

Robert A. Blair

Brown University
Department of Political Science
Box 1970
Providence, RI 02912

Cell: 202-689-4628
Office: 401-863-3928
Email: robert_blair@brown.edu
Web: <http://robblair.net/>

Academic appointments

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

Education

- 2015 **Yale University**
PhD in Political Science (with Distinction)
- 2007 **Universidad de los Andes** (Bogotá, Colombia)
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. Cambridge University Press, forthcoming

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

12. "Forecasting Civil Wars: Theory and Structure in an Age of 'Big Data' and Machine Learning" (with Nicholas Sambanis). *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, forthcoming
11. "Engineering Informal Institutions: Long Run Impacts of Alternative Dispute Resolution on Violence and Property Rights in Liberia" (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman). 2019. *Journal of Politics*, forthcoming ([link](#))
10. "Building Trust and Compliance in Weak States: Coproduction during the 2014-2015 Ebola Crisis in Liberia" (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai). 2019. *Comparative Political Studies*, forthcoming ([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. “The Impact of International Interventions to Empower Women in Post-Conflict 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

“Foreign Aid, Political Perceptions and Citizenship in the Developing World” (with Matthew Winters)

“The Promise and Pitfalls of Conflict Prediction: Evidence from Colombia and Indonesia” (with Samuel Bazzi, Christopher Blattman, Oeindrila Dube, Matthew Gudgeon and Richard Peck) ([link](#))

UNDER REVIEW

“Civil War and Citizens’ Demand for the State: An Empirical Test of Hobbesian Theory” ([link](#))

“Foreign Aid and Soft Power: Great Power Competition in Africa in the Early 21st Century” (with Philip Roessler and Robert Marty) ([link](#))

“Foreign Aid and State Legitimacy in Africa: Sub-National and Cross-National Evidence from Surveys, Survey Experiments and Behavioral Games” (with Philip Roessler) ([link](#))

“Policing and the Legacies of State Predation: Evidence from a Survey and Field Experiment in Liberia” (with Benjamin Morse)

“UN Peacekeeping and the Rule of Law After Civil War” ([link](#))

WORKING PAPERS

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

“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) ([link](#))

“UN Peacekeeping: From Mandate to Practice” (with Jessica di Salvatore and Hannah Smidt)

BOOK CHAPTERS

“On the Ground: Local Legacies of Gender Reforms in the UN Mission in Liberia” (with Kyle Beardsley, Michael Gilligan and Sabrina Karim). 2017. In Sabrina Karim and Kyle Beardsley, *Equal Opportunity Peacekeeping: Women, Peace, and Security in Post-Conflict States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 136-64

POLICY REPORTS

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

Effects of Rule-of-Law Sector Quick Impact Projects on Crime Rates, Crime Reporting and Perceptions of Security and Justice in Liberia. 2014. UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Mission Analysis Centre

Prospects for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in Cote d'Ivoire: Results from a Baseline Study. 2012. UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)

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

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

Quantifying the Incidence and Prevalence of Violence in Post-War Liberia. 2011. Small Arms Survey

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. Innovations for Poverty Action ([link](#))

SELECTED RELATED PUBLICATIONS

“Democratic Erosion in Comparative Perspective: Lessons from a Multi-University Consortium” (with Hannah Baron, Jessica Gottlieb and Shelby Grossman). 2019. *American Political Science Association 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](#))

Ongoing field research

Randomized controlled trial evaluating community-oriented policing and training for neighborhood watch teams in rural Uganda (with Guy Grossman and Anna Wilke)

Randomized controlled trial evaluating the *Plan Fortaleza* program to reduce homicides through military involvement in domestic policing operations in urban Colombia (with Michael Weintraub)

Randomized controlled trial evaluating the *ComunPaz* program to increase police presence and reduce armed group influence in rural Colombian communities formerly controlled by guerrillas (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)

Randomized controlled trial evaluating Better Angels “Red/Blue” workshops for reducing partisan polarization among students on six college campuses (with Hannah Baron, Daniel Choi, Jessica Gottlieb, Amanda Robinson and Steven Rosenzweig)

Related employment experience

USAID

Consultant on security sector governance

2019

- 2014- **Political Instability Task Force**
Consultant on forecasting civil wars
- 2013- **Varieties of Democracy**
Country expert on Liberia and Sierra Leone
- 2015-17 **Overseas Development Institute**
Consultant on survey data analysis
- 2012-14 **Freedom House**
Country expert on Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone
- 2011-12 **UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)**
Consultant on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in Cote d'Ivoire
- 2010 **Small Arms Survey**
Consultant on armed violence in Liberia

Presentations

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS

- 2019 *Research Seminar*, University of California, Davis
Comparative Politics Seminar, Stanford University
Comparative Politics Colloquium, University of California at Berkeley
International Relations Seminar, Stanford University
Replication Seminar, University of California, San Diego
- 2018 *CISAC Research Seminar*, Stanford University
International Politics Seminar, Columbia University
The Next Frontier of Peacekeeping, Yale University
Comparative Politics Seminar, Boston University
- 2017 *Joint Degree Program in Social Policy Seminar*, Princeton University
International Political Economy Seminar, Johns Hopkins University (SAIS)
International Development Seminar, William & Mary
Brown Bag Lunch Seminar, AidData
- 2016 *New Perspectives on the State, Violence and Social Control*, University of Chicago
Unequal Security in the Americas, Brown University
- 2015 *Comparative Politics Colloquium*, University of California at Berkeley
Democracy in Africa, Brown University
School of Public Health Brown Bag Lunch Seminar, Harvard University
African Economic Development, Harvard University
Economics of Ebola, International Growth Centre
Microfoundations of Conflict and Violence, Households in Conflict Network and World Bank
- 2014 *Faculty Colloquium*, Naval War College

Global Justice After Colonialism, McGill University
Field Experiments in International Relations, Princeton University

2013 *Hacia la Reconstrucción del País*, Pontifica Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia)

2012 *Department of Machine Learning Colloquium*, Carnegie Mellon University

POLICY PRESENTATIONS

2019 “Security Sector Reform & Police-Community Relations: Reflections from 9 Studies in Liberia, Uganda and Colombia.” *Research-Policy Dialogue*, UN Department of Peace Operations and Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA)

“Experiments” and “Electoral Violence.” *Design Symposium*, US Department of State and Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP)

2016 “China and the African State” (with Philip Roessler). USAID

“Peacekeeping, Policing and the Rule of Law after Civil War: Evidence from Four Studies in Liberia.” Folke Bernadotte Academy

“Electoral Violence” (with Eric Kramon). *Evidence-Based Approaches to Conflict Prevention and Mitigation*, US Department of State and Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP)

2013 “Measuring Local Perceptions of Peacekeeping Operations: Mixed Methods, Triangulation and Attribution.” *Understanding and Integrating Local Perceptions in the Work of UN Peacekeeping Operations*, UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) and NUPI (Kampala, Uganda)

2012 “Measuring the Impact of Peacekeeping Operations: Who, What, Why and How?” *Measuring the Impact of Peacekeeping Missions on Rule of Law and Security Institutions*, UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)

“After UNMIL: Perspectives on the Future of Security in Liberia.” University of Liberia (Monrovia, Liberia)

“Prospects for Conflict Early Warning in Liberia: Results from a Three-Year Study.” Ministry of Internal Affairs (Monrovia, Liberia)

“Peacebuilding Prospects in Liberia: Results from Three Longitudinal Research Studies” (with Christopher Blattman). UN Peacebuilding Support Office

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting, 2012, 2013, 2018, 2019

Center for Experimental Social Science (NYU-CESS) Annual Conference, 2018

Contemporary African Political Economy Research Seminar (CAPERS), 2014, 2017

Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP), 2017, 2019

Folke Bernadotte Academy Working Groups, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2019

International Studies Association (ISA) National Conference, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019

Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) National Conference, 2012, 2013
Political Instability Task Force Semi-Annual Conference, 2014, 2015
Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE), 2015, 2017

Fellowships & awards

2018 Henry Merritt Wriston Fellowship, Brown University
Junior Faculty Fellowship, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University

2008 Sterling Fellowship, Yale University

2006 Fulbright Fellowship

External grants

2019 International Office of Migration, \$40,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)
Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), *Peace and Recovery Program*, \$220,000 (with Michael Weintraub)
Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), *Peace and Recovery Program*, \$57,000 (with Michael Weintraub)
Hewlett Foundation, \$95,000

2018 UN Development Programme (UNDP), \$124,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)
Social Science Research Council, *Anxieties of Democracy*, \$10,000
Folke Bernadotte Academy, *Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations*, \$4,000 (with Hannah Smidt)
American Political Science Association, *Centennial Center*, \$5,000
Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), *Peace and Recovery Program*, \$115,000 (with Guy Grossman)

2017 Economic Development & Institutions (EDI), \$288,000 (with Guy Grossman)
Evidence in Governance & Politics (EGAP), \$239,000 (with Guy Grossman)

2016 Folke Bernadotte Academy, *Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations*, \$17,000 (with Hannah Smidt)
KfW Development Bank, \$40,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)

2015 Folke Bernadotte Academy, Working Group on Security Sector Reform, \$28,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)
KfW Development Bank, \$63,000 (with Manuel Moscoso, Andrés Vargas and Michael Weintraub)

- 2014 Folke Bernadotte Academy, Working Group on Security Sector Reform, \$35,000 (with Sabrina Karim and Benjamin Morse)
 International Studies Association, *Venture Research Grant*, \$21,000 (with Philip Roessler, Simone Dietrich and Matthew Winters)
 International Growth Centre, \$40,000 (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai)
 Omidyar, \$45,000 (with Benjamin Morse and Lily Tsai)
- 2013 USAID, *Democracy Fellows and Grants Program*, \$85,000 (with Philip Roessler)
 International Growth Centre, \$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 Working Group on Security Sector Reform, \$30,000 (with Kyle Beardsley, Michael Gilligan and Sabrina Karim)
 Folke Bernadotte Academy Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, \$7,100
 International Studies Association, *Venture Research Grant*, \$9,300
 MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, *Dissertation Research Grant*, \$15,000
 National Science Foundation, *Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant*, \$12,300
- 2010 Humanity United, \$140,000 (with Christopher Blattman and Alexandra Hartman)

Teaching

Brown University

- Security, Governance and Development in Africa* (undergraduate, fall 2016, fall 2017)
Democratic Erosion (undergraduate, fall 2017)
Quantitative Research Methods (graduate, spring 2016, spring 2017, spring 2018)
Experiments and the Logistics of Intensive Fieldwork (graduate, summer 2016)
Post-Conflict Politics (undergraduate, fall 2015, fall 2016)
Humanitarian Response and Post-Conflict Reconstruction (Brown International Advanced Research Institute, summer 2015, summer 2016, summer 2017)

Yale University

- Post-Conflict Politics* (undergraduate, spring 2015)

Academic affiliations

- 2017- Coordinator, Democratic Erosion consortium ([website](#))
 2016- Member, Evidence in Governance & Politics (EGAP) network
 2016- Faculty Affiliate, Brown University Humanitarian Innovation Initiative (HI²)

2014- Research Fellow, AidData
2011- Member, Folke Bernadotte Academy Working Groups

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 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 Science Research & Methods, World Bank Economic Review, World Politics

COMMITTEES

Member, *Studies in Comparative International Development* Editorial Collective
Chair, Evidence in Governance & Politics (EGAP) Peer Response Committee
Reviewer, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)
Reviewer, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Research Review Committee