

**PSCI 7123: CIVIL WAR
ONLINE
T 9:10AM - 11:40AM
SPRING 2021**

Professor: Megan Shannon

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Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:15am - 11:45am in my Zoom personal meeting room (link available on Canvas)

Course Description

Why do people use violence to pursue political goals? When asked this question, most people give straightforward answers such as “people will always fight for their religion.” But consider this: violence is costly, it often does not result in the desired political outcome, and people have a number of choices besides violence for pursuing their political goals. Further, why do states respond violently to dissident movements? This is particularly puzzling once we think about the costs of repression relative to political concessions. The unfortunate result of political violence is often civil war, which imposes enormous political, monetary, and human costs. Why can’t actors reach the outcome they will inevitably reach after a war ends, but without the pain and suffering of fighting?

This class explores the conditions under which political actors use violence, and the conditions that lead to civil war. We approach questions of conflict behavior and political violence from the perspective of strategic choice. Strategic choice explains conflict not as an accident, but as the deliberate result of choices by actors. The choice of war is not made because actors are inherently aggressive and war-mongering. Actors want to reach their preferred outcome without fighting, but various obstacles stand in the way. We discover how those obstacles render actors unable to reach and commit to peaceful agreements.

Studying conflict and violence not only tells us a great deal about global politics, it provides insight into the human condition. While we may believe that violence is part of being human, strategic choice tells us that human interests alone do not lead to conflict. It takes two sides to make a war. Understanding how conflict results from human interaction allows us to begin to devise the right prescriptions and policies to produce peace. We study various types of international intervention to get a sense of if and how outside actors can work to mitigate the bargaining obstacles behind political violence and civil conflict.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, successful students will be able to:

- (1) Define and identify the characteristics of civil war and civil violence
- (2) Describe the conditions most conducive to civil war
- (3) Analyze the influence of international institutions on civil war
- (4) Formulate puzzles in the study of civil war and social science
- (5) Create a research design to study a puzzle surrounding civil war

Commitment to Inclusivity

The University of Colorado is a learning community that seeks to understand the world around us. CU cannot achieve those goals without the engagement of its undergraduate students. You have unique gifts, skills, and insights that advance our search for truth and knowledge. That means your participation in this class is valuable. My commitment is to make sure that you feel included enough in our class community to participate. If you feel your differences may isolate you from CU's community or if you need specific accommodations, please speak with me early in the semester about what we can do together to help you engage in our class and the CU community. This class stresses active learning and we have a great deal of discussion in small groups and as a class.

Course Materials

- All readings will either be posted to Canvas or are available from CU libraries. In addition, you may want to read *What Do We Know About Civil Wars?* 2016. ed. by T. David Mason and Sara Mitchell. ISBN:978-1-4422-4225-8. This is available as an ebook on reserve from the library (unlimited users can access the reserve ebook). It has not been assigned in any given week, but it has chapters that are great primers for the topics we are discussing in class.

Grades

Puzzle Paper, 10%

Students will write a short paper that identifies a puzzle in the area of political violence and civil conflict. You'll explain why you have identified a puzzle, not merely a question. You will then propose a theory that answers the puzzle, specify a testable hypothesis, and develop a way to test the hypothesis. You'll also identify relevant scholarly literature to help establish the puzzle and the theory. Ideally, the puzzle paper will be expanded into a research design. The puzzle paper should be no more than four pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1" margins, page numbers. It can be written and turned in for a grade at any point during the semester, but at least one attempt at the puzzle paper must be turned in by Tuesday, February 23. I am happy to meet with you to discuss if and how the puzzle paper can be improved. Final puzzle papers are due Tuesday, April 20. **Required reading:** Zinnes, Dina. "Three Puzzles In Search of a Researcher: Presidential Address." *International Studies Quarterly* 24(3):315-342.

Two Peer Reviews, 20%

Notice on the syllabus that a number of articles are marked with a star*. Choose two of these articles and write a review of each. Your review will be written as if you are reviewing the paper for a professional journal. This entails a short summary as well as a critical analysis of the paper. You may also suggest some alternative ways the author could test the theory, or some extensions of the existing empirical tests. Ultimately, offer a recommendation of publish as is, publish with minor revisions, revise and resubmit, or reject. Each article review should be at least three pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1" margins, page numbers. The review must be turned in the same day the article is discussed in class. **Required reading:** Miller, E., Pevehouse, J., Tingley, D., Rogowski, R., and Wilson, R. 2013. "How to Be a Peer Reviewer: a Guide for Recent and Soon-to-Be Ph.D.'s." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 46(1).

Case Exploration and Presentation, 10%

To help develop some contextual knowledge, you will study a specific case within civil conflict and political violence. This might be an overall conflict, the government of a state, a rebel group, a pro-government militia, a terrorist organization, or a civilian organization. You will

then relate this case to an academic theory or reading that we have discussed in seminar this semester. To start thinking about this, you might consult some of the readings suggested under ‘Additional’ for each week. You may also find other pieces on your own. Ideally, you will consult two or three sources, and they can be news items, academic readings, podcasts, etc. Be creative. Write a paper of no more than four pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, 1” margin paper describing how the case illustrates or relates to what we have studied so far. You will give a short presentation on the case in seminar on Tuesday, March 30.

Attendance and Participation, 20%

Attendance is expected. To function as a class, your oral participation is needed. This includes asking good questions and offering sound critical analysis to further the class discussion. Further, students should comment on each other’s discussion questions on Canvas to earn participation credit.

Discussion Questions, 10%

To engage with the readings, you will write four discussion questions and **post them to Canvas each week before 11:59pm on Sunday**, beginning with the class readings for Week 2. The questions should be broad and should stimulate discussion across several or all of the readings.

Final Research Design, 30%

As a final project for the class, you will write a research design. It can be an extension of your puzzle paper, or it may be an entirely different idea. The research design should be 12-15 pages in length. It should a) clearly state a research question, b) review and synthesize the relevant literature, c) develop a theory to answer the question and derive testable hypotheses, and d) identify data, case studies, or develop another empirical test of the hypotheses. The research design may not replicate any work that you have previously completed for a graduate seminar, though I’m happy to talk with you if you have a way you’d like to modify or expand previous work. The research design must be turned in to Canvas by Wednesday, May 5th at 3:00pm.

Assignment	My Due Date	Weight	Completed
Peer Review One	student choice	10%	
Peer Review Two	student choice	10%	
Puzzle Paper (First Draft)	February 23		
Puzzle Paper (Final Draft)	April 20	10%	
Case Presentation	March 30	10%	
Discussion Questions	By 11:59pm every Sunday	10%	
Final Research Design	Wednesday May 5th, 3:00pm	30%	

Grade Scale

The grading scale for the course is as follows. Grades ending in .5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole percentage point:

	B+ 89 - 87	C+ 79 - 77
A 93 - 100	B 86 - 83	C 76 - 73
A- 92 - 90	B- 82 - 80	C- 72 - 70

Academic Integrity

Both you and I are responsible for upholding academic integrity. By my writing this syllabus, and by your enrolling in this course, we agree to uphold the CU Academic Honor Pledge, which

says:

As citizens of an academic community of trust, CU-Boulder faculty and students do not lie or cheat whether they are on campus or acting as representatives of the university in surrounding communities. Neither should they suffer by the dishonest acts of others. Honor is about academic integrity, moral and ethical conduct, and pride of membership in a community that values academic achievement and individual responsibility. Cultivating honor lays in the foundation for lifelong integrity, developing in each of us the courage and insight to make difficult choices and accept responsibility for actions and their consequences, even at personal cost.

All incidents of academic misconduct should be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu and 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion).” Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://honorcode.colorado.edu>.

Attendance and Religious Observances

Campus policy requires that faculty deal reasonably with students who, because of religious obligations, will miss scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please discuss with me in advance if you will miss class because of a religious obligation.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veterans status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, ”Protected Classes” refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity>.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

The schedule of readings may be modified as needed. For the most part, you should search for the readings on Google scholar or through the library's website.

Week 1: Puzzles and Practices in the Study of International Relations and Civil Conflict

January 19

Required:

- Zinnes, Dina. "Three Puzzles In Search of a Researcher: Presidential Address." *International Studies Quarterly* 24(3):315-342.

Week 2: What is Civil War?

January 26

Required:

- Sambanis, N. 2004. What is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6):814-858.
- Miller, E., Pevehouse, J., Tingley, D., Rogowski, R., and Wilson, R. 2013. "How to be a peer reviewer: a guide for recent and soon-to-be Ph.D.'s." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 46(1).
- Pettersson, Therese and Kristine Eck. 2018. "Organized Violence, 1989-2017." *Journal of Peace Research* 55(4).
- Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel. 2010. "Civil War." *Journal of Economic Literature* 48(1):3-57.

Additional:

- Goldstein, Joshua. 2012. *Winning the War on War*, Chapter 9.
- Spend some time looking at the Uppsala Conflict Data Program website.

Week 3: Greed, Grievance, and the State Response

February 2

Required:

- Fearon, James and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97(1):75-90.*
- Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56(4): 563-595.
- Young, Joseph. 2013. "Repression, Dissent, and the Onset of Civil War." *Political Research Quarterly* 66(3):516-532.*
- Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher. 2011. "Divide and Conquer or Divide and Concede: How Do States Respond to Internally Divided Separatists?" *American Political Science Review* 105(2):275-297.*

Additional:

- Tilly, Charles. 2003. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge University Press.
- Weber, Max. *Politics as a Vocation*. <http://anthropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Weber-Politics-as-a-Vocation.pdf>
- Davenport, Christian. 2007. "State Repression and Political Order." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10:1-23.
- Ritter, Emily Hencken and Courtenay R. Conrad. 2015. "Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression."

Week 4: Ethnic Interests

February 9

Required:

- Nicholas Sambanis. 2001. Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Wars Have the Same Causes?: A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry (Part 1), *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(3):259-282.
- Mueller, John. "The Banality of Ethnic War." *International Security* 25(1):42-70.
- Sambanis, Nicholas and Moses Shayo. 2013. "Social Identification and Ethnic Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 107(2):294-325.*
- Larson, Jennifer M. and Janet I. Lewis. 2018. "Rumors, Kinship Networks, and Rebel Group Formation." *International Organization*.*

Additional:

- Fearon, James, and David Laitin. 2000. Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity. *International Organization* 54(4): 845-877.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. 2010. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 62(1):871-119.
- Harris, Adam S. and Michael G. Findley. 2013. "Is Ethnicity Identifiable? Evidence from an Experiment in South Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- Lyall, Jason. 2010. "Are Co-Ethnics More Effective Counter-Insurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War." *American Political Science Review* 104(1):120.

Week 5: Strategic Choice and Bargaining Models of War

February 16

Required:

- Fearon, James. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49:379-414.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining Failures and Civil War." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 243-261.
- Stathis N. Kalyvas. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 6-7.

Additional:

- Fearon and Wendt. Rationalism v Constructivism: A Skeptical View.
- Muthoo, Abhinay. 2000. A Non-Technical Introduction to Bargaining. *World Economics* 1(2): 145-166.
- Fearon, James D. 2004. "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41(3):275-301.
- Fearon, James. 2013. Obstacles to Ending Syria's Civil War. *Foreign Policy*.
- Lynch, Marc. 2013. The Political Science of Syria's War. *Foreign Policy*.
- Fisher, Max. October 23, 2013. "Political Science Says Syria's Civil War Will Probably Last Another Decade." *Washington Post*.

Week 6: Collective Action and Political Violence

February 23

Required:

- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*, Ch 1 and 8. (I will scan and post to the class Canvas site).
- Humphreys, Maccartan and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2):436-455.*

- Rubin, Michael. 2020. "Rebel Territorial Control and Civilian Collective Action in Civil Wars: Evidence from the Communist Insurgency in the Philippines." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 64(2).*

Additional:

- Kalyvas, Stathis and Matthew Kocher. 2007. "How Free is Free Riding in Civil Wars?" *World Politics* 59(2):177-216.

Week 7: Violence Against Civilians

March 2

Required:

- Aydin, Aysegul and Cem Emrence. 2015. *Zones of Rebellion: Kurdish Insurgents and the Turkish State*. Cornell University Press. Chapters 1-3. Available from CU libraries as an ebook.
- Cohen, Dara Kay. "Explaining Rape During Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980-2009)." *American Political Science Review* 107(3):461-477.*
- Schwartz, R. A. and Straus, S. 2018. "What drives violence against civilians in civil war? Evidence from Guatemalas conflict archives." *Journal of Peace Research*, 55(2), 222-235. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343317749272>

Additional:

- Balcells, Laia. 2017. *The Politics of Violence During Civil War*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fjelde, Hanne and Lisa Hultman. 2013. "Weakening the Enemy: A Disaggregated Study of Violence Against Civilians in Africa."
- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2018. "Rape as a Practice of War: Toward a Typology of Political Violence." *Politics and Society*.
- Podcast: "What Happened at Dos Erres?" *This American Life*.

Week 8: Institutions, International Law, and Political Violence

March 9

Required:

- Jo, Hyeran. 2015. *Compliant Rebels: Rebel Groups and International Law in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-5. (On reserve at the library).

Additional:

- Jo, Hyeran, and Beth A. Simmons. 2016. "Can the International Criminal Court Deter Atrocity?" *International Organization* 70(3): 443-475. (read the article and the corrigendum).
- Stanton, Jessica. 2016. *Violence and Restraint in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fazal, Tanisha. 2018. *Wars of Law: Unintended Consequences in the Regulation of Armed Conflict*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Week 9: Settlement of Civil Wars

March 16

Required:

- Walter, Barbara. 1997. "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement." *International Organization* 51(3):335-364.

- Mattes, Michaela and Burcu Savun. 2010. "Information, Agreement Design, and the Durability of Civil War Settlements." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2):511-524.*
- Lake, Milli. 2017. "Building the Rule of War: Post-Conflict Institutions and the Micro-Dynamics of Conflict in Eastern DR Congo." *International Organization* 71(2):281-315.*
- Howard, Lise Morje and Alexandra Stark. "How Civil Wars End: The International System, Norms, and the Role of External Actors." *International Security* 42(3):127-171.

Additional:

- Hartzell, Caroline. 1999. "Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements of Intra-State Wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43(1).
- Hoddie, Matthew, and Caroline Hartzell. 2003. "Civil War Settlements and the Implementation of Military Power-Sharing Agreements." *Journal of Peace Research* 40(3).
- Matanock, Aila and Natalia Garbiras Diaz. August 18, 2016. "Could Colombia's Peace Process Still Be Derailed?" *Political Violence at a Glance* blog post.

Week 10: Work on Case Discussions

March 23

- You will choose a set of 2-3 related readings or other media dealing with a specific case of political violence and civil conflict.

Week 11: Present Case Discussions

March 30

- Each student gives a ten minute presentation on their case.

Week 12: The Effects of Intervention on Political Violence and Civil Conflict

April 6

Required:

- Kydd, Andrew H. and Scott Straus. 2013. "The Road to Hell? Third-Party Intervention to Prevent Atrocities." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3):673-684.
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. 2014. "Beyond Keeping Peace: United Nations Effectiveness in the Midst of Fighting." *American Political Science Review* 108(4): 737-753.*
- DeMeritt, Jacqueline. 2015. "Delegating Death: Military Intervention and Government Killing." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59(3):428-454.*
- Wood, Reed M. and Christopher Sullivan. 2015. "Doing Harm by Doing Good? The Negative Externalities of Humanitarian Aid Provision During Civil Conflict."*

Additional:

What Drives Intervention?

- Gent, Stephen E. 2007. "Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Intervention." *Journal of Politics* 69(4):1089-1102.
- Aydin, Aysegul. 2012. *Foreign Powers and Intervention in Armed Conflicts*. Ch 6. (All chapters available online from CU Libraries).

More on the Effects of Intervention

- Specia and O'Neill. July 13, 2016. "What Can the United Nations Do When Its Troops Can't, or Won't, Protect Civilians?" *New York Times*.
- Kuperman, Alan J. 2008. "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans." *International Studies Quarterly* 52(1):49-80.
- Kuperman, Alan J. 2013. "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign." *International Security* 38(1):105-136.

- Narang, Neil. 2015. Assisting Uncertainty: How Humanitarian Aid Can Inadvertently Prolong Civil War. *International Studies Quarterly* 59(1):184-195.
- Wood, Reed and Emily Molfino. 2016. "Aiding Victims, Abetting Violence: The Influence of Humanitarian Aid on Violence Patterns in Civil Conflict." *Journal of Global Security Studies* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogw007>

Week 13: Civilian Protection

April 13

Required:

- Prins, Brandon and Anup Phayal. 2020. "Deploying to Protect: The Effect of Military Peacekeeping Deployments on Violence Against Civilians." *International Peacekeeping* (2):311-336.*
- Fjelde, Hanne, Lisa Hultman, and Desiree Nilsson. 2019. "Protection Through Presence: UN Peacekeeping and the Costs of Targeting Civilians." *International Organization*. 73(1):103-131.*
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2013. Protecting Civilians in Civil War: The Institution of the ATCC in Colombia. *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3):351-367.*
- Stephan, Maria and Erica Chenoweth. 2008. Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict. *International Security* 33(1):7-44.*

Additional:

- Gallagher-Cunningham, Kathleen. 2013. "Understanding Strategic Choice: The Determinants of Civil War and Nonviolent Campaign in Self-Determination Disputes. *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 291-304.
- Hultman, Lisa. 2013. UN Peace Operations and Protection of Civilians: Cheap Talk or Norm Implementation? *Journal of Peace Research* 50(1): 59-73.
- Carpenter, Charli R. 2005. Women, Children, and Other Vulnerable Groups: Gender, Strategic Frames and the Protection of Civilians as a Transformational Issue. *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (2): 295-334.

Week 14: Reflecting on How We Study Political Violence

April 20

Required:

- Gohdes, Anita, and Megan Price. 2012. "First Things First Assessing Data Quality before Model Quality." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- Lacina, Bethany, and Nils Petter Gleditsch. 2013. "The Waning of War is Real A Response to Gohdes and Price." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57(6): 1109-1127.
- Balcells, Laia and Christopher Sullivan. 2018. "New Findings from Conflict Archives: An Introduction and Methodological Framework." *Journal of Peace Research*.
- Weidmann, Nils. 2016. "A Closer Look at Reporting Bias in Conflict Event Data." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(1):206-218.

Additional:

- Price, Megan and Anita Gohdes. 2014. "Searching for Trends: Analyzing Patterns in Conflict Data." *Political Violence at a Glance*.
- Kadera, Kelly M. 2013. "The Social Underpinnings of Women's Worth in the Study of World Politics: Culture, Leader Emergence, and Coauthorship." *International Studies Perspectives*, doi: 10.1111/insp.12028
- Weber, Cynthia. 2016. "Queer intellectual curiosity as international relations method: Developing queer international relations theoretical and methodological frameworks." *International Studies Quarterly* 60(1):11-23.

- Davenport, Christian. April 10, 2013. “Researching While Black: Why Conflict Research Needs More African Americans (Maybe).” Political Violence at a Glance blog post.
- Walter, Maggie and Chris Andersen. Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Research Methodology.

Week 15: Conflict Behavior and Political Violence Workshop

April 27

- Students will present puzzle papers or research designs

Additional suggested readings:

- Wendy Pearlman, Narratives of Fear in Syria. *Perspectives on Politics* 14(1):21-37.
- Williams, Paul R., J. Trevor Ulbrick, and Jonathan Worboys. 2012. Preventing Mass Atrocity Crimes: The Responsibility to Protect and the Syria Crisis. *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* Vol. 45, Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2174768>
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2013. Protecting Civilians in Civil War: The Institution of the ATCC in Colombia. *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3):351-367.
- Additional chapters in Laia Balcells’s book
- Case study chapters from Jessica Stanton’s book