
Get off my lawn:
Territorial civil wars and subsequent social intolerance in the public

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Abstract
It is argued that threat related to territorial civil wars generates negative interpersonal attitudes that are both more intense and more broadly oriented than previously thought. That is, civil wars fought over issues of autonomy or secession foment social intolerance, a broad orientation that extends well beyond members of former enemy groups to an aversion to interpersonal differences in general. The expectation that the issue the civil war is fought over is consequential is tested with data from the World Values Survey and the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset. The empirical domain consists of over 130,000 individuals across 123 surveys in 69 countries over the 1989–2008 period. Results from multilevel models indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between domestic territorial conflicts and subsequent social intolerance. Substantively, territorial civil wars have a far greater impact on individuals’ attitudes than do ‘standard’ correlates of social intolerance that are well established in the literature. Further, non-territorial civil war is unrelated to attitudes of social intolerance. Empirical results are robust to several model specifications and are not a mere artifact of the potential reverse relationship, whereby intolerant societies are (erroneously) presumed to be at a higher risk of civil wars in the first place. The findings have implications for the understanding of civil war resolution, civil war reoccurrence, and the contextual correlates of interpersonal intolerance.

Keywords: civil war, social tolerance, territory, armed conflict

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Macro-level consequences of civil wars (e.g. setbacks in economic and political development, education, and public health) are well established in the literature (Blattman & Miguel, 2010; Collier et al., 2003; Ghobarah, Huth & Russett, 2003; Murdoch & Sandler, 2004; Murray et al., 2002). Yet, less is known about how a past civil war experience influences individual-level attitudes. Although one can naturally speculate that the affected population would be left with a sense of fear, threat, and enmity – and countless civil war survivor testimonies reported in the media support this – a systematically-derived basis for making assertions about post-conflict individual attitudes is only starting to emerge. For example, Bakke, O'Loughlin & Ward (2009) report that individuals targeted in fighting in the North Caucasus are less likely to forgive people of other nationalities for the violence, while Hutchison (2014) shows that the civil war-related threat leads individuals to wish to deny basic civil liberties to perceived enemies – that is, to become politically intolerant.

Our study furthers this nascent research along two lines. First, we systematically investigate the consequences of civil wars for social intolerance1 in the public. We argue that civil wars have the potential to activate individual-level attitudes that go well beyond the negative orientations toward the opposing battlefield group, such as the denial of basic civil liberties. Instead, these attitudes are much more far-reaching and intense, leading to a broad social intolerance that encompasses an array of societal groups. Second, when it comes to social intolerance, we argue that what matters is the issue over which the civil war is fought. In particular, issues of territorial control have long been known to be especially salient and inflammatory (Vasquez, 1993). This is in large part due to people’s identities tending to be wrapped up in the land they (want to) occupy (Diehl, 1999; Gottman, 1973; Sack, 1986; Vasquez, 1993). So an attack on land that one perceives as rightfully belonging to his/her group is perceived as a direct threat to the epitome of one’s identity. We thus

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1 Social intolerance is a general tendency to see group differences as undesirable (Hurwitz & Peffley 1992) and a desire to avoid contact and interpersonal relations (e.g. being neighbors) with individuals who constitute non-mainstream social groups (Kirchner et al., 2011: 205; Leite Viegas, 2007: 110).
focus on civil wars fought over secessions or autonomy, and argue that the threat emerging from such territorial civil wars is what activates attitudes of social intolerance.

Utilizing data from 123 surveys from the World Values Survey (2012) in the 1989–2008 period, the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (Themnér & Wallensteen, 2014; Gleditsch et al., 2002) and multi-level modeling techniques linking individual- and state-level characteristics, we obtain strong and robust empirical support for the above assertions. Further, follow-up tests indicate that the findings are not a function of the particular way in which we operationalize armed conflict and social intolerance, nor of a potential reverse relationship, whereby intolerant societies are simply more likely to experience civil war; and the relationship between territorial civil conflict and social intolerance is stronger among individuals who are particularly sensitive to ingroup threat, buttressing our identification of threat as the catalyst of the relationship.

Among other implications, our findings provide a novel micro-level explanation as to why it may be difficult for post-civil war societies to address the macro-level problems identified in the opening paragraph. Given that the fighting activates broadly-based attitudes of social intolerance, having the population ‘get over it,’ move on beyond the conflict, and work together across various societal lines is, to say the least, difficult. Furthermore, our study provides an innovative explanation for combatant group splintering, an important problem that often frustrates peacemaking efforts (e.g. Bakke, Cunningham & Seymour, 2012; Cunningham, 2006; Fjelde & Nilsson, 2012). Rather than being motivated by strategic or rational concerns alone, splintering could also be an effect of changing attitudes and perceptions toward one’s brothers in arms; we return to this issue below.

From the standpoint of the public attitudes research, our study represents the first cross-national, individual-level examination to link civil wars to social intolerance. We engage social identity theory and build on ethnic competition and realistic conflict theories, both of which see intolerance as a result of perceived threat. Beyond demonstrating a robust link between territorial
civil war and social intolerance, we also find that the effects of these wars quite convincingly overshadow the impacts of established correlates of social intolerance (religiosity, ideology, education, democracy, and development).

In sum, our study offers important qualifiers to conventional wisdom that may expect that (1) civil wars increase negative attitudes toward (former) enemies and (2) that such attitudes are not altogether surprising since they probably contributed to the civil war onset in the first place. Along point (1), we show that the negative post-civil war attitudes (a) are not simple dislikes but actually form a social intolerance that extends beyond (former) enemy groups to the society broadly; and (b) stem from only particular types of civil wars (those fought over territorial issues) and not others (non-territorial civil wars). Concerning issue (2), our follow-up analyses clearly show that territorial civil wars have an independent impact on social intolerance; that is, they are an important causal variable in the mechanism that activates socially intolerant attitudes.

Below, we discuss how threat generates (social) intolerance in the public and argue that civil war generates threat when it is fought over territory. Presentations of the research design, findings, and their implications follow. Concluding remarks close the article.

**Threat and intolerance**

A sizeable literature connects intergroup conflict to intolerant attitudes, and most of these connections are grounded in the ethnic competition and realistic group conflict theories. Ethnic competition theory argues cultural threat also foments anti-outgroup sentiment. The presence of an outgroup may pose a threat to a homogeneous cultural status quo by introducing competition over customs, values, and identity (Huntington, 2004; Ivarsflaten, 2005; Schneider, 2008; Zolberg & Woon, 1999), and repeated involuntary interaction with an outgroup under conditions of high anxiety and threat is likely to heighten intergroup tension (Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Wilder &
Shapiro, 1989). Arguing from a material perspective, realistic group conflict theory posits that intergroup conflict and anti-outgroup sentiment result from competition over limited resources (Sherif, 1966; Sherif et al., 1961); a threat to basic needs often results in aggression and intolerant attitudes (e.g. Shamir & Sagiv-Schifter, 2006).

Threat is most commonly – and robustly – linked to political intolerance, which is a disinclination to extend civil liberties to individuals or groups that one opposes (Sullivan, Piereson & Marcus, 1979). Expressions of political intolerance are likely to be cognitively processed and, therefore, targeted toward offending groups. For example, Sullivan, Piereson & Marcus (1982) find that, when individuals feel threatened by political enemies, they are less likely to agree to extend such enemies rights. Both economically- and culturally-induced threats are linked to political intolerance (e.g. Davis, 2007; Merolla & Zechmeister, 2009), a finding extended to threats produced by international militarized conflicts (Hutchison & Gibler, 2007; see also Gibler, Hutchison & Miller, 2012) and civil wars (Hutchison, 2014).

Social identity theory further posits that ingroup attachments, and the emotional significance of these attachments, are linked to behavior and attitudes toward outgroups (e.g. Tajfel, 1982). For example, Brewer (2001) notes that, while social grouping and ingroup positivity are ubiquitous in human societies, outgroup hostility requires ‘additional social-structural and motivational conditions that are not inherent in the process of group formation’ (Brewer, 2001: 19), and feelings of threat are prominent among these conditions. Indeed, Gibson & Gouws (2000) find that those who see the most need for group solidarity are most likely to feel threatened by their political enemies – and it is this threat that engenders political intolerance.

Threat also has the potential to alter individuals’ attitudes towards groups that are not the actual sources of the threat. Threat from a political event, for example a civil war, can lead to intolerance beyond the political realm, to where individuals become less accepting of anyone
perceived as an ‘other’. This is because, independent of its source, threat can engender a broad intolerance by reinforcing or magnifying existing prejudices, stereotypes, and worldviews (e.g. Sullivan & Hendriks, 2009). For example, Onraet & Van Hiel (2013) find that prejudice toward outgroups in the Netherlands results from perceived economic and terrorist threat, while Feldman & Stenner (1997) find that, in the USA, threats including perceived alienation from powerful political actors, fear of unemployment, and negative assessments of the national economy can foment anti-outgroup sentiment. Further, Arwine & Mayer (2014) show that threat stemming from riots and high profile assassinations correlates with negative opinions of outgroups in the European Union.

Thus, existing negative orientations toward a range of groups can be ‘activated’ by perceived threats. Beyond ‘punishing’ outgroups through a call for the removal of their civil liberties (i.e. political intolerance), individuals who are living in the aftermath of a recent civil war may, on average, be indiscriminately less accepting of outgroups, regardless of such groups’ conflict involvement. That is, we expect that threat from conflicts can lead to social intolerance, a general non-acceptance of individuals who constitute outgroups (Kirchner, Freitag & Rapp, 2011: 205; Leite Viegas, 2007: 110) and a tendency to see group differences as undesirable (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1992).

Although our argument that civil war-induced threat can provoke negative attitudes that will not stop at political intolerance – but will extend to the more general attitude of social intolerance – may seem intuitive, it is by no means a settled issue. Sullivan et al. (1982) and Gibson (2006) demonstrate that political and social intolerance are conceptually and empirically distinct. In fact, Gibson reports correlations between political intolerance and social intolerance of only 0.08 and 0.03. Further, the paths through which threat causes the two types of intolerance are dissimilar. While threat can induce political intolerance by making one resentful or hostile toward an opposing group, it can induce social intolerance by reinforcing, or even amplifying, existing anti-outgroup sentiment. And, while it may seem obvious that a threat from a war would engender political
intolerance, our analysis will help to examine, for the first time, whether social intolerance is spurred by civil wars.

Civil wars, territory, and threat

Civil wars have the potential to generate the threat of physical harm for individuals close to the frontlines. Linking this observation with the scholarship on intolerance, terror management theory indicates that acceptance of otherness tends to be lower among individuals who are reminded of their own mortality, and, such intolerance is not confined only toward groups thought to have generated the threat (Burke, Martens & Faucher, 2010; Greenberg et al., 1992).

Moreover, the above theoretical views suggest that the remainder of the population, including those far away from conflict hotspots, are not immune to the fighting’s effects. Social intolerance is particularly likely in response to a threat to societal homogeneity and group unity (Blumer, 1958; Quillian, 1995; Stenner, 2005). And when group unity and cohesion are threatened, ostensibly all members of the group are affected regardless of whether they are physically proximate to the source of the threat (e.g. civil war-related fighting). In fact, through an experimental analysis in Northern Ireland, Schmid & Muldoon (forthcoming) show that both direct and indirect exposure to political violence can heighten perceptions of intergroup threat. Further, threats to group unity are particularly pronounced when they spawn from internal actors – those who are ostensibly supposed to be a 'part of the group' (e.g. Simmel, 1922 [1955]).

An application of ethnic competition and realistic group conflict theories to civil war further points toward subsequent increases in social intolerance. Civil wars introduce inter-group competition and its outcome (i.e. which side wins) may well have a bearing on survival of the customs, values, and identity of the losing side. The high stakes therefore engender much anxiety over whether one will be forced to change who he or she is, which, by ethnic competition theory, is
a recipe for social intolerance (Huntington, 2004; Ivarsflaten, 2005; Schneider, 2008; Zolberg & Woon, 1999). Moreover, civil wars can be seen as an extreme form of competition over valuable resources (e.g. water, government, land, policy). And because humans tend to perceive valuable resources in zero-sum terms (Klare, 2001; Lonergan, 2001; see also Vasquez, 1993), the resource is then seen as inherently limited. Per realistic group conflict theory, these dynamics provoke feelings of aggression and of socially intolerant attitudes (Sherif, 1966; Sherif et al., 1961).

The above discussion suggests that individuals in societies that have recently experienced a civil war will be less tolerant of others. Furthermore, these negative attitudes will be diffused well beyond members of the opposing battlefield group. The conflict’s threat to societal harmony and unity – as well as to the preservation of one’s identity and access to valuable resources – will taint the attitudes toward all ‘others’ who are perceived as somehow different. The threat will thus foment broad social intolerance through a reinforcement of stereotypes and worldviews (Sullivan & Hendriks, 2009). Establishing empirical support for our first hypothesis (listed in Table I) will help determine whether these dynamics indeed hold despite some recent evidence that attitudes of reconciliation and fairness can be found in post-conflict societies (see Bakke, O’Loughlin & Ward, 2009; Whitt & Wilson, 2007).

Table I in here

Next, we further pinpoint the source of the threat that activates intolerant attitudes by taking particular note of civil war’s potential to threaten one’s identity. Civil wars fought over a variety of issues hold the potential to induce such threat. For instance, how a conflict over government control is resolved can have profound implications for the survival of a group culture, as one hostile group may come to dominate another as a result of the war. Nevertheless, we expect wars fought over territorial issues to have the most clear-cut and systematic impact on one’s sense of identity and,
consequently, his or her level of social intolerance. This argument rests on the research showing that, among the variety of issues over which conflicts have been fought, territory stands out as the most salient (Mitchell & Thies, 2011; Vasquez, 1993; Vasquez & Tir, 2010).

Vasquez (1993) notes the human tendency to define ourselves as territorial creatures, which is deeply ingrained in our collective genetic and/or cultural inheritance (as discussed in the sociobiological and evolutionary psychology literatures, e.g. Buss, 1995; Valzelli, 1981). Similarly, scholars such as Gottman (1973), Sack (1986), and Touval (1972) note that people become socialized toward, and emotionally attached to, territory they think of as belonging to them. The land becomes an integral part of their identity, ingrained in the national psyche.\(^2\) Disagreements over territorial control thus quickly turn into highly emotionally charged affairs where objective facts hold little sway. In fact, the territorial conflict literature argues that the emotional connections and related proclivities feed into the perceptions of land as zero-sum, indivisible, and unsubstitutable, where compromises are seen as improbable, territorial disputes are thought of as irresolvable, and brute force is counted on as the only real means of obtaining (temporary) control (Hensel & Mitchell, 2005; Tir, 2006; Vasquez, 1993; Vasquez & Tir, 2010).

That is, among the many civil wars that have the capacity to threaten one’s sense of identity, those involving territorial control have a particularly pronounced capacity to systematically elicit feelings of threat, in part because territory invariably speaks directly to people’s conceptions of national identity. And these conceptions are clearly threatened when the country experiences a fight over secession or territorial autonomy – issues that could literally rip the country apart and thus undermine the very foundation of one’s identity. In response, territorial conflicts prompt great emotional investment, mobilization, and ingroup bonding; and this also means that the line between

\(^2\)This even holds in cases where there are weak objective claims to the contested land. Witness, for example, the fervor by which many ordinary Chinese respond to suggestions that Tibet is not legitimately Chinese territory. Or consider analogous attitudes in the Serbia–Kosovo and India-Kashmir situations.
the ingroup and ‘others’ becomes important when a society has experienced a civil war over the country’s territorial unity. Alternatively, although some civil wars without a territorial component can threaten one’s sense of identity, we do not expect them to represent as systematic of an affront. As noted below, non-territorial conflicts, in some cases at least, can provide avenues of compromise that do not necessarily pose a fundamental threat to one’s identity.

Furthermore, socially intolerant attitudes will likely heighten among individuals and groups beyond those directly involved in the fighting. Because issues of territorial autonomy and independence literally threaten to rip the country apart, they challenge the very foundations of society’s identity (i.e. create the feelings that one is losing their country and thus the core of their identity). In turn, territorial civil war’s implications reverberate far beyond the conflict hotspots and well beyond individuals or groups actually involved in the fighting. As an example of these far-reaching dynamics, consider the war in Yugoslavia. Its start in 1991, with the attempted secessions of Croatia and Slovenia, brought into question the very existence of the Yugoslav identity. The Serbs, who were the biggest advocates of Yugoslavia, felt particularly threatened by this, even though no fighting actually took place in Serbia.³ Consequences of increasingly intolerant attitudes among the Serbs are well known. By 1992, Serbian forces were on the forefront of particularly brutal actions in Bosnia that made ‘ethnic cleansing’ a household term and targeted anyone considered a non-Serb. But Serbian intolerance did not stop with the groups that were actually involved in the fighting. Various minorities faced ever-increasing discrimination (e.g. Hungarians, Slovaks, Roma, and Rusyns in Vojvodina), while others were cleansed by regular and irregular Serbian forces (e.g. Slovaks, Czechs, Hungarians, Roma in northern Croatia).⁴

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³ The Kosovo fighting started in the late 1990s.
⁴ The fighting and concomitant threat also triggered intolerant attitudes in Croatian and Bosniak populations, as evidenced by a surge in intolerance of minorities.
Although some civil wars fought over non-territorial issues (e.g. government control, resource-sharing, a particular policy) can threaten one’s sense of identity, they can also, at least theoretically, be resolved by accommodating various agendas within the extant territorial context of the society and country. Thus, the threat to one’s core sense of identity would be less systematically expressed when the expectation is that the society and country will survive, albeit after some modification. Social intolerance in the public would, accordingly, be less affected as well.

Still, given the close territory-identity connection noted above and that secessions are typically driven by desires of ethnic self-determination, one may inquire whether territory, as opposed to identity, is indeed the factor responsible for exacerbating the potential of identity-related conflicts to activate intolerant attitudes. While inter-ethnic conflicts can certainly challenge one’s sense of identity, their impact on social intolerance may well be less when they are not coupled with territorial demands. If all that the ethnic rebels seek are improvements to their status (e.g. representation, political inclusion, linguistic, economic, or political non-discrimination, addressing of structural inequalities, etc.; see for example, Buhaug, 2006; Cederman, Gleditsch & Buhaug, 2013; Denny & Walter, 2014), such accommodations can again be made within extant territorial context.

Therefore, non-territorial ethnic conflicts pose less of a systematic threat to societal unity and individuals’ sense of identity; consequently, their impact on social intolerance in the public is less consequential. We investigate this claim empirically in a follow up analysis below.

Our discussion leads to expectations that civil wars over territorial control will increase social intolerance and that they will do so more than non-territorial civil wars. These are expressed in hypothesis form in Table I.

**Research design**
For individual-level data, we turn to the Waves 2–5\textsuperscript{5} of the World Values Survey (WVS), which was developed to gauge public attitudes cross-nationally (World Values Survey, 2012). Data are available across 131,578 respondents from 123 surveys and 69 countries\textsuperscript{6} over the years 1989–2008. This delineates our empirical domain.\textsuperscript{7}

**Dependent variable: Social intolerance**

Social intolerance is a general tendency to see group differences as undesirable (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1992) and a tendency to not accept individuals who constitute (Kirchner, Freitag & Rapp, 2011: 205; Leite Viegas, 2007: 110). The WVS asks respondents whether they would be unwilling to live next to individuals belonging to various societal groups,\textsuperscript{8} and many studies employ these ‘neighbors’ questions to gauge social tolerance (e.g. Ciftci, 2010; Dunn, Orellana & Singh, 2009; Hadler, 2012; Inglehart et al., 2008; Kirchner, Freitag & Rapp, 2011; Norris, 2002: 158). We follow this approach by assessing respondents’ desirability of a broad range of groups as potential neighbors: people of a different race, religion, native language, and immigrants. To create our dependent variable, we create an additive index of the questions, which produces a reliability coefficient of 0.78.\textsuperscript{9} The scale ranges from 0 to 1, and larger values indicate greater degrees of social intolerance. Figure A1 in the online

\textsuperscript{5} Questions necessary to create our variables were not asked in Wave 1.

\textsuperscript{6} Figure A1 lists the countries covered by the surveys in our sample. One may observe that the African countries are underrepresented. Because we include variables for economic development, ethnic fractionalization, and education, ‘African-like’ empirical combinations are still present in our analyses. This positions us to generalize our findings to Africa and beyond.

\textsuperscript{7} Data limitations unfortunately prohibit us from linking individuals with sub-state groups they may belong to. We thus cannot investigate the effects of group-specific dynamics recent research (see Bakke et al., 2009; Bakke, O'Loughlin & Ward, 2009; Cederman & Gleditsch, 2009; Kalyvas, 2012) points to (e.g. minority-majority, initiator-target, conflict involvement, winner-loser). Yet were intolerance effects restricted to only specific inter-group settings, the findings would likely be biased away from finding a relationship with country-level data that we utilize.

\textsuperscript{8} Question wording: ‘On this list are various groups of people. Could you please mention any that you would not like to have as neighbors?’

\textsuperscript{9} A tetrachoric exploratory factor analysis revealed that the first factor accounted for 97\% of the common variance and 74\% of the total variance; responses to these items reflect a unidimensional social (in)tolerance. We assign a 1 to each respondent for each group mentioned and a 0 for each group not mentioned, add across the groups, and divide by the number of groups addressed by each respondent. Individuals who addressed at least two of the four groups are retained.
appendix displays the mean level of social intolerance across each country in our sample, while Table AI provides summary statistics.

To ensure that no single outgroup drives our results, we re-estimated the models with each group evaluated separately. Results, which are provided in Table AII, indicate that our findings hold across the groups.

**Key independent variable: Civil war**

The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset lists all instances of politically motivated violence resulting in at least 25 battle-related deaths within a country and within one year (Themnér & Wallensteen, 2014; Gleditsch et al., 2002). We initially restrict this list to civil wars, defined in the literature as those conflicts surpassing the threshold of 1,000 casualties. The UCDP/PRIO list also provides information on whether the conflict involved a rebel group’s desire for territorial autonomy or independence, which allows us to identify territorial civil wars. A country is recorded as having a civil war if the fighting took place within one year prior to the survey. As discussed below, examining a longer pre-survey time period, lowering the fatality threshold, or accounting for conflict duration, battle-related fatalities, population size, or non-territorial ethnic conflicts does not reveal notable differences vis-à-vis our main results.

**Control variables**

Because individual characteristics are linked to tolerance (e.g. Sullivan & Transue, 1999), we control for the following factors with WVS data.

*Age:* Older individuals tend to be more intolerant (e.g. Inglehart, 1990), and we control for a respondent’s age in years.
**Education**: Higher levels of education may increase tolerance through the development of cosmopolitan values (e.g. Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007). Following the WVS classification scheme, we code lower (1), middle (2), and upper (3) education levels.

**Female**: Females tend to hold less intolerant social attitudes than men (Howell & Day, 2000; Pratto, Stallworth & Sidanius, 1997), and we include a variable coded 1 for females and 0 for males.

**Religiosity**: Religiosity is positively associated with social intolerance, often independent of religions and denominations (Herek, 1987; McFarland, 1989). WVS survey asks respondents to classify religion as ‘not at all important,’ ‘not very important,’ ‘rather important,’ or ‘very important’ in their life. We assign values 1–4 to each response, respectively.

**Political ideology**: Rightwing ideology is routinely linked to social intolerance (e.g. McIntosh et al., 1995; Weldon, 2006). We use a self-reported 1 to 10 measure of left–right identification to measure ideology.

To account for contextual, macro-level drivers of social intolerance, we measure the following:

**Freedom**: Individuals in more democratic countries tend to express lower levels of intolerance (e.g. Inglehart et al., 2008; Marquart-Pyatt & Paxton, 2007). We use the Freedom House (2012) scores for civil liberties and political rights and sum them into a single variable.

**Wealth**: Modernization theory holds that citizens in wealthier countries are more accepting of outgroups (Inglehart et al., 2008; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). We measure a country’s per capita GDP with data from the (World Bank, 2012).

**Socioethnic fractionalization**: Social diversity increases an individual’s chances of routine interaction with a member of an outgroup, which, in the absence of competition and threat, can heighten
understanding and acceptance (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). We employ Alesina et al. (2003)’s index to measure fractionalization.\footnote{As an additional robustness check, we added population size as a control variable. There was no appreciable change to the (non)territorial civil war coefficients’ significance, while population was insignificant.}

**Method of analysis**

We estimate multilevel models, which take individuals (level 1) to be clustered within survey country-years (level 2). Multilevel models prevent the false inflation of the significance levels of the macro-level coefficients that could arise in a simple pooled regression analysis of clustered data (Steenbergen & Jones, 2002). In an empty model, $\rho$ is 0.144, which indicates that 14.4% of the variance in social intolerance is due to the country and year to which an individual was subject. The appendix provides further details of our technique.

**Findings and discussion**

Descriptive statistics lend preliminary support to our expectations. Mean social intolerance is approximately 0.16 across the individuals in our sample living in countries without recent civil war experience, 0.26 if there was a recent civil war, and 0.30 if the war was over territory. Turning to multilevel analyses, Model 1 in Table II demonstrates that individuals in countries that experienced a civil war in the prior year have social intolerance values that are an average of 0.06 units higher than those of their peers in countries that did not. A recent civil war increases average social intolerance levels from a Canadian level to a Peruvian level, for example (see Figure A1 of the appendix). This increase is roughly equivalent to a $15,000 decrease in per capita GDP or to a two-standard deviation decrease in our freedom measure. The effect is clearly non-trivial, providing support for our first hypothesis. Our finding also extends Hutchison’s (2014) insight that civil wars generate politically intolerant attitudes to the realm of social intolerance and show the strength of intolerant
attitudes, despite some recent research reporting that the qualities of reconciliation and fairness can be found in post-conflict populations (see Bakke, O'Loughlin & Ward, 2009; Whitt & Wilson, 2007).

Next, in Model 2, we differentiate civil wars according to whether they were territorial or non-territorial; countries without a recent civil war represent the omitted category. Results indicate that individuals in countries that experienced a territorial civil war in the prior year have, on average, social intolerance values 0.10 units higher than those of their peers in countries that did not experience a civil war, which supports our second hypothesis. This effect surpasses that of the other variables in our models, each of which is established as a powerful forerunner of intolerance in the extant literature. For example, the effect is equivalent to the impact of a decrease in per capita GDP of nearly $30,000 or a decrease in the freedom measure of about three standard deviations. Further, the expected difference in social intolerance between an individual with the leftmost political ideology and an individual with the rightmost ideology does not even amount to one-half of the effect of a recent territorial civil war. And, the difference in average social intolerance values of men and women is equivalent to a mere 1/25th of the impact of a territorial civil war.

Conversely, the non-territorial civil war coefficient is insignificant, and the territorial and non-territorial civil war coefficients are significantly different from one another (p < 0.01). This lends support to our third hypothesis and suggests that empirical support for the first hypothesis stems from territorial civil wars. We argued above that non-territorial conflicts (e.g. over government policy, representation, minority treatment) can be resolved within the context of existing country and society, by power sharing or changing laws for example. As such, they do not fundamentally threaten the core conceptions of identity that individuals hold. This is in stark difference to the perceived threat posed by territorial conflicts: by threatening to physically tear the
country and society apart, territorial fights challenge one’s core sense of identity and in turn trigger intolerant attitudes.

And, to further demonstrate that intolerant attitudes stem more from the agenda of breaking the country apart rather than from an agenda that simply seeks to improve ethnic minority rights within the context of the existing country, we added a non-territorial, ethnic-based civil war variable to Model 2. This was generated by subdividing the non-territorial civil wars into ethnic and non-ethnic categories. The non-territorial, ethnic-based civil war coefficient failed to achieve significance \( (p = 0.79) \), while the territorial civil war coefficient remained positive and significant \( (p < 0.01) \).

To ensure that our findings are not a result of our decision to examine solely the one-year period after a civil war, in Table AVI in the online appendix we employ a variable gauging the number of civil war years in the previous five years. The findings are consistent; (territorial) civil wars increase the level of social intolerance in the public.

To address the critique that civil wars represent the most extreme form of violence, in follow-up analyses presented in Models 3 and 4 of Table II we lower the conflict severity threshold from 1,000 to 25 battle-related fatalities. Results establish that even lower-level armed conflicts serve to foment social intolerance. Model 3 demonstrates that on average a person living in a country with a recent experience of an armed conflict has social intolerance value that is almost .06 units greater than a person from outside such a country. Model 4 reveals that individuals in countries that experienced territorial armed conflict have, on average, social intolerance values 0.09 units higher than those of their peers in countries that did not experience any armed conflicts. Non-territorial armed conflicts again have no effect on individuals’ levels of social intolerance, and the territorial vs. non-territorial coefficients remain significantly different from one another. The findings of Models 3 and 4 thus lend further support to our three hypotheses and lead to the important insight that
socially intolerant attitudes are driven more by the issue fought over (i.e. territory) than by the magnitude of violence.\footnote{Further reinforcing this observation, neither the battle-related fatalities (from Lacina & Gleditsch, 2005) or conflict duration variables were significant when added to our models. Analyses are available from the authors.}

While their impact is overshadowed by that of both the (territorial) civil war and domestic armed conflict variables, the effects of the control variables comport well with the literature (cf. Dunn, Orellana & Singh, 2009; Hadler, 2012; Kirchner, Freitag & Rapp, 2011; Norris, 2002: 158). All else being equal, older, religious, male, less educated, and ideologically rightward individuals tend to be more socially intolerant. At the survey level, social intolerance is lower in freer, richer, and socioethnically diverse countries.

\textit{Endogeneity concerns}

A critic may claim that the causal relationship runs in the reverse direction, with civil wars being more likely in socially intolerant societies. Though this assertion is intuitively appealing, it is also likely an oversimplification. While some civil wars may emerge in intolerant societies, a highly influential stream of civil war research argues that, at their root, many civil wars are materially motivated – that is based either on opportunities to seize valuable primary resources or to obtain political power (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Fearon & Laitin, 2003). Implications from this view would suggest that intolerance has little to do with civil war origins. Furthermore, in a rare systematic examination of pre-civil war individual attitudes, Dyrstad (2012) finds that pre-war intolerance-associated attitudes in Yugoslavia were high in only one of the four regions (Kosovo) that later experienced a civil war; pre-civil war intolerance was very low in Bosnia and Croatia and moderate in Macedonia.

While the above points strongly suggest a lack of a systematic relationship between intolerance and civil war onset, we nevertheless also deal with endogeneity concerns...
methodologically, by employing instrumental variables within our multilevel modeling framework. We employ oil exports, population size, and memberships in highly structured intergovernmental organizations as instruments. These variables are linked to civil wars (see Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Karreth & Tir, 2013), but there is little theoretical reason to believe that they also relate to intolerance. Our own analyses confirm this; each of the instruments strongly relates to civil war onset in first-stage regressions while the bivariate correlations between each of the instruments and social intolerance are all below $|r| = 0.13$. Re-estimating the models in Tables II and III with the instrumented territorial and non-territorial civil war variables in place of their observed counterparts continues to show that territorial civil wars engender social intolerance in the public, while non-territorial ones do not. See Table AIII in the online appendix for further details, diagnostics, and an example re-analysis of our main model, Model 2.

**Testing the threat mechanism**

Next, we better pinpoint the threat mechanism as the source of increased social intolerance. Because the WVS does not provide information on the perceived threat level of each individual surveyed, we turn to measures of ideology and authoritarianism; both right-wing individuals and those with authoritarian predispositions are known to be particularly sensitive to threat and more likely to exhibit punitive attitudes and intolerance when exposed to it (e.g. Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Jost et al., 2007; Stenner, 2005). Therefore, if (territorial) civil wars foster social intolerance by engendering threat, the relationship between recent territorial conflicts and intolerance should be most pronounced among those on the political right and among authoritarians. Adding interactions

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12 The temporal span of the WVS precludes a systematic comparison of attitudes before and after civil wars. See the online appendix.
13 Further, Sargan-Hansen tests of the null hypothesis that the excluded instruments are uncorrelated with the error term show that the associated test statistic never attains statistical significance across our eight models (the smallest associated $p$-value is 0.631), meaning we never reject the null of valid instruments. Further, we were able to reject null hypotheses of under-identification and weak instruments across the eight models. See the online appendix.
between conflict and ideology and authoritarian predispositions to the models in Tables II and III indicates that the relationship between social intolerance and territorial conflict is particularly strong for those on the political right and those with strong authoritarian predispositions; see also Dyrstad (2013), who finds that civil war can engender authoritarian values. Further details and examples of these analyses, re-estimations of our primary analysis in Model 2, are provided in the online appendix (see Table AIV).

The scope of social intolerance

A critic may also argue that intolerant attitudes only target the enemy groups and are not present beyond individuals or groups directly involved in civil wars. The social intolerance literature reviewed above suggests that this is not the case: social intolerance is a broadly held and not a targeted attitude toward specific outgroups (e.g. Arwine & Mayer, 2014; Onraet & Van Hiel, 2013; Sullivan & Hendriks, 2009). Our study admittedly has a limited ability to directly evaluate these arguments, as the WVS data do not allow us to pinpoint each survey respondent’s group membership and thus perform group-on-group matching. Nevertheless, we see two compelling reasons to side with the literature and against the critic. First, if intolerance was as confined as the critic believes, then our study, based on a broad spectrum of individuals across a society, would be unlikely to detect much of an empirical relationship between (territorial) civil war and social intolerance. That is, the bias would be against us finding a relationship; and not only do we find a relationship, but it is also strong in comparison to the impact of ‘standard’ correlates of social intolerance. Second, when we add outgroups that can hardly be expected to form rebel groups to wage (territorial) civil wars – homosexuals and people with AIDS – to our measure of social intolerance (see Table AII, Model 2E in the online appendix), our results hold.14 This provides

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14 Examining social intolerance toward members of these groups only produces the same result.
further evidence that socially intolerant attitudes are not confined only to the groups waging the fight.

*Extreme social intolerance*

We also examine civil war’s effect on the proportion of the population with extremely socially intolerant attitudes. We define an extremely socially intolerant individual as someone with an intolerance value over one standard deviation above the mean. The proportion of extremely intolerant individuals is 0.19 in countries without recent civil war experience, 0.30 if there was a recent civil war, and 0.36 if the war was over territory (all significantly different from one another, $p < 0.01$). Replacing our social intolerance scale with the extreme social intolerance indicator returns the same substantive results. Territorial civil war increases the likelihood that one is extremely socially intolerant, while non-territorial war does not exert an independent effect. A re-estimation of our primary analysis in Model 2 is provided in Table AV.

*Implications*

**Splintering.** A challenge in ending ongoing civil wars is combatant group splintering, where a combatant side breaks into two or more groups, each with its own goals and agendas (e.g. Asal, Brown & Dalton, 2012; Cunningham, 2006; Cunningham, Bakke & Seymour, 2012; Fjelde & Nilsson, 2012). Standard splintering explanations attribute rationalist motives, where some members of the original group split off with the hopes of reaching a better outcome for themselves. Our findings imply that splintering may be precipitated by the combatant group merely being composed of individuals who see themselves as different from one another. The rise in social intolerance due to the fighting would consequently put a strain on inter-combatant group relations and increase the
likelihood of fracture. This provides either an alternative view of splintering or advances the rationalist explanation by pinpointing the fault line along which the group may divide for self-serving motives.

For example, the 1992–95 Bosnian civil war started as a two-sided affair, with the Bosnian Serb forces targeting the non-Serb population. Yet, though suffering heavy losses, the non-Serb side split into the Bosniak and Croatian factions by 1993; the two factions then engaged in a civil war of their own. Strategically, the split is nonsensical as there was a clear and militarily superior common enemy. Yet, our study suggests that the initial fighting caused attitudes of intolerance in the Bosniak and Croatian populations not only toward the Serbs but also toward each other. From this perspective, the civil-war-within-a-civil-war dynamic is not entirely unexpected, though it has certainly complicated resolving the Bosnian conflict.

Research on mass attitudes. Ours is the first cross-national study to examine the impact of civil war on individuals’ levels of social intolerance. This adds to the growing body of literature linking contextual factors to social and political tolerance in the public (e.g. Dunn, Orellana & Singh, 2009; Hutchison & Gibler, 2007; Kirchner, Freitag & Rapp, 2011; Singh & Dunn, 2013; Weldon, 2006). Moreover, this study provides further confirmation of the importance of threat – real or perceived – to the formation of intolerant attitudes. Research grounded in the ethnic competition and realistic group conflict traditions sees threat as spawning from perceived challenges to cultural and economic security. We argue that civil war works strongly to generate both types of threat, and that territorial civil war, specifically, further serves to activate a threat to one’s identity. Finally, we show that territorial civil war is at least as important to social tolerance as the well-known variables, including economic modernization, political freedom, and socioethnic fractionalization.
Conclusion

We find that an individual who lived in a country that recently went through a territorially-based civil war will, on average, be relatively intolerant of outgroups. It is such an individual who is most likely to command someone unlike himself or herself to ‘get off my lawn.’ Of course, an unwillingness to share one’s neighborhood with ‘others’ has implications beyond the lawn, especially in post-civil war societies. And it is these very societies where social cohesion is most important.

Constitutionally engineered consensual political structures (e.g. Lijphart, 2012) and economic development (e.g. Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Florida, Mellander & Stolarick, 2008) may help societies coalesce. Still, neither constitutional changes nor economic growth come about easily in post-conflict societies, and neither option is a failsafe method for the creation of a society that can overcome the negative repercussions of recent civil wars.

A more detailed empirical examination of the channels through which threat from territorial civil war fosters intolerance could help determine which modes of recovery might be most useful for post-conflict societies. Our data do not include indicators of an individual’s level of exposure to the conflict or whether he or she was on the winning side, losing side, or a member of a third party. Such data would allow for a finer-grained analysis of how civil wars create intolerance in the public and would help further the understanding of the degree to which the effects vary within the population. Our study lays a foundation for future research that could, in turn, provide a more detailed portrait of the pathways from territorial civil war to social intolerance.

Replication note

The dataset, codebook, and model code for the empirical analysis in this article can be found at http://www.prio.org/jpr/datasets. All analyses were conducted using Stata 13.
Acknowledgements

Equal co-authorship. We wish to thank members of the Institutions Group at the Institute of Behavioral Science at the University of Colorado Boulder, as well as Anand Sokhey, Jennifer Wolak, Zaryab Iqbal, Patricia Sullivan, and Lisa Hultman for helpful comments.

References


Hurwitz, Jon & Mark Peffley (1992) Traditional versus social values as antecedents of racial


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SHANE P SINGH, b. 1980, PhD in Political Science (Michigan State University, 2009); Associate Professor, Department of International Affairs, University of Georgia (2010-); current research focuses on the institutional and contextual foundations of political behavior and attitudes.
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<td>H3: Individuals living in countries with recent experiences of territorial civil war will express higher levels of social intolerance than their counterparts in countries with recent experiences non-territorial civil war.</td>
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Table II. Impact of civil war on social intolerance

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<th>Armed conflict in prior year</th>
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| Model statistics                    |                         |                         |                              |                              |
| std(ζ)                              | 0.091                   | 0.090                   | 0.091                        | 0.090                        |
| std(ε)                              | 0.292                   | 0.292                   | 0.292                        | 0.292                        |
| ρ                                   | 0.089                   | 0.086                   | 0.089                        | 0.086                        |
| R^2                                 | 0.060                   | 0.064                   | 0.060                        | 0.063                        |
| Prob. > χ^2                         | <0.001                  | <0.001                  | <0.001                       | <0.001                       |
| Number of observations              | 131,578                 | 131,578                 | 131,578                      | 131,578                      |
| Number of country-years             | 123                     | 123                     | 123                          | 123                          |

Cell entries represent coefficients from a multilevel linear regression. Standard errors in parentheses. *p<.05 (two-sided)