

# POLS 515: Applied Game Theory

Emory University  
Spring 2024  
Thursdays, 8:30 – 11:15am  
Classroom: Tarbutton 120A

Instructor: Jack Paine  
Office: 310 Tarbutton  
Office hours: Tuesdays 2:15 – 4:15pm  
[jackpaine@emory.edu](mailto:jackpaine@emory.edu)  
[www.jackpaine.com](http://www.jackpaine.com)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a third course in game theory that focuses on applying formal theoretic methods to substantive questions in political science. Building on POLS 514, students will further develop technical skills, gain familiarity with different types of games, and explore in depth both well-known and recently published work. Students will also read relevant non-formal scholarship to better understand how the models are used to answer questions of interest. Substantively, the course will focus primarily on models of authoritarian politics, conflict, and democratization. A major objective of this course is for students to produce their own models.

## GRADING

- **Class participation (10%):** Students are required to attend and actively participate in every session. Sometimes we will be solving models, sometimes discussing broader issues; either way, this is conducted as part of a conversation. Carefully completing the readings before the class sessions is crucial for high-quality participation. Students having trouble understanding the material are highly encouraged to speak up! The value-added of the class sessions is for me to help you understand what's going on, not to impress you with how quickly I can write math on a white board (which I do not believe is notably fast, anyway).
- **Problem sets (10%):** Throughout the semester, there will be problem “sets”—really, just a single problem at a time to gauge your understanding of the material. These are intentionally designed to be less involved than problem sets in a more standard game theory “tools” course.
- **Presentation and model memo (15% each):** Students will complete two assignments that each have the following elements. Students will form into groups such that, in a given week, half the students will present one paper and half another. Students choose their papers from the list of additional topics at the end of the syllabus. The first half of these courses will focus on one paper, and the other half the other. The group is required to present the model to the class. In weeks prior to these class sessions, I will choose lecture material that helps to prepare the students for the papers they will present. After the class session, each group will write a short memo (2–3 pages) with brief commentary on the models (the more precise technical details can be reserved for class). The goal of this assignment is for students to both

learn the mechanics of models of interest in greater detail, while also critically reflecting on the models. These projects will be completed in groups given the difficulty deconstructing a formal model on one's own.

The topics listed at the end of the syllabus provide a guide to help students choose which topics they would like to cover in their presentations. Recent overviews of models of authoritarian politics are also helpful to consult; see Gehlbach et al. (2016); Egorov and Sonin (2023); Paine and Tyson (2024).

- **Final paper (30%):** Each student will complete a final paper that engages with formal-theoretic models in a serious way. The ideal paper is one that looks like a standard research article with an original formal model (even a model that is a somewhat minor extension of existing models). But, depending on students' interests and objectives, I am open to other types of final papers. These may include empirical tests of a formal model or a literature review on related formal models. The theme should fit within the broad substantive parameters of the course (authoritarian politics, regime transitions, conflict). We will develop the project ideas in class throughout the semester. You will present the final paper during the last class, which is included within this grade.
- **First draft of final paper (10%):** It is what it sounds like. I don't have concrete expectations for exactly what this draft will contain. In general, the more/better you give me, the better my comments will be to help with the final paper.
- **Peer feedback (10%):** You will be responsible for providing oral and written feedback to other students during the semester. Details TBD.

## READING

My expectation is for students to complete all the required reading **prior** to the class session for which it is assigned. It will be much easier to absorb the material in class after having previously seen it in some form. At the end of the syllabus, I provide numerous recommended readings for students to gain wider exposure to the literature, if they wish. Other than choosing papers/topics to present in class, I have no expectation that students will consult any of these during the semester; they are primarily intended to guide future reading.

Students are expected to download all articles on their own. Selections from books that are required reading will be posted to the course's Canvas site. Any of my papers, chapters, etc. are available on my website. If you have trouble accessing any course material, please email me.

## EMAIL AND OFFICE HOURS

I always prefer to discuss course material in person than via email. In particular, 99% of questions with a technical component can be more efficiently answered in person than via email, so please reserve such questions for office hours (or in class!). The best way to get in touch with me is during my scheduled office hours, but I can make other times work if you are unavailable during that bloc. You can drop in during office hours, but emailing me ahead of time to schedule a specific time is best to minimize waiting time (or to coordinate students with similar questions).

## SCHEDULE OF CLASS SESSIONS

### **Weeks 1 and 2 (January 18 and 25): Conflict!**

We will examine foundational models on bargaining and conflict. These are “weakly institutionalized” settings, which provides a baseline for examining institutional reform in later weeks. This may take longer than a single class, which is why I allocate three lectures to the next topic.

- *Reading*: Fearon (1995) and Powell (2006) provide seminal statements in this literature. You do not need to read every model in depth in these articles, but you should come to class with an understanding of the main ideas. In particular, you should be able to answer the following questions before lecture starts. What is the inefficiency puzzle of war? Why (or why not) can each of incomplete information, indivisibilities, and commitment problems cause bargaining breakdown? After developing the core ideas with simpler models, we will move to a dynamic Markov model based on those by Acemoglu and Robinson (see next topic). Read Gehlbach (2021, Chapter 9, Section 3) as a primer on Markov games. The specific dynamic model we will cover in class is from Section 3 of Paine (2024b) (we will read the entire paper for the next topic).
- *Recommended*: Powell (2012) provides an overview of conflict bargaining models with commitment problems (see also Morrow and Sun 2021), and Walter (2009) discusses substantive applications to civil war (see also Fearon 2004). For more general statements of the mechanism, see Powell (2004); Krainin (2017); Little and Paine (2024). For models with endogenous armament, see the list of topics later in the syllabus. For textbook coverage of the topics discussed this week, see Kydd (2015, Chapters 4–6) and Spaniel (2023). See also Powell (1999); Slantchev (2011); Wolford (2019).

### **Weeks 3–6 (February 1, 8, 15, 22): Power sharing and political transitions**

We will build on the bargaining models of commitment problems to examine how reforming political institutions (e.g., sharing power, extending the franchise) can alleviate commitment problems—or fail to do so. We’re also going to deconstruct the Acemoglu and Robinson models by distinguishing the dynamic commitment problem component from the redistribution component. By the end of these class sections, students should not only understand the core mathematical mechanics of the models, but also be able to distinguish which assumptions drive which core implications.

- *Reading (substantive foundations)*: Introduction to Acemoglu and Robinson (2000), Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, Chapter 2), Introduction to Castañeda Dower et al. (2018), and Meng et al. (2023).
- *Reading (models)*: The specific models we will cover come from Gehlbach (2021, Sections 9.3 and 9.4) and Paine (2024b). The core technical machinery in these models derives from work by Acemoglu and Robinson (2000, 2001, 2006, 2017). The core ideas are presented in Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, Chapters 4–6); students should skim these chapters to understand their basic content, without needing to work through the models in any depth. The Acemoglu and Robinson articles are recommended, not required, reading.

## **Week 7 (February 29): Student presentations of models**

Selections from Gehlbach (2021).

## **Week 8 (March 7): No class (conference)**

## **Week 9 (March 14): No class (spring break)**

## **Week 10 (March 21): Writing, submitting, and evaluating papers**

For the first class after spring break, we're going to do a session on writing and evaluating papers. I would like everyone to complete the following assignment. The actual amount of writing is short, but it will require some thought. I understand that everyone's final papers are at different stages of completion (and some of you might not have even settled on a topic), but the hope is that answering the following questions will help you to think through key issues. For some of them (especially the later questions about your own paper), you might genuinely have no idea. That's fine. You can either leave it blank, or write something highly speculative. You can submit multiple versions if you're deciding among ideas. Part of the value of the exercise is that answering specific questions can help you think through where you might want your paper to go.

Anyway, to the best of your ability, write responses to the following questions as they pertain to your final paper. Please email your responses to THE ENTIRE CLASS no later than midnight on Tuesday, March 19. We will comment on each others' during class.

- What is the question?
- Why is this question/topic important?
- What are the existing answers to this question? And yes, the relevant literature likely contains more than just theory papers!
- Why are existing answers wrong or incomplete? There are a few ways to approach this.
  - No one has addressed this topic before, I'm the first.
  - Existing answers are wrong.
  - There are multiple existing answers that contradict each other. (I use this one a lot in my theory papers.)
- What is your answer?
- How does your answer differ?
- Why is your answer better?

We're also going to discuss the submission process and referee reports. Please come prepared with general questions about how the review process works, I'm happy to discuss anything pertaining to publishing. To help focus the discussion, we'll discuss the review process for one of my articles, "Reframing the Guardianship Dilemma: How the Military's Dual Disloyalty Options Imperil

Dictators.” Both the final article and the various submissions/responses are attached. You certainly don’t need to read everything in depth. I would suggest reading the final version and the response memos (which copy and paste most of the reviewer comments), although you might want to refer to earlier drafts because some of the referee comments won’t make sense for the final draft.

Please do not share these files with anyone else. If another Emory student is interested, I’m probably happy to share the files with them, but I’d prefer to directly email them myself. There’s nothing terribly confidential in any of this, especially because the paper is published, but it’s still better to not disseminate these types of files too widely.

I think that’s it (and please submit your memos by Friday). Let me know if you need any clarifications for what is expected for the next class. Have a nice break, and see you then.

### **Week 11 (March 28): Political institutions and agency problems**

Read Myerson (2008) and Paine (2022a).

### **Week 12 (April 4): Student presentations of models**

Selections from Gehlbach (2021).

### **Week 13 (April 11): Democratic backsliding**

Read Luo and Przeworski (2023) and Grillo et al. (2024).

### **Week 14 (April 18): Debating inequality and democratization**

We will return to the Acemoglu and Robinson model to discuss empirical evaluations and critiques, in particular the posited U-shaped relationship between inequality and democratization. Think about the following while reading: Are these critiques convincing? What features should be incorporated into a model in order to address the most pertinent critiques? What would this alternative model look like?

- *Reading:* Ansell and Samuels (2014, Chapter 1 and 4), Haggard and Kaufman (2012), Slater et al. (2014), Albertus (2015, 1–20), Acemoglu et al. (2013).

### **Week 15 (April 25): Student presentations of final papers**

Date subject to change based on the date of second-year poster presentations.

## LIST OF ADDITIONAL TOPICS IN MODELS OF AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS

- **Agency problems.** For a recent overview of the literature, see the relevant section in Paine and Tyson (2024). The classic variants of the agency problem are moral hazard and adverse selection; see Laffont and Martimort (2009, Chapter 3 and 4) for a textbook treatment of the basic models. For applications of moral-hazard-type models to authoritarian politics, see Svobik (2009), Dragu and Przeworski (2019), and Tyson (2018); and see Padró i Miquel and Yared (2012); Myerson (2015) for dynamic moral hazard models. For applications of adverse-selection-type models to authoritarian politics, see Egorov and Sonin (2011); Zakharov (2016); Paine (2022a), and references therein.
- **Authoritarian institutions I.** The following models extend those studied in the weeks on power sharing and political transitions by incorporating core pieces from the Acemoglu and Robinson models (Paine 2024a provides recent commentary on this literature): Leventoglu (2014), Castañeda Dower et al. (2018, 2020), Meng (2019), Paine (2022b) (see also Paine 2021 and Kenkel and Paine 2023, which lack a dynamic component), Luo (2024), and Powell (2024).
- **Authoritarian institutions II.** The models covered in our weeks on power sharing and political transitions do not provide the only formal framework for studying authoritarian institutions. For other models that highlight how different formal institutions, such as parties, legislatures, and constitutions, solve the autocratic commitment problem, see Weingast (1997); Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005); Gandhi and Przeworski (2006); Magaloni (2008); Myerson (2008); Svobik (2009); Gehlbach and Keefer (2011); Boix and Svobik (2013); Ansell and Samuels (2014); Gailmard (2017, 2024); Luo and Rozenas (2022); Little and Paine (2024). For textbook coverage of some of these topics, see Bueno de Mesquita (2016, Section 11.1) and Gehlbach (2021, Sections 8.2 and 8.3). For substantive overviews of institutions in authoritarian politics, see Gandhi (2008), Svobik (2012, Chapter 2), Geddes et al. (2014), Guriev and Treisman (2019), and Meng (2020, Chapter 1).
- **Coalitions.** Acemoglu et al. (2008, 2012, 2015) and Gieczewski (2021) develop models of dynamic coalition formation in autocracies (or clubs more generally), including both restricting and expanding membership. Acemoglu et al. (2021) provide an overview of this literature and Gehlbach (2021, Section 8.2) provides a brief textbook treatment. If a student is interested in presenting these models, walking through a numerical example would be sufficient, rather than presenting a full equilibrium characterization. For models of bargaining among coalitions in an IR conflict setting, see Powell (1999, Chapter 5) and Wolford (2015).
- **Collective action.** For a textbook treatment of global games, see Gehlbach (2021, Sections 9.1 and 9.2). For a recent overview of the literature, see the relevant section in Paine and Tyson (2024). This chapter discusses numerous articles that could serve as the basis for a presentation.
- **Democratic stability and backsliding.** The first formal-theoretic literature on democratic stability and collapse developed the concept of self-enforcing democracy. For a recent overview of the literature, see Svobik (2019). For models, see Przeworski (2005); Chacón et al. (2011); Fearon (2011); Alberts et al. (2012); Bidner et al. (2014); Przeworski et al. (2015); see also Przeworski (1991, 2018) and Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, Chapter 7).

Many recent models focus on the subtle means by which democracies erode, including electoral and legal manipulation and stealth tactics. For a recent overview of the literature, see Grillo et al. (2024). For models, see Buisseret and Van Weelden (2020); Svolik (2020); Chiopris et al. (2021); Miller (2021); Helmke et al. (2022); Gratton and Lee (2023); Grillo and Prato (2023); Hollyer et al. (2023); Howell and Wolton (2023); Luo and Przeworski (2023).

- **Endogenous armament.** In many conflict bargaining models, players lack an explicit option to invest in arms or otherwise to bargain over the distribution of power. Models with endogenous armament include Fearon (1996, 2018), Jackson and Morelli (2009), Chadeaux (2011), Powell (1993, 2013), Debs and Monteiro (2014), Paine (2016, 2022b), Spaniel (2019, Chapter 3), and Gibilisco (2021). For development of the contest function models underlying many of these models, see Anderton and Carter (2019, Chapter 8) for an accessible textbook treatment and Garfinkel and Skaperdas (2006) and Konrad (2009) for more in depth coverage.
- **Information transmission.** For a textbook treatment of recent signaling models applied to authoritarian politics, see Gehlbach (2021, Sections 8.4–8.6); see also Dal Bó and Powell (2009). There is a huge IR conflict literature on signaling; see Kydd (2015, Chapter 9) and Spaniel (2023) for textbook treatments.
- **State building.** State building has long been a core topic in IR, but only recently has spawned a formal-theoretic literature. See Moselle and Polak (2001); Besley and Persson (2011); Powell (2013); Johnson and Koyama (2014); Boix (2015); Gennaioli and Voth (2015); De Magalhaes and Giovannoni (2019); Tyson (2020); Abramson et al. (2022); Dal Bó et al. (2022); Garfias and Sellars (2022); Lee and Paine (2023); Kenkel et al. (2023); Kenkel and Paine (2023).
- **Succession.** Given its inherent importance, there is surprisingly little research on non-electoral succession. For recent formal models, see Kurrild-Klitgaard (2000); Konrad and Mui (2017); Zhou (2023). For related empirical work, see Meng (2021); Kokkonen et al. (2022).

## ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

- **Accommodations.** As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment where every student can succeed. If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me to discuss a protocol to implement accommodations as needed throughout the semester. The Office of Accessibility Services works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact OAS. It is the responsibility of the student to register with OAS. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and that disability accommodations are not provided until an accommodation letter has been processed. Students must renew their accommodation letter every semester they attend classes. Contact the Office of Accessibility Services for more information at (404) 727-9877 or [accessibility@emory.edu](mailto:accessibility@emory.edu). Additional information is available at the OAS website at <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html>.
- **Academic Integrity.** I take academic integrity very seriously. It is common to rely on ideas and results from published work as you build models. It is also essential that you cite these sources appropriately.



## REFERENCES

- Abramson, Scott F, Emiel Awad, and Brenton Kenkel. 2022. “Designing Political Order.” Available at <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/9z2gk>.
- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2000. “Why did the West Extend the Franchise? Democracy, Inequality, and Growth in Historical Perspective.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115(4):1167–1199.
- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2001. “A Theory of Political Transitions.” *American Economic Review* 91(4):938–963.
- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. 2017. “Why Did the West Expand the Franchise? A Correction.”. Mimeo. Available at <https://economics.mit.edu/files/12738>. Accessed 4/25/18.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Georgy Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin. 2008. “Coalition Formation in Non-Democracies.” *The Review of Economic Studies* 75(4):987–1009.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Georgy Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin. 2012. “Dynamics and Stability of Constitutions, Coalitions, and Clubs.” *American Economic Review* 102(4):1446–76.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Georgy Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin. 2015. “Political Economy in a Changing World.” *Journal of Political Economy* 123(5):1038–1086.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Georgy Egorov, and Konstantin Sonin. 2021. “Institutional Change and Institutional Persistence.” In *The Handbook of Historical Economics*, ed. Alberto Bisin and Giovanni Federico. Academic Press pp. 365–389.
- Acemoglu, Daron, Suresh Naidu, Pascual Restrepo, and James A. Robinson. 2013. “Democracy, Public Policy, and Inequality.” *APSA Comparative Democratization Newsletter* 11(3):2, 16–20.
- Alberts, Susan, Chris Warshaw, and Barry R. Weingast. 2012. “Democratization and Countermajoritarian Institutions: The Role of Power and Constitutional Design in Self-Enforcing Democracy.” In *Comparative Constitutional Design*, ed. Tom Ginsburg. Cambridge University Press.
- Albertus, Michael. 2015. *Autocracy and Redistribution: The Politics of Land Reform*. Cambridge University Press.
- Anderton, Charles H and John R Carter. 2019. *Principles of Conflict Economics: The Political Economy of War, Terrorism, Genocide, and Peace*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ansell, Ben W. and David J. Samuels. 2014. *Inequality and Democratization: An Elite Competition Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Besley, Timothy and Torsten Persson. 2011. *Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Development Clusters*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bidner, Chris, Patrick François, and Francesco Trebbi. 2014. “A Theory of Minimalist Democracy.” NBER Working Paper 20552.

- Boix, Carles. 2015. *Political Order and Inequality*. Cambridge University Press.
- Boix, Carles and Milan W. Svolik. 2013. “The Foundations of Limited Authoritarian Government: Institutions, Commitment, and Power-sharing in Dictatorships.” *Journal of Politics* 75(2):300–316.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M Siverson, and James D Morrow. 2005. *The Logic of Political Survival*. MIT Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan. 2016. *Political Economy for Public Policy*. Princeton University Press.
- Buisseret, Peter and Richard Van Weelden. 2020. “Crashing the Party? Elites, Outsiders, and Elections.” *American Journal of Political Science* 64(2):356–370.
- Castañeda Dower, Paul, Evgeny Finkel, Scott Gehlbach, and Steven Nafziger. 2018. “Collective Action and Representation in Autocracies: Evidence from Russia’s Great Reforms.” *American Political Science Review* 112(1):125–147.
- Castañeda Dower, Paul, Evgeny Finkel, Scott Gehlbach, and Steven Nafziger. 2020. “Democratization as a Continuous Choice: A Comment on Acemoglu and Robinson’s Correction to “Why did the West Extend the Franchise?”.” *Journal of Politics* 82(2):776–780.
- Chacón, Mario, James A Robinson, and Ragnar Torvik. 2011. “When is Democracy an Equilibrium? Theory and Evidence from Colombia’s La Violencia.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(3):366–396.
- Chadefaux, Thomas. 2011. “Bargaining over Power: When do Shifts in Power Lead to War?” *International Theory* 3(2):228–253.
- Chiopris, Caterina, Monika Nalepa, and Georg Vanberg. 2021. “A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing: Citizen Uncertainty and Democratic Backsliding.” Available at <https://www.monikanalepa.com/uploads/6/6/3/1/66318923/chioprisnalepavanberg.pdf>.
- Dal Bó, Ernesto and Robert Powell. 2009. “A Model of Spoils Politics.” *American Journal of Political Science* 53(1):207–222.
- Dal Bó, Ernesto, Pablo Hernández-Lagos, and Sebastián Mazzuca. 2022. “The Paradox of Civilization: Preinstitutional Sources of Security and Prosperity.” *American Political Science Review* 116(1):213–230.
- De Magalhaes, Leandro and Francesco Giovannoni. 2019. “War and the Rise of Parliaments.” <https://ideas.repec.org/p/bri/uobdis/19-709.html>.
- Debs, Alexandre and Nuno P. Monteiro. 2014. “Known Unknowns: Power Shifts, Uncertainty, and War.” *International Organization* 68(1):1–31.
- Dragu, Tiberiu and Adam Przeworski. 2019. “Preventive Repression: Two Types of Moral Hazard.” *American Political Science Review* 113(1):77–87.
- Egorov, Georgy and Konstantin Sonin. 2011. “Dictators and their Viziers: Endogenizing the Loyalty-Competence Trade-Off.” *Journal of the European Economic Association* 9(5):903–930.

- Egorov, Georgy and Konstantin Sonin. 2023. “The Political Economics of Non-Democracy.” *Journal of Economic Literature*, forthcoming .
- Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49(3):379–414.
- 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 D. 2011. “Self-Enforcing Democracy.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 126(4):1661–1708.
- Fearon, James D. 2018. “Cooperation, Conflict, and the Costs of Anarchy.” *International Organization* 72(3):523–559.
- Fearon, James F. 1996. “Bargaining Over Objects that Influence Future Bargaining Power.” <https://fearonresearch.stanford.edu/53-2/>.
- Gailmard, Sean. 2017. “Building a New Imperial State: The Strategic Foundations of Separation of Powers in America.” *American Political Science Review* 111(4):668–685.
- Gailmard, Sean. 2024. *Agents of Empire: English Imperial Governance and the Making of American Political Institutions*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gandhi, Jennifer. 2008. *Political Institutions Under Dictatorship*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gandhi, Jennifer and Adam Przeworski. 2006. “Cooperation, Cooptation, and Rebellion under Dictatorships.” *Economics & Politics* 18(1):1–26.
- Garfias, Francisco and Emily A. Sellars. 2022. “State Building in Historical Political Economy.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*, ed. Jeffery A. Jenkins and Jared Rubin. Oxford University Press.
- Garfinkel, Michelle R. and Stergios Skaperdas. 2006. “Economics of Conflict: An Overview.” In *Handbook of Defense Economics, Vol. 2: Defense in a Globalized World*, ed. Todd Sander and Keith Hartley. Amsterdam: North-Holland pp. 649–710.
- Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. 2014. “Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set.” *Perspectives on Politics* 12(2):313–331.
- Gehlbach, Scott. 2021. *Formal Models of Domestic Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gehlbach, Scott and Philip Keefer. 2011. “Investment Without Democracy: Ruling-Party Institutionalization and Credible Commitment in Autocracies.” *Journal of Comparative Economics* 39(2):123–139.
- Gehlbach, Scott, Konstantin Sonin, and Milan W. Svobik. 2016. “Formal Models of Nondemocratic Politics.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 19:565–584.
- Gennaioli, Nicola and Hans-Joachim Voth. 2015. “State Capacity and Military Conflict.” *Review of Economic Studies* 82(4):1409–1448.

- Gibilisco, Michael. 2021. “Decentralization, Repression, and Gambling for Unity.” *Journal of Politics* 83(4):1353–1368.
- Gieczewski, Germán. 2021. “Policy Persistence and Drift in Organizations.” *Econometrica* 89(1):251–279.
- Gratton, Gabriele and Barton E. Lee. 2023. “Liberty, Security, and Accountability: The Rise and Fall of Illiberal Democracies.” *Review of Economic Studies* .
- Grillo, Edoardo and Carlo Prato. 2023. “Reference Points and Democratic Backsliding.” *American Journal of Political Science* 67(1):71–88.
- Grillo, Edoardo, Zhaotian Luo, Monika Nalepa, and Carlo Prato. 2023. “Theories of Democratic Backsliding.” *Annual Review of Political Science*, forthcoming. Available at [https://www.monikanalepa.com/uploads/6/6/3/1/66318923/democratic\\_backsliding\\_arps\\_\\_11\\_.pdf](https://www.monikanalepa.com/uploads/6/6/3/1/66318923/democratic_backsliding_arps__11_.pdf) .
- Grillo, Edoardo, Zhaotian Luo, Monika Nalepa, and Carlo Prato. 2024. “Theories of Democratic Backsliding.” *Annual Review of Political Science* .
- Guriev, Sergei and Daniel Treisman. 2019. “Informational Autocrats.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33(4):100–127.
- Haggard, Stephan and Robert R Kaufman. 2012. “Inequality and Regime Change: Democratic Transitions and the Stability of Democratic Rule.” *American Political Science Review* 106(3):495–516.
- Helmke, Gretchen, Mary Kroeger, and Jack Paine. 2022. “Democracy by Deterrence: Norms, Constitutions, and Electoral Tilting.” *American Journal of Political Science* 66(2):434–450.
- Hollyer, James R., Marko Klasnja, and Rocío Titiunik. 2023. “Charismatic Leaders and Democratic Backsliding.” Available at <https://titiunik.github.io/papers/KlasnjaHollyerTitiunik2023-wp.pdf>.
- Howell, William G., Kenneth A. Shepsle and Stephane Wolton. 2023. “Executive Absolutism: The Dynamics of Authority Acquisition in a System of Separated Powers.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 18(2):243–275.
- Jackson, Matthew O. and Massimo Morelli. 2009. “Strategic Militarization, Deterrence and Wars.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 4(4):279–313.
- Johnson, Noel D and Mark Koyama. 2014. “Tax Farming and the Origins of State Capacity in England and France.” *Explorations in Economic History* 51:1–20.
- Kenkel, Brenton and Jack Paine. 2023. “A Theory of External Wars and European Parliaments.” *International Organization* 77(1):102–143.
- Kenkel, Brenton et al. 2023. “Social Conflict and the Predatory State.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 18(4):437–468.
- Kokkonen, Andrej, Jørgen Møller, and Anders Sundell. 2022. *The Politics of Succession: Forging Stable Monarchies in Europe, AD 1000–1800*. Oxford University Press.

- Konrad, Kai A. 2009. *Strategy and Dynamics in Contests*. Oxford University Press.
- Konrad, Kai A and Vai-Lam Mui. 2017. “The Prince—or Better No Prince? The Strategic Value of Appointing a Successor.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61(10):2158–2182.
- Krainin, Colin. 2017. “Preventive War as a Result of Long Term Shifts in Power.” *Political Science Research and Methods* 5(1):103–121.
- Kurrild-Klitgaard, Peter. 2000. “The Constitutional Economics of Autocratic Succession.” *Public Choice* 103(1-2):63–84.
- Kydd, Andrew H. 2015. *International Relations Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Laffont, Jean-Jacques and David Martimort. 2009. *The Theory of Incentives: The Principal-Agent Model*. Princeton University Press.
- Lee, Alexander and Jack Paine. 2023. “The Great Revenue Divergence.” *International Organization* 77(2):363–404.
- Leventoğlu, Bahar. 2014. “Social Mobility, Middle Class, and Political Transitions.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(5):825–864.
- Little, Andrew and Jack Paine. 2024. “Stronger Challengers can Cause More (or Less) Conflict and Institutional Reform.” *Comparative Political Studies* 57(3):486–505.
- Luo, Zhaotian. 2024. “Self-Enforcing Power Dynamics.” <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4279704>.
- Luo, Zhaotian and Adam Przeworski. 2023. “Democracy and Its Vulnerabilities: Dynamics of Democratic Backsliding.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 18(1):105–130.
- Luo, Zhaotian and Arturas Rozenas. 2022. “Ruling the Ruling Coalition: Information Control and Authoritarian Power-sharing.” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, forthcoming .
- Magaloni, Beatriz. 2008. “Credible Power-Sharing and the Longevity of Authoritarian Rule.” *Comparative Political Studies* 41(4-5):715–41.
- Meng, Anne. 2019. “Accessing the State: Executive Constraints and Credible Commitment in Dictatorships.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 33(4):568–599.
- Meng, Anne. 2020. *Constraining Dictatorship: From Personalized Rule to Institutionalized Regimes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Meng, Anne. 2021. “Winning the Game of Thrones: Leadership Succession in Modern Autocracies.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65(5):950–981.
- Meng, Anne, Jack Paine, and Robert Powell. 2023. “Authoritarian Power Sharing: Concepts, Mechanisms, and Strategies.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 26:153–173.
- Miller, Michael K. 2021. “A Republic, if You Can Keep It: Breakdown and Erosion in Modern Democracies.” *Journal of Politics* 83(1):198–213.
- Morrow, James D. and Jessica S. Sun. 2021. “Models of Interstate Conflict.” In *The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*, ed. Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese. SAGE Publications pp. 261–276.

- Moselle, Boaz and Benjamin Polak. 2001. "A Model of a Predatory State." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 17(1):1–33.
- Myerson, Roger B. 2008. "The Autocrat's Credibility Problem and Foundations of the Constitutional State." *American Political Science Review* 102(1):125–139.
- Myerson, Roger B. 2015. "Moral Hazard in High Office and the Dynamics of Aristocracy." *Econometrica* 83(6):2083–2126.
- Padró i Miquel, Gerard and Pierre Yared. 2012. "The Political Economy of Indirect Control." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127(2):947–1015.
- Paine, Jack. 2016. "Rethinking the Conflict "Resource Curse": How Oil Wealth Prevents Center-Seeking Civil Wars." *International Organization* 70(4):727–761.
- Paine, Jack. 2021. "The Dictator's Powersharing Dilemma: Countering Dual Outsider Threats." *American Journal of Political Science* 65(2):510–527.
- Paine, Jack. 2022a. "Reframing the Guardianship Dilemma: How the Military's Dual Disloyalty Options Imperil Dictators." *American Political Science Review* 116(4):1425–1442.
- Paine, Jack. 2022b. "Strategic Power Sharing: Commitment, Capability, and Authoritarian Survival." *Journal of Politics* 84(2):1226–1232.
- Paine, Jack. 2024a. "A Comment on Powell and Formal Models of Power Sharing." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 36(2):212–233.
- Paine, Jack. 2024b. "The Threat-Enhancing Effect of Authoritarian Power Sharing." Working paper.
- Paine, Jack and Scott A. Tyson. 2024. "Formal Theory: Three Pillars of Authoritarian Power." In *Oxford Handbook of Authoritarian Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Powell, Robert. 1993. "Guns, Butter, and Anarchy." *American Political Science Review* 87(1):115–132.
- Powell, Robert. 1999. *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. Princeton University Press.
- Powell, Robert. 2004. "The Inefficient Use of Power: Costly Conflict with Complete Information." *American Political Science Review* 98(2):231–241.
- Powell, Robert. 2006. "War as a Commitment Problem." *International Organization* 60(1):169–203.
- Powell, Robert. 2012. "Commitment Problems and Shifting Power as a Cause of Conflict." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Peace and Conflict*.
- Powell, Robert. 2013. "Monopolizing Violence and Consolidating Power." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(2):807–859.
- Powell, Robert. 2024. "Power Sharing with Weak Institutions." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 36(2):186–211.

- Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge University Press.
- Przeworski, Adam. 2005. "Democracy as an Equilibrium." *Public Choice* 123(3-4):253–273.
- Przeworski, Adam. 2018. *Why Bother with Elections?* John Wiley & Sons.
- Przeworski, Adam, Gonzalo Rivero, and Tianyang Xi. 2015. "Elections as a Conflict Processing Mechanism." *European Journal of Political Economy* 39:235–248.
- Slantchev, Branislav L. 2011. *Military Threats: The Costs of Coercion and the Price of Peace*. Cambridge University Press.
- Slater, Dan, Benjamin Smith, and Gautam Nair. 2014. "Economic Origins of Democratic Breakdown? The Redistributive Model and the Postcolonial State." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(2):353–374.
- Spaniel, William. 2019. *Bargaining over the Bomb: The Successes and Failures of Nuclear Negotiations*. Cambridge University Press.
- Spaniel, William. 2023. *Formal Models of Crisis Bargaining: Applications in the Politics of Conflict*. Cambridge University Press.
- Svolik, Milan. 2020. "When Polarization Trumps Civic Virtue: Partisan Conflict and the Subversion of Democracy by Incumbents." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 15(1):3–31.
- Svolik, Milan W. 2009. "Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2):477–494.
- Svolik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. Cambridge University Press.
- Svolik, Milan W. 2019. "Democracy as an equilibrium: rational choice and formal political theory in democratization research." *Democratization* 26(1):40–60.
- Tyson, Scott A. 2018. "The Agency Problem Underlying Repression." *Journal of Politics* 80(4):1297–1310.
- Tyson, Scott A. 2020. "The Strategic Foundations of Political Sovereignty." *Journal of Politics* 82(2):657–670.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining Failures and Civil War." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12:243–261.
- Weingast, Barry R. 1997. "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of the Law." *American Political Science Review* 91(2):245–263.
- Wolford, Scott. 2015. *The Politics of Military Coalitions*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wolford, Scott. 2019. *The Politics of the First World War: A Course in Game Theory and International Security*. Cambridge University Press.
- Zakharov, Alexei V. 2016. "The Loyalty-Competence Trade-Off in Dictatorships and Outside Options for Subordinates." *Journal of Politics* 78(2):457–66.

Zhou, Congyi. 2023. "Last Step to the Throne: The Conflict Between Rulers and their Successors."  
*Political Science Research and Methods* 11(1):80–94.