

Sherry Zaks, Ph.D.

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Academic Appointments

University of Southern California

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Los Angeles, CA

2019–Present

Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University

VISITING FACULTY

Palo Alto, CA

2023–2024

Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Palo Alto, CA

2018–2019

Dickey Center for International Understanding, Dartmouth College

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

Hanover, NH

2017–2018

Education

Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley

POLITICAL SCIENCE (INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & POLITICAL METHODOLOGY)

Berkeley, CA

2012–2017

- *Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Wartime Organizational Structures Affect Rebel-to-Party Transformation*
 - Committee: David Collier (co-chair), Ron Hassner (co-chair), Heather Haveman, Leonardo Arriola

B.A. Rutgers University

POLITICAL SCIENCE & COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

New Brunswick, NJ

2002–2006

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Books

- **Sherry Zaks.** (2025). *Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels become Tomorrow's Parties* Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY.
 - Honorable Mention for Best Book by a Female Scholar for the Peace Studies Section of ISA

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- **Sherry Zaks.** (2025). "Repurposing Rebellion: Building Rebel Successor Parties on the Heels of War" *European Journal of International Relations*. 31(2): 480–506
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2024). "Do we know it when we see it? (Re-)Conceptualizing Rebel-to-Party Transformation." *Journal of Peace Research*. 61(2): 246–262
- M.P. Broache, Carolyn Holmes, and **Sherry Zaks.** (2023). "Political Science after the Insurrection: Teaching About Democratic Backsliding in U.S. Classrooms." *Journal of Political Science Education* 19(3): 447–457
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2022). "Return to the Scene of the Crime: Revisiting Process Tracing, Bayesianism, and Murder." *Political Analysis*. 30(2): 306–310
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2021). "Updating Bayesians: A Critical Evaluation of Qualitative Bayesian Inference." *Political Analysis*. 29(1): 58–74.
- Sarah E. Parkinson and **Sherry Zaks.** (2018) "Militant and Rebel Organization(s)." *Comparative Politics*. 50(2): 271–290.
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2017). "Relationships Among Rivals: A Framework for Analyzing Contending Hypotheses in Process-Tracing Research." *Political Analysis*. 25(3): 344–362.

Manuscripts Under Review

- **Sherry Zaks.** *#Not All Marxists: Transporting Ideology from the Book to the Battlefield* (Book Proposal Under Review)
- **Sherry Zaks.** “Organizing World Politics: New Concepts, New Tools, New Directions” (Proposal Under Review with APSR Synthesis Track)
- **Sherry Zaks.** “#Not All Marxists: Exploring the Power and Limits of Organizational Ideology in Rebel Groups” (Under Review at *World Politics*)

Editor-Reviewed Publications & Expert Interviews

- **Sherry Zaks.** (2021). “What Rebels can Teach the C-Suite: Organizational Resilience and Agility during Global Crisis” (Expert interview for *Workflow*).
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2017). “Evaluating ‘Competing’ Explanations in *Economic Interdependence and War*” *Qualitative and Multi-Method Research*. 15(2): 40-44.
- Seth Masket and **Sherry Zaks.** (2017). “Having Your Cake and Eating it Too? The Conflicting Principles at Issue in the Masterpiece Cakeshop Case” *Vox*. December 8, 2017. Online: <https://www.vox.com/mischiefs-of-faction>
- **Sherry Zaks.** (2016). “Process Tracing Progress and Pitfalls: The State of the Art of Qualitative Research Methods.” In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Political Science*, eds. Hans Kerman & Jaap J. Woldendorp. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Works in Progress

- **Sherry Zaks.** *#Not All Marxists: Transporting Ideology from the Book to the Battlefield* (Book Manuscript in Preparation)
- **Sherry Zaks.** “Process Tracing is Timeless (derogatory): a framework for sequential evidentiary evaluation in process-tracing research”
- Liana Eustacia Reyes and **Sherry Zaks.** “Rebel Law and its Legacies.”
- **Sherry Zaks.** “Roles of Law: An Organizational Approach to Democratic Backsliding”
- **Sherry Zaks.** “Under my Umbrella: How Geographical Variation in FMLN Wartime Structures affected Post-conflict Vote Share”
- Jason Klocek and **Sherry Zaks.** “Deus ex Rebellis: Religious Networks and Rhetoric in Resistance Movements.”

Grants & Awards

EXTERNAL AWARDS

2025	Best Book by a Female Scholar , Peace Science Section (ISA)	<i>Honorable Mention</i>
2023	Becky Morton & Tom Carsey Methodology Mentoring Award , Society of Political Methodology	<i>Honorable Mention</i>
2018	Best Dissertation in Peace Studies , United States Institute of Peace	<i>\$1,000</i>
2016	Winner , Herbert York Global Security Fellowship, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation	<i>\$25,000</i>
2016	Winner , Simpson Fellowship, Institute of International Studies	<i>\$3,000</i>

INTERNAL AWARDS

2026	Center for International Studies , Research Assistance Grant	\$17,250
2023	USC, Winner: Raubenheimer Award for Excellence in Research, Teaching, and Service	
2022	USC , Dept. Nomination: Raubenheimer Award for Excellence in Research, Teaching, and Service	
2021	Center for International Studies , Research Assistance Grant	\$30,500
2020	Center for International Studies , Research Assistance Grant	\$15,250

Invited Talks

Cal State University, Dominguez Hills

Carson, CA

CAMPUS-WIDE EVENT

September 2026

- *Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels Become Tomorrow's Parties* (Book Talk)

George Mason University

Fairfax County, VA

CARTER SCHOOL FOR PEACE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

April 2026

- *Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels Become Tomorrow's Parties* (Book Talk)

University of California, Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara, CA

CPEIR COLLOQUIUM

February 2026

- “#Not All Marxists: Transporting Ideology from the Book to the Battlefield”

Stanford University

Palo Alto, CA

CISAC RESEARCH SEMINAR

Spring 2024

- “Repurposing Rebellion: Building Rebel Successor Parties on the Heels of War”

University of Cambridge

Cambridge, UK

WORKSHOP ON QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE

Spring 2022

- “Measure it? I hardly know it! Cascading Bias in Conceptualization, Measurement, and Data Collection”

Joseph Korbel School of International Studies

Denver, CO

KORBEL RESEARCH SEMINAR

Spring 2022

- “Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels become Tomorrow's Parties”

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA

APPLIED STATISTICS WORKSHOP

Sept. 2021

- “(Re-)Conceptualizing Rebel-to-Party Transformation: Cascading Bias in Conceptualization, Measurement, and Data Collection”

University of Washington

Virtual Talk

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY COLLOQUIUM

Jan. 2021

- “Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Today's Rebels become Tomorrow's Parties”

Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas

Virtual Talk

PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM

Nov. 2020

- “Rethinking Medium-N Analysis: Promises, Progress, and Pitfalls on the Quest for a Middle Ground”

Stanford University

Palo Alto, CA

CISAC RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

Oct. 2018

- “Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Wartime Organizational Structures Affect Rebel-to-Party Transformation”

Yale University

New Haven, CT

PROGRAM ON ORDER, CONFLICT, AND VIOLENCE

Oct. 2017

- “Resilience Beyond Rebellion: How Wartime Organizational Structures Affect Rebel-to-Party Transformation”

APSA Annual Meeting: Short Courses

Seattle, WA

SHORT COURSE ON MULTIMETHOD RESEARCH

Sep. 2013

- Analyzing “Competing” Hypotheses in Process Tracing Research

Institute for Qualitative and Multimethod Research

Syracuse, NY

MULTIMETHOD RESEARCH & CAUSAL INFERENCE

June 2012

- (co-taught with Jay Seawright)

Service

Society of Political Methodology

MILLER PRIZE COMMITTEE

- Committee member to honor the best work in *Political Analysis* the preceding year.

PolMeth

AY 2025-2026

Qualitative and Multimethod Research Section

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

APSA

AY 2023-24

Qualitative and Multimethod Research Section

KENDRA KOIVU PAPER AWARD COMMITTEE

- Committee member to honor exceptional work in qualitative research and process tracing.

APSA

AY 2023-24

Co-Chair of the Comparative Politics/International Relations & American Politics Job Search Committee

CO-CHAIR WITH MORRIS LEVY (AMERICANIST SEARCH)

- Spearheading outreach and recruitment
- Coordinating search logistics

USC

AY 2022-2023

Chair of the Methods & Research Tools Field

FIELD CHAIR, ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE, STEERING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

- Created the first Methods Field Exam for the department
- Spearheaded the creation of a methods reading list
- Graduate admissions committee

USC

Aug. 2020–Dec. 2022

Comparative Politics Working Paper Series

CO-ORGANIZER (WITH GERRY MUNCK)

- Ran workshops, coordinated speakers, mobilized participation

USC

AY 2019–2020

Predocutorial Institute for Diverse Scholars

PANEL MEMBER

- Panel on writing Ph.D. application documents
- Panel on the “hidden curriculum” & what to expect from graduate school

USC

2020, 2021

Other Service to the Discipline

JOURNAL REFEREE

- **Methods:** *Political Analysis*, *Sociological Methods & Research*, *Sociological Methods & Research*, *Quality & Quantity*
- **Substantive:** *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Comparative Politics*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *Democratization*, *European Journal of International Relations*, *European Journal of Political Research*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Studies Review*, *Democratization*, *International Interactions*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Political Parties*, *Review of International Studies*

Ongoing

GRADUATE MENTORSHIP

CIS Professionalization Series

PANEL MEMBER

- Developing an Informed AI Ideology
- How to be a [Good] Discussant
- Preparing for the Job Market
- How to give a Job Talk

USC

2020, 2021, 2024, 2026

Qualifying Exam Committees

COMMITTEE MEMBER

- Gave extensive feedback on written exams and participated in oral examinations

USC

2020, 2021, 2023, 2025, 2026

Dissertation Committees

COMMITTEE MEMBER

- Gaea Morales (Graduated: 2025)
- Laura Breen, co-chair with Wayne Sandholtz (Anticipated Graduation: 2026)
- Jessica Walker, co-chair with Gerry Munck (Anticipated Graduation: 2028)
- Shenali Pilapitiya (Anticipated Graduation: 2029)
- SJ Han, co-chair with Saori Katada (Anticipated Graduation: 2029)
- Constantinos Kourtellas (Anticipated Graduation: 2029)
- Aaron Tucker (Anticipated Graduation: 2029)
- Jada Fraser, co-chair with Saori Katada (Anticipated Graduation: 2030)
- Dan Spinelli (Anticipated Graduation: 2030)
- Donovan Street (Anticipated Graduation: 2030)

Teaching

Teaching Interests: Research Methods (Research Design, Qualitative Research, Process Tracing), Civil Conflict, Terrorism, International Relations, IR Theory

GRADUATE COURSES TAUGHT

- POIR 539 **Conflict Processes**, USC (Spring 2026)
POIR 610 **Research Design**, USC (Fall 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025, 2026)
PS 234a **Qualitative and Multimethod Research**, UC Berkeley (Spring 2012) (w/ David Collier)

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES TAUGHT

- POSC 311 **Political Analysis**, USC (Fall 2019, 2020, 2022, 2024)
POSC 469 **Rebellion, Conflict, and Political Violence**, USC (Spring 2020)
POSC 366 **Terrorism and Genocide**, USC (Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2025, Fall 2025)
PS 4 **Intro to International Relations**, UC Berkeley

Skills

- Computational** R, \LaTeX , Stata, Adobe Creative Suite
Methods Process Tracing, Statistics, Archival Work, Formal Modeling
Languages English (Native), Spanish (Research Proficiency), Italian (Beginner)