
Faculty Name Ana Arjona

Summer 2018

Fall 2018

Winter 2019

Spring 2019

Project Title Civilians in War: Researching Truth and Reconciliation Commissions and Repositories of Civilians' Testimonies

Project Description Even though we tend to think of civilians living in contexts where non-state armed actors operate as victims with little agency, common citizens do make choices when confronting the activities of these groups. They can passively obey them, offer them support, or join their ranks; they can migrate; and they can fiercely resist against them. While the fate of common citizens is at the core of much of the research on civil war, drug trafficking, and criminality, common citizens are often assumed to be simple "recipients" of the choices of criminals, insurgents, and state officials, but rarely taken to be agents in the process. This research project focuses on their choices by asking when, and why, do they opt for engaging with, cooperating, obeying, or opposing a non-state armed group that operates in their communities. I have collected detailed evidence on civilians' experiences of war, and their behavior towards armed actors in Colombia and Kosovo. During the 2018-2019 academic year, I will be researching truth and reconciliation commissions as well as other repositories of testimonies that are available online in order to gather detailed empirical evidence on civilians' lives during wartime in other conflicts. These sources include The Cambodian Genocide Databases created by Yale University, the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Guatemala's Historical Clarification Commission.

Position Expectations Two students will conduct research on several sources. Most of these sources are in English, while others are in Spanish. Students who are not fluent in Spanish are encouraged to apply, as they can focus on English sources. This position will center in the following tasks: (1) Students will do a literature review on the conflict(s) they will be working on, and will prepare an annotated bibliography. (2) Students will familiarize themselves with the source they will be working on. This entails understanding the background of the conflict, and the way in which the data were collected. (3) Students will be trained in the use of software for qualitative data analysis such as NVivo. They will follow a clear protocol for reading the assigned sources and organizing the material pertinent to the project. They will also produce reports using this qualitative data.

(4) Students will help with editing research papers and book chapters that present the product of this research.

Skills/Experience Required (1) Strong writing skills (2) Research fluency in Spanish is a plus but not required

What Will the FF Gain? - Learn how to conduct independent research using qualitative sources - Learn to use software for qualitative research - Improve his/her research and analytical skills by finding, analyzing, synthesizing and reporting on several sources - Learn about political violence - Gain in-depth knowledge about one or more civil wars

Time Requirement Two students will participate in this project at any given time. Each student is expected to work 5 hours per week during the academic year, and 20 hours per week during the summer.
