



Multi-Actor Conflict and Violence in Colombia

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Join us for a presentation with Dr. Javier Osorio, an Assistant Professor in the School of Government and Public Policy at the University of Arizona, as he discusses multi-actor conflict and violence in Colombia.

Most accounts of civil war are bounded by a dyadic conceptualization of conflict. Unfortunately, such an approach offers limited leverage to understand conflicts characterized by multiple actors. By extending prominent theories of territorial competition and natural resources, the main argument claims that violence depends not only on the number of armed actors, but also on their kind. By focusing on Colombia, the study relies on automated event coding to disaggregate the violent behavior of 30 different armed actors between 1988 and 2014 including government authorities, guerrilla organizations, paramilitary groups, and criminal syndicates. The identification strategy relies on the presumably exogenous price shocks of coca, oil, and coffee to explain the violent presence of different armed actors, and their subsequent effect on the number of homicides. Results show that different commodities have distinct effects on the behavior of rent-seeking and support-seeking armed actors, and the resulting multi-polar configurations of conflict increase the levels of violence in different magnitudes.

Dr. Javier Osorio's research interests focus on understanding the micro-foundations and dynamics of political and criminal violence in Latin America. His methodology includes natural language processing, quasi-experimental and information systems, and big data analytics. His work focuses on Latin America, with a particular emphasis on Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

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