

## Kai M. Thaler

Department of Global Studies  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-7065  
Office SSMS 2103

Email: thaler@ucsb.edu  
Telephone: +1 (207) 939-1288  
Web: <https://www.kaithaler.com>

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

#### **University of California, Santa Barbara**

Assistant Professor, Department of Global Studies, 2018 –

#### *Previous*

#### **University of Denver, Josef Korbel School of International Studies**

Postdoctoral Fellow, Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy,  
2018-19

### EDUCATION

**Harvard University**                      PhD in Government, 2018

Dissertation: “From Insurgents to Incumbents: State Building and Service Provision after Rebel  
Victory in Civil Wars”

Certificate in Latin American Studies, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies

**Harvard University**                      AM in Government, 2015

**University of Cape Town**              MSc in Sociology, 2011 (with distinction)

**Yale University**                         BA in Political Science, 2009 (*cum laude*, with distinction in the major)

### PUBLICATIONS

#### *Articles*

2019. “Reflexivity and Temporality in Researching Violent Settings: Problems with the  
Transparency and Replicability Regime,” *Geopolitics*, forthcoming.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2019.1643721>.
2018. “Has Liberia Turned a Corner?” *Journal of Democracy* 29(3): 156-170 (with Benjamin Spatz)
2017. “Nicaragua: A Return to Caudillismo.” *Journal of Democracy* 28(2): 157-169
2017. “Mixed Methods Research in the Study of Political and Social Violence and Conflict.”  
*Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 11(1): 59-76
2016. “Dynamique et diversité des armées africaines: État des connaissances.” *Afrique  
Contemporaine* 2016/4(260): 27-44 (with Jason Warner)
2014. “Socioeconomic Conditions and Violence in Cape Town, South Africa.” *Economics of Peace  
and Security* 9(2): 34-42 (with Jeremy Seekings)
2012. “Ideology and Violence in Civil Wars: Theory and Evidence from Mozambique and  
Angola.” *Civil Wars* 14(4): 546-567
2012. “Foreshadowing Future Slaughter: From the Indonesian Killings of 1965-66 to Genocide in  
East Timor.” *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 7(2/3): 204-222
2009. “Avoiding the Abyss: Finding a Way Forward in Guinea-Bissau.” *Portuguese Journal of  
International Affairs* 1(2): 3-14

*Book Chapters*

2019. “Mixed methods in violence studies,” in Walter S. DeKeseredy, Callie Marie Rennison, and Amanda K. Hall-Sanchez (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Violence Studies*, pp.19-29 (New York: Routledge)
2018. “U.S. Action and Inaction in the Massacre of Communists and Alleged Communists in Indonesia,” in Samuel Totten (ed.), *Dirty Hands and Vicious Deeds: The US Government’s Complicity in Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide*, pp.23-69 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press)
2013. “Brazil, Biofuels, and Food Security in Mozambique,” in Renu Modi and Fantu Cheru (eds.), *Agricultural Development and Food Security in Africa: The Impact of Chinese, Indian and Brazilian Investments*, pp.145-158 (London: Zed Books)

*Book Reviews and Correspondence*

- Forthcoming Review of Philip Roessler, *Ethnic Conflict and State Power in Africa: The Logic of the Coup Civil War Trap* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), *H-Diplo Roundtable Review*.
- 2018 “Correspondence: Ideological Extremism in Armed Conflict,” *International Security*, 43(1): 186-190 (with Jonathan Leader Maynard)
- 2015 Review of Stephen A. Emerson, *The Battle for Mozambique: The Frelimo-Renamo Struggle, 1977-1992* (Solihull, England: Helion & Company, 2014), *War in History* 22(4): 571-573

**WORKING PAPERS**

- “Civil Wars as Critical Junctures: Theoretical Grounding and Empirical Applications”
- “Delegation, Sponsorship, and Autonomy: Understanding State-Armed Group Relationships”
- “Disentangling Insurgent Ideologies” (with Jason Warner)
- “Patterns of Violence and Levels of Analysis: Explaining Spatial and Temporal Variation in Sandinista Nicaragua”
- “The Paradox of Revolutions: How Can We Isolate the Causal Effects of Transformative Events?” (with Marika Landau-Wells)
- “Ideology, Perception, and Strategic Decision-Making in a Revolutionary State: Mistakes and Adjustment in FSLN Security Policy in Nicaragua”
- “Left-Wing Authoritarianism: The Marxists and the Machiavellians” (with Dan Slater)
- “Revolutionary Legacies and Threat Management: Security Apparatus Development in Revolutionary Nicaragua and Iran”
- “Strategic Pandering: Exploitation of Grievances and Rebel Mobilization” (*under review*)

**WORKS IN PROGRESS**

- When the Rebels Win: State Power and Public Interests after Civil Wars* (book manuscript)
- “The New Nicaraguan Revolution: Protest and Repression in the Shadow of History” (with Eric Mosinger)

**GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

- 2017 Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
- 2017 Samuel P. Huntington Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2017 David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS) Term-Time Grant, Harvard University
- 2016 Democracy Doctoral Fellowship, Ash Center for Democratic Governance, Harvard Kennedy School

- 2016 Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (WCFLA) Mid-Dissertation Grant, Harvard University
- 2015 Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship, Harvard University
- 2015 WCFLA Mid-Dissertation Grant, Harvard University
- 2014 WCFLA Pre-Dissertation Grant, Harvard University
- 2014 National Security Graduate Research Fellowship, The Tobin Project
- 2013 DRCLAS Summer Research Grant, Harvard University
- 2013 National Security Graduate Research Fellowship, The Tobin Project
- 2011 Microcon Mobility Fund Grant
- 2010 Centre for Social Science Research Postgraduate Fellowship, University of Cape Town
- 2009 DGARQ/FLAD Investigation Fellowship, Portuguese Directorate General of Archives and Luso-American Development Foundation

### **INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

*Foreign Languages:* Fluent Spanish; proficient French and Portuguese

*Fieldwork:* South Africa (2010), Nicaragua (2015, 2016, 2017), Liberia (2015), Uganda (2016)

*Archival Research:* Portugal (2008, 2009), Nicaragua (2013, 2015, 2017), USA (2014), Uganda (2016)

### **MAJOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

African Studies Association Annual Meeting: 2016-2018

American Political Science Association Annual Meeting: 2013-2018, 2019 (scheduled)

European Conference on African Studies: 2017

European Consortium for Political Research General Conference: 2009, 2011, 2015

International Studies Association Annual Convention: 2014-2019

International Security Studies Section/International Security Annual Conference 2019 (scheduled)

Latin American Studies Association: 2018-2019

Network of European Peace Scientists Jan Tinbergen Conference: 2017

### **TEACHING AND ADVISING**

#### **University of California, Santa Barbara**

*Committee Member:* Taylor Horton (MA in Global Studies)

#### **Boston University**

Lecturer, *International Relations 367/Political Science 360:* Latin American Politics and International Relations, Pardee School of Global Studies (half semester), fall 2017

#### **Harvard University**

*Teaching Fellow*

*Government 62:* Research Practice in Qualitative Methods, Gwyneth McClendon, spring 2015

*Government 20:* Foundations of Comparative Politics, Steven Levitsky, fall 2014

*Government 1295:* Comparative Politics of Latin America, Steven Levitsky, spring 2014

*Senior Thesis Adviser:* Ben Cashin (2017-18), Chloe George (2014-15), Hilary Higgins (2014-15), Jason Kwon (2015-16), Charles Orta (2015-16), Delany Sisiruca (2015-16)

*Undergraduate Research Mentor,* Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, 2013-17

**INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND SYMPOSIA**

- 2019 “Rebel Victories and Comparative Perspectives on the Nicaraguan Revolution,” Nicaragua 1979-2019: The Sandinista Revolution After 40 Years, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Brown University
- 2019 “Resistance and Repression: One Year on From Nicaragua’s Civil Uprising,” DRCLAS Seminar on Latin American Politics, Harvard University
- 2019 “Decolonizing Scholarship on Africa” [roundtable], Conference on Sustainable Development in Africa, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver
- 2018 “Civil Wars as Critical Junctures: Theoretical Grounding and Empirical Applications,” Southwest Workshop on Mixed Methods Research, University of California, Santa Cruz
- 2018 “Strategic Pandering and Rebel Mobilization,” Korbel Research Seminar, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver
- 2018 “When the Rebels Win: Power and Interests after Civil Wars,” Symposium: The Micro dynamics of Armed Conflict, Institut Barcelona d’Estudis Internacionals
- 2018 “Nicaragua’s April Uprising: Understanding the Protests and Repression,” Roundtable, DRCLAS Special Event, Harvard University
- 2017 “When the Rebels Win: State Building and Service Provision in Revolutionary Nicaragua,” DRCLAS Seminar on Latin American Politics, Harvard University
- 2017 “When the Rebels Win: Leadership, Preferences, and State Building After Civil Wars,” Yale Program on Order, Conflict, and Violence Speaker Series, Yale University
- 2016 “Daniel Ortega and the Erosion of Democracy in Nicaragua,” DRCLAS Seminar on Latin American Politics, Harvard University
- 2013 “Revolutionary Regimes, Security, and Strategic Myopia: Mistakes in Military Development in Revolutionary Nicaragua and Iran,” Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica, Universidad Centroamericana, Nicaragua (in Spanish)
- 2011 “Foreshadowing Future Slaughter: From the Indonesian Killings of 1965-66 to Genocide in East Timor.” International Workshop ‘Resisting the Path to Genocide: The Case of States and Societies,’ University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- 2011 “What are the strengths and limits of using survey data to examine participation in everyday violence?” Safety and Violence Initiative Colloquium, University of Cape Town
- 2010 “Revolutionary Restraint? Marxism-Leninism and Violence Against Civilians in Mozambique and Angola.” IPRI/LSE IDEAS Working Seminar, Lisbon, Portugal

**PUBLIC WRITING**

- 2019 “Authoritarian Resilience: Why Bouteflika and Bashir Fell, but Ortega Remains,” *Political Violence @ a Glance*, 30 April.
- 2019 “Flying Blind in Crisis Time: The US Strategic and Human Foreign Policy Deficit,” *Duck of Minerva*, 28 February.
- 2019 “Resisting Democratic Erosion in Latin America and Beyond,” *Political Violence @ a Glance*, 15 January. Republished by LAC Perspectivas (Korbel School Latin America Center).
- 2018 “Aid and Diplomacy, Not Tear Gas: How to Address the Central American Migrant Crisis,” *Duck of Minerva*, 27 November. Republished by *The Big Q* (New Zealand)
- 2018 “Peacekeeping’s Perverse Effects: Bolsonaro and Brazil’s Remilitarized Politics,” *Duck of Minerva*, 16 October
- 2018 “Repression, Regime Consolidation, and Latin America’s Authoritarian (Re)Turn,” *Political Violence @ a Glance*, 25 September

- 2018 “In massive street protests, Nicaraguans are using Ortega’s revolutionary symbols against him,” *The Washington Post* Monkey Cage, 14 May (with Yerling Aguilera and Eric Mosinger)
- 2018 “A New Nicaraguan Revolution? Understanding This Week’s Popular Protests” *Political Violence @ a Glance*, 3 May (with Eric Mosinger)”
- 2018 “Nicaragua protests threaten an authoritarian regime that looked like it might never fall,” *The Conversation*, 2 May (with Eric Mosinger). Republished by PRI, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Pacific Standard*, and *San Antonio News-Express*
- 2016 “Hurricane Mary” [on urban politics, informality, and government cleanup efforts in Monrovia, Liberia]. *Roads and Kingdoms*, 17 February
- 2015 “Fifty years ago today, American diplomats endorsed mass killings in Indonesia. Here’s what that means for today.” *The Washington Post* Monkey Cage, 2 December
- 2012 *Armed Violence: The Untold Story* (with Rashmi Thapa). Brussels: Handicap International, 62pp. (Data manager and analyst for full report and author of Colombia and Haiti chapters)

### **MEDIA APPEARANCES AND INTERVIEWS**

- 2019 Radio-Canada (3 May)
- 2018 BBC World News Today (3 June), France24 (17 July), *Gazeta do Povo* (Brazil, 27 July, 5 December)

### **FURTHER TRAINING**

- 2015 Bridging the Gap New Era Foreign Policy Conference, Washington, DC
- 2010 Olympia Summer Seminars/Microcon Summer School, Cycle B–Advanced Research Methods in Conflict-Affected Countries, Olympia, Greece

### **VISITING AFFILIATIONS**

- 2016 Makerere Institute of Social Research, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. January-June
- 2016 Centre for Basic Research, Kampala, Uganda. March-June
- 2011 Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Económico, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia. June-August
- 2009 Portuguese Directorate-General of Archives (DGARQ), Lisbon, Portugal. June-August

### **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

- Reviewer*: British Journal of Political Science, Civil Wars, Comparative Politics, Conflict Management and Peace Science, Foreign Policy Analysis, Genocide Studies International, International Studies Quarterly, International Security, Journal of Global Security Studies, Journal of Mixed Methods Research, Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Politics, Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African Politics, Palgrave-Macmillan, Public Administration Review, Third World Quarterly
- Panel discussion organizer*, “Latin America’s Democratic Decline and Possibilities for Resistance,” January 2019, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver
- Conference co-organizer*, “Research in Conflict Zones: The Untold Practices, Methods, and Ethics of Fieldwork,” February 2017, Harvard Kennedy School
- Conference panel organizer*, APSA Annual Meeting, 2016, 2018, 2019 (scheduled); European Conference on African Studies, 2017; ISA Annual Convention, 2015 (2x), 2018, 2019
- Conference panel discussant*, APSA Annual Meeting 2018

*Coordinator*, Harvard Political Violence Workshop, 2013–15; Harvard Comparative Politics Speaker Series, 2014-15

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

*Consultant*, Freedom House, Africa civil liberties and press freedom analyst, 2013-2018

*Research Assistant*, Steven Levitsky, Harvard University & Lucan Way, University of Toronto, 2013-15

*Consultant*, Handicap International, project on impacts of armed violence, 2011-12

*Researcher*, Centre for Social Science Research, University of Cape Town, 2010–11

*Research Assistant*, Elisabeth Jean Wood, Yale University, 2008-10

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Political Science Association, International Studies Association, African Studies Association, Latin American Studies Association

### **REFERENCES**

#### **Steven Levitsky**

Professor  
Department of Government  
Harvard University

#### **Robert H. Bates**

Professor Emeritus  
Department of Government  
Harvard University

#### **Fotini Christia**

Associate Professor  
Department of Political Science  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

#### **Elisabeth Jean Wood**

Professor  
Department of Political Science  
Yale University