

# Robert A. Blair

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## Academic appointments

- 2015- **Brown University**  
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs
- 2018-19 **Stanford University**  
Junior Faculty Fellow, Center for International Security and Cooperation

## Education

- 2015 **Yale University**  
PhD in Political Science
- 2007 **Universidad de los Andes**  
MSc in Resolution of Armed Conflicts
- 2006 **Brown University**  
BA in Education Studies, Comparative Literature, and Creative Writing

## Publications & working papers

### BOOK

*Peacekeeping, Policing, and the Rule of Law after Civil War*. 2020. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press ([link](#))

### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

22. “When Do UN Peacekeeping Operations Implement Their Mandates?” (with Jessica Di Salvatore and Hannah Smidt). 2021. *American Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming ([link](#))
21. “Policing Ethnicity: Lab-in-the-Field Evidence on Cooperation, Discrimination, and Ethnic Balancing in the Liberian National Police” (with Kyle Beardsley, Michael Gilligan, and Sabrina Karim). 2021. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming ([link](#))
20. “Foreign Aid and Soft Power: Great Power Competition in Africa in the Early 21st Century” (with Robert Marty and Philip Roessler). 2021. *British Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming ([link](#))

19. “The Promise and Pitfalls of Conflict Prediction: Evidence from Colombia and Indonesia” (with Samuel Bazzi, Christopher Blattman, Oeindrila Dube, Matthew Gudgeon, and Richard Peck). 2021. *Review of Economics & Statistics*, forthcoming ([link](#))
18. “Is Theory Useful for Conflict Prediction? A Response to Beger, Morgan, and Ward” (with Nicholas Sambanis). 2021. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, forthcoming
17. “Civil War and Citizens’ Demand for the State: An Empirical Test of Hobbesian Theory.” 2021. *British Journal of Political Science*, in press ([link](#))
16. “Policing and the Legacies of State Predation: Evidence from a Survey and Field Experiment in Liberia” (with Benjamin Morse). 2021. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, in press ([link](#))
15. “UN Peacekeeping and the Rule of Law.” 2021. *American Political Science Review* 115(1): 51-68 ([link](#))
14. “Foreign Aid and State Legitimacy: Evidence on Chinese and US Aid to Africa from Surveys, Survey Experiments, and Behavioral Games” (with Philip Roessler). 2021. *World Politics* 73(2): 315-357 ([link](#))
13. “Engineering Informal Institutions: Long-Run Impacts of Alternative Dispute Resolution on Violence and Property Rights in Liberia” (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2021. *Journal of Politics* 83(1): 381-389 ([link](#))
12. “Building Credibility and Cooperation in Low-Trust Settings: Persuasion and Source Accountability in Liberia During the 2014–2015 Ebola Crisis” (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai). 2020. *Comparative Political Studies* 54(10-11): 1582-1618 ([link](#))
11. “Forecasting Civil Wars: Theory and Structure in an Age of ‘Big Data’ and Machine Learning” (with Nicholas Sambanis). 2020. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64(1): 1885-1915 ([link](#))
10. “Foreign Aid and State-Society Relations: Theory, Evidence, and New Directions for Research” (with Matthew Winters). 2020. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 55(2): 123-42 ([link](#))
9. “Establishing the Rule of Law in Weak and War-torn States: Evidence from a Field Experiment with the Liberian National Police” (with Sabrina Karim and Benjamin Morse). 2019. *American Political Science Review* 113(3): 641-657 ([link](#))
8. “International Intervention and the Rule of Law after Civil War: Evidence from Liberia.” 2019. *International Organization* 73(2): 365-398 ([link](#))
7. “Teaching Trump: Why Comparative Politics Makes Students More Optimistic About US Democracy” (with Hannah Baron and Shelby Grossman). 2019. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 52(2): 347-352 ([link](#))
6. “International Gender Balancing Reforms in Postconflict Countries: Lab-in-the-Field Evidence from the Liberian National Police” (with Kyle Beardsley, Michael Gilligan, and Sabrina Karim). 2018. *International Studies Quarterly* 62(3): 618-631 ([link](#))
5. “Predicting Local Violence: Evidence from a Panel Survey in Liberia” (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2017. *Journal of Peace Research* 54(2): 298-312 ([link](#))

4. “Public Health and Public Trust: Survey Evidence from the Ebola Virus Disease Epidemic in Liberia” (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai). 2017. *Social Science & Medicine* 172: 89-97 ([link](#))
3. “On the Rights of Warlords: Legitimate Authority and Basic Protection in War-Torn Societies” (with Pablo Kalmanovitz). 2016. *American Political Science Review* 110(3): 428-440 ([link](#))
2. “Patterns of Demand for Non-Ebola Health Services During and After the Ebola Outbreak: Panel Survey Evidence from Monrovia, Liberia” (with Karen Grepin, Benjamin Morse, and Lily Tsai). 2016. *BMJ Global Health* 1: e000007 ([link](#))
1. “How to Promote Order and Property Rights under Weak Rule of Law? An Experiment in Changing Dispute Resolution Behavior through Community Education” (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2014. *American Political Science Review* 108(1): 100-120 ([link](#))

#### REVISE & RESUBMIT

“After Rebel Governance: A Field Experiment in Security and Justice Provision in Rural Colombia” (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas, and Michael Weintraub). *American Political Science Review*, revise & resubmit ([link](#))

- Best Paper Presented at APSA in 2020 Award, APSA Experimental Research Section

“Does Community Policing Build Trust in Police and Reduce Crime? Evidence from Six Coordinated Field Experiments in the Global South” (with Graeme Blair, Fotini Christia, and Jeremy Weinstein et al.). *Science*, revise & resubmit

#### UNDER REVIEW

“Can Americans Depolarize? Assessing the Effects of Reciprocal Group Reflection on Partisan Polarization” (with Hannah Baron, Danny Choi, Laura Gamboa, Jessica Gottlieb, Amanda Robinson, Steven Rosenzweig, Megan Turnbull, and Emily West) ([link](#))

“Military Policing Exacerbates Crime and Human Rights Abuses: A Randomized Controlled Trial in Cali, Colombia” (with Michael Weintraub)

“Public Trust, Policing, and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from an Electoral Authoritarian Regime” (with Travis Curtice, David Dow, and Guy Grossman) ([link](#))

“UN Peacekeeping and Democratization in Conflict-Affected Countries” (with Jessica Di Salvatore and Hannah Smidt) ([link](#))

#### WORKING PAPERS

“A Global Analysis of Policymaker Support for Competing Aid Regimes” (with Samantha Custer and Philip Roessler)

“Can Community Policing Improve Police-Community Relations in an Authoritarian Regime? Experimental Evidence from Uganda” (with Guy Grossman and Anna Wilke) ([link](#))

“Legitimacy After Violence: Evidence from Two Lab-in-the-Field Experiments in Liberia” ([link](#))

“*Mano Dura*: An Experimental Evaluation of Military Policing in Cali, Colombia” (with Michael Weintraub)

## BOOK CHAPTERS

“Peacekeeping, Security Sector Reform, and the Rule of Law.” 2021. In Han Dorussen (ed.), *Handbook on Peacekeeping and International Relations*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, under contract

“Restoring Police/Community Relations in Uganda” (with Guy Grossman and Anna Wilke). 2021. In Graeme Blair, Fotini Christia, and Jeremy Weinstein (eds.), *Crime, Insecurity, and Community Policing: Experiments on Building Trust*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, under contract

## SELECTED POLICY REPORTS

*Couples Therapy for a Divided America: Evaluating the Effects of a Depolarization Workshop* (with Hannah Baron, Danny Choi, Laura Gamboa, Jessica Gottlieb, Amanda Robinson, Steven Rosenzweig, Megan Turnbull, and Emily West). 2021 ([link](#))

*Building Trust in a Reformed Security Sector: A Field Experiment in Liberia* (with Sabrina Karim and Benjamin Morse). 2016. IGC ([link](#))

*Patterns of Trust and Compliance in the Fight Against Ebola: Results from a Population-Based Survey of Monrovia, Liberia* (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai). 2015. IGC ([link](#))

*Patterns of Conflict and Cooperation in Liberia (Part 2): Prospects for Conflict Forecasting and Early Warning* (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2012. IPA ([link](#))

*Patterns of Conflict and Cooperation in Liberia (Part 1): Results from a Longitudinal Study* (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2011. IPA ([link](#))

*Can We Teach Peace and Conflict Resolution? Results from an Evaluation of the Community Empowerment Program in Liberia* (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2011. IPA ([link](#))

## SELECTED RELATED PUBLICATIONS

“How would we know if it’s time to protest Trump’s maneuvers?” (with Steven Rosenzweig). 2020. *The Boston Globe* ([link](#))

“Get ready to protest like democracy depends on it” (with Steven Rosenzweig). 2020. *The Boston Globe* ([link](#))

“Democratic Erosion in Comparative Perspective: Lessons from a Multi-University Consortium” (with Hannah Baron, Jessica Gottlieb, and Shelby Grossman). 2019. *APSA Comparative Politics Newsletter* XXIX(1): 77-84 ([link](#))

“Looking abroad increases optimism about our democracy in the US” (with Hannah Baron and Shelby Grossman). 2019. *Inside Higher Ed* ([link](#))

“In Liberia, the UN mission helped restore confidence in the rule of law.” 2019. *The Washington Post* (*Monkey Cage*) ([link](#))

“When is a warlord better than no warlord?” (with Pablo Kalmanovitz). 2017. *The Washington*

Post (*Monkey Cage*) ([link](#))

## Related employment experience

- 20121- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine  
Consultant on police reform
- 2019-20 USAID  
Consultant on police accountability
- 2015-17 Overseas Development Institute  
Consultant on survey data analysis
- 2014-17 Political Instability Task Force  
Consultant on forecasting civil wars
- 2013- Varieties of Democracy  
Country expert on Liberia and Sierra Leone
- 2012-14 Freedom House  
Country expert on Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone
- 2011-12 UN OROLSI  
Consultant on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) in Cote d'Ivoire
- 2010 Small Arms Survey  
Consultant on armed violence in Liberia

## Workshops, seminars, & conferences

- 2021 *Comparative Politics Workshop*, University of Pennsylvania  
*Business & Society Program*, Aspen Institute  
*Latin American Studies Program Seminar*, Cornell University  
*National Conference*, ISA  
*Online Economics of Crime Seminar*  
*Comparative Politics Colloquium*, UC Berkeley  
*Security, Peace, and Conflict Seminar*, Duke University  
*Comparative Politics Workshop*, University of Chicago  
Boston-Area Working Group in African Political Economy (B-WGAPE)
- 2020 *Comparative Politics Workshop*, Northwestern University  
*The Pursuit of Peaceful Polling*, Folke Bernadotte Academy  
*Strategic Studies Group*, Oxford University  
*Annual Meeting*, APSA  
*International Security Brown Bag Seminar*, Harvard Kennedy School  
*Social Unrest and Violent Conflict in Times of Pandemics*, Households in Conflict Network  
*Security, Peace, and Conflict Seminar*, Duke University  
*Governance, Justice, and the Rule of Law in Conflict-affected States*, Folke Bernadotte Academy

- 2019 *Research Seminar*, UC Davis  
*Research-Policy Dialogue*, UN DPO and Folke Bernadotte Academy  
*Annual Conference*, EGAP  
*Comparative Politics Seminar*, Stanford University  
*Comparative Politics Colloquium*, UC Berkeley  
*National Conference*, ISA  
*Annual Meeting*, APSA  
*International Relations Seminar*, Stanford University  
*Design Symposium*, US DoS and EGAP  
*Replication Seminar*, UC San Diego
- 2018 *CISAC Research Seminar*, Stanford University  
*International Politics Seminar*, Columbia University  
*Annual Meeting*, APSA  
*The Next Frontier of Peacekeeping*, Yale University  
*NYU-CESS Annual Conference*, NYU  
*Comparative Politics Seminar*, Boston University
- 2017 *Joint Degree Program in Social Policy Seminar*, Princeton University  
*International Political Economy Seminar*, SAIS  
*Annual Conference*, EGAP  
Contemporary African Political Economy Research Seminar (CAPERS)  
*International Development Seminar*, William & Mary  
Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE)  
*Brown Bag Lunch Seminar*, AidData
- 2016 *New Perspectives on the State, Violence and Social Control*, University of Chicago  
*Evidence-Based Approaches to Conflict Prevention and Mitigation*, US DoS and EGAP  
*Working Group on Security Sector Reform*, Folke Bernadotte Academy  
*National Conference*, ISA  
*Brown Bag Seminar*, Folke Bernadotte Academy  
*China and the African State*, USAID  
*Unequal Security in the Americas*, Brown University
- 2015 *Comparative Politics Colloquium*, UC Berkeley  
*Democracy in Africa*, Brown University  
*Semi-Annual Conference*, Political Instability Task Force  
*Brown Bag Lunch Seminar*, Harvard School of Public Health  
Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE)  
*National Conference*, ISA  
*African Economic Development*, Harvard University  
*Economics of Ebola*, IGC  
*Microfoundations of Conflict and Violence*, Households in Conflict Network and World Bank
- 2014 *Faculty Colloquium*, Naval War College  
*Global Justice After Colonialism*, McGill University  
*Semi-Annual Conference*, Political Instability Task Force  
*Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations*, Folke Bernadotte Academy

- Contemporary African Political Economy Research Seminar (CAPERS)  
*Field Experiments in International Relations*, Princeton University
- 2013 *Hacia la Reconstrucción del País*, Pontifica Universidad Javeriana  
 Annual Meeting, APSA  
 Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, Folke Bernadotte Academy  
 National Conference, ISA  
 Local Perceptions of UN Peacekeeping Operations, UN OROLSI and NUPI
- 2012 Annual Meeting, APSA  
 Department of Machine Learning Colloquium, Carnegie Mellon University  
 National Conference, MPSA
- 2011 Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, Folke Bernadotte Academy

## Fellowships & awards

- 2021 Early Career Research Achievement Award, Brown University
- 2018 Henry Merritt Wriston Fellowship, Brown University
- 2008 Sterling Fellowship, Yale University
- 2006 Fulbright Fellowship

## External grants

- 2020 J-PAL, \$40,000 (with Travis Curtice, David Dow, and Guy Grossman)
- 2019 IOM, \$40,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas, and Michael Weintraub)  
 IPA, \$220,000 (with Michael Weintraub)  
 IPA, \$57,000 (with Michael Weintraub)  
 Hewlett Foundation, \$95,000
- 2018 UNDP, \$124,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas, and Michael Weintraub)  
 Social Science Research Council, \$10,000  
 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$4,000 (with Hannah Smidt)  
 APSA Centennial Center, \$5,000  
 IPA, \$115,000 (with Guy Grossman)
- 2017 EDI, \$288,000 (with Guy Grossman)  
 EGAP, \$239,000 (with Guy Grossman)
- 2016 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$17,000 (with Hannah Smidt)  
 KfW, \$40,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas, and Michael Weintraub)
- 2015 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$28,000  
 KfW, \$63,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas, and Michael Weintraub)
- 2014 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$35,000 (with Sabrina Karim and Benjamin Morse)  
 ISA, \$21,000 (with Simone Dietrich, Philip Roessler, and Matthew Winters)  
 IGC, \$40,000 (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai)

- Omidyar, \$45,000 (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai)
- 2013 USAID, \$85,000 (with Philip Roessler)  
 IGC, \$75,000 (with Sabrina Karim and Benjamin Morse)  
 Vanguard Charitable Trust, \$37,000 (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman)
- 2012 Humanity United, \$107,000 (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman)  
 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$30,000 (with Kyle Beardsley, Michael Gilligan, and Sabrina Karim)  
 Folke Bernadotte Academy, \$7,100  
 ISA, \$9,300  
 MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, \$15,000  
 NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, \$12,300
- 2010 Humanity United, \$140,000 (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman)

## Teaching

### Brown University

- Democratic Erosion* (undergraduate)  
*Post-Conflict Politics* (undergraduate)  
*Security, Governance, and Development in Africa* (undergraduate)  
*Proseminar in Comparative Politics* (graduate)  
*Quantitative Research Methods* (graduate)  
*Experiments in the Social Sciences* (graduate, summer short course)  
*Humanitarian Response and Post-Conflict Reconstruction* (BIARI, summer short course)

### Yale University

- Post-Conflict Politics* (undergraduate)

## Academic affiliations

- 2021- Member, Security Sector Reform Advisory Network, UN Department of Peace Operations  
 2019- Faculty Affiliate, Brown University Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies  
 2017- Coordinator, Democratic Erosion Consortium ([website](#))  
 2016- Member, EGAP  
 2014-15 Research Fellow, AidData  
 2011- Member, Folke Bernadotte Academy Working Group on Security Sector Reform  
 2011- Member, Folke Bernadotte Academy Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations

## Professional service

### REFEREE

*American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *International Organization*, *International Peacekeeping*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Development Economics*, *Journal of Development Studies*,



*Journal of Experimental Political Science, Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Politics, Political Geography, Political Science Research & Methods, World Bank Economic Review, World Development, World Politics*

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