

NICHOLAS JOHN BARNES

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EMPLOYMENT

2020-Present, University of St. Andrews, School of International Relations, Scotland, UK
Senior Lecturer, 2025-present
Lecturer, 2020-2025

2019-2020, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, USA
Visiting Assistant Professor, Political Science Department

2017-2019, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA
Postdoctoral Fellow, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs

EDUCATION

2009-2017, Ph.D. Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI, USA
Subfields: Comparative Politics, Methodology
Thesis: “Monopolies of Violence: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro”
Committee: Scott Straus (Chair), Erica Simmons, Rikhil Bhavnani, Christina Ewig, Ivan Ermakoff

2008-2009, University of Haifa, Israel
Certificate, Peace and Conflict Studies

2007-2008, University College Dublin, Ireland
M.Sc., Nationalism and Ethno-Communal Conflict

2000-2004, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA, USA
B.A., English, Comparative Literature, and Spanish
Magna Cum Laude

PUBLICATIONS

Book

2025, *Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro*.
Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics: Cambridge University Press.
• Reviewed in *The Latin American Review of Books*, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *MPSA Blog*, and *Civil Wars*

Edited Volume

2021, *Maré from the Inside: Art, Culture, and Politics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*. Edited with Desirée Poets and Max Stephenson Jr. Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech Publishing. Portuguese volume: *Maré de Dentro: Arte, Cultura e Política no Rio de Janeiro*.

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Chapters

2023, “The Enduring Influence of the Logic of Violence in Civil Wars.” *Civil Wars* 25(2): 569-576.

2022, “The Logic of Criminal Territorial Control: Military Intervention in Rio de Janeiro.” *Comparative Political Studies* 55(5): 789-831.

- Alexander L. George Article Award for best article from APSA’s Qualitative and Multi-Method Research section

2021, “The Global Comparative Study of Gangs and Other Non-State Armed Groups.” In E. Erez & P. Ibarra (Eds.). *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Oxford University Press.

2020, “Criminal Violence in Latin America.” *Latin American Research Review* 55(2): 397-406. Co-authored with Juan Albarracín.

2017, “Criminal Politics: An Integrated Approach to the Study of Organized Crime, Politics, and Violence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 15(4): 967-987.

- Mildred Potter Hovland Award, best paper by a UW–Madison graduate student

2017, “Crime and plural orders in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.” *Current Sociology* 65(3): 448-465. Co-authored with Enrique Desmond Arias.

- Best Article by LASA Defense, Public Security, and Democracy Section

Works-in-Progress

“Rebels or Criminals? Criminalization and the Politics of Classifying Non-State Armed Groups” (with Zachariah Mampilly)

“Criminalized Democracy: The Electoral Consequences of Gang Territorial Control in Rio de Janeiro” (with Juan Albarracín)

“Resident Resistance: Denouncing Criminalized Groups in Rio de Janeiro”

“*Saindo do Tráfico*: Gang Desistence amid Military Occupation”

“Citizen Responses to Criminalized Governance”

“*Borders, Bocas, and Bailes*: The Ideology of Drug-Trafficking Gangs in Rio de Janeiro”

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

External

2025, Columbia University, President’s Global Innovation Fund, with Eduardo Moncada and Luna Borges (\$25,000)

2025, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Distinguished Scholar Award, with Juan Masullo (\$42,750)

2025, Leverhulme Trust, Research Fellowship (£64,247)

2024, Royal Society of Edinburgh, Personal Research Fellowship (£49,995)
2021, British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant, University of St Andrews (£9,776)
2020, Franklin Research Grant, American Philosophical Society (\$6,000)
2020-2021, Fellowship, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame
(declined)
2017-2019, Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship, European University Institute (*declined*)
2016-2017, Harry Frank Guggenheim Fellowship (\$20,000)
2014-2015, Fulbright Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Award (\$64,000)
2013-2014, SSRC, International Dissertation Research Fellowship (\$14,000)
2013-2014, SSRC, Drugs, Security and Democracy in Latin America (\$14,000)
2012-2013, NSF, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (\$13,000)
2008-2009, Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship, Haifa, Israel (\$20,000)

Internal

2025, Impact Main Award, University of St Andrews, (£14,980)
2023, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Grant, University of St Andrews (£1,800)
2023, Impact Main Award, University of St Andrews, (£15,000)
2019, Institute for Global Engagement, Grinnell College (\$7,000)
2019, Art at Watson Fund, Watson Institute, Brown University (\$3,000)
2015, Mellon Summer Dissertation Fellowship, UW-Madison (\$8,000)
2015, International Institute Summer Fieldwork Fellowship (\$3,000)

AWARDS AND HONORS

2025, 1413 Teaching Awards, Outstanding Innovation in Teaching Award (nominated),
University of St Andrews
2024, 1413 Teaching Awards, Outstanding Educator (nominated), University of St Andrews
2022, Alexander L. George Article Award, American Political Science Association's (APSA)
Qualitative and Multi-Method Research section
2018, Best Dissertation, Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics
2017, Best Fieldwork, APSA's Comparative Democratization Section
2017, Best Article, Latin American Studies Association's Defense, Public Security, and
Democracy Section
2016, Mildred Potter Hovland Award for best article by graduate student, UW-Madison
2016-2017, Letters & Sciences Teaching Fellows Award, UW-Madison
2012, Joaquim Nabuco Award for best graduate paper on Brazil, UW-Madison
2012, University Housing Honored Instructor, UW-Madison
2010-2011, Campus-Wide Teaching Assistant Award, UW-Madison

OTHER PUBLICATIONS & ACADEMIC OUTPUT

2025, “¿Estará Río de Janeiro más segura después de la Operación Contención? Los estudios
sobre la mano dura en América Latina sugieren que no,” *El País*. Nov 29 (with Verónica
Zubillaga, Rebecca Hanson, Maryhen Jiménez, Juan Albarracín, and Benjamin Lessing).

2025, "Why the War on Crime Threatens Democracy," *Journal of Democracy Online Exclusives*, November 24 (with Juan Masullo and Henrique Gomes).

2025, "Criminalized Governance in Rio's Neighborhoods," Orion Talks Podcast, Orion Policy Institute, April 21.

2024, "Maré from the Inside: Race, Gender, and Utopia in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Theatre Arts Building, University of St Andrews, Mar 15-May 25.

2023, "Maré from the Inside: Race, Gender, and Utopia in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Matthew Gallery, University of Edinburgh, Aug 4-Sept 18.

2023, "Resisting Extortion: Victims, Criminals, and States in Latin America (Review article)," *Journal of Strategic Security* 16(2): 134-137.

2022, "Maré from the Inside," Elmaleh Gallery, University of Virginia School of Architecture, Mar 25-April 22.

2021, "Celebrating Brazilian Favelas," University of St Andrews Research Blog. June 10.

2021, "Maré from the Inside: Art, Culture, and Politics in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Carol M. Newman Library, Virginia Tech University, April-Sept.

2020, "Criminal Governance in the Time of COVID-19," Urban Violence Research Network, with Juan Albarracín. July 4.

2019, "Maré de Dentro: Life in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Burling Gallery, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, Nov 2-Feb 19.

2019, "Maré de Dentro: Life amid the Militarization of Rio de Janeiro's Favelas—A photography and film exhibit," Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Brown University, Providence, RI, Mar 5-May 5.

2019, "Maré de Dentro: Life amid the Militarization of Rio de Janeiro's Favelas—A photography and film exhibit," Bertelsmann Campus Center, Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson, NY, Feb 1-Mar 1.

2018, "Life in a War Zone: Putting the military in control of Rio de Janeiro's policing threatens Brazilian democracy," *US News & World Report*. Feb 23.

2018, "Recruitment and Remobilization (Review article)," *Dynamics of Asymmetrical Conflict* 11(2): 121-122.

2017, "Bruno: Conversations with a Brazilian Drug Dealer (Review article)," *Latin American Politics and Society* 59(4): 147-149.

2016, "Mobilization in the Wake of Rio's Olympics," *Mobilizing Ideas*. Aug 28.

2014, "With Brazil in Spotlight, Rio's Favela Pacification Program at a Crossroads," *World Politics Review*. June 9.

2014, "Rio de Janeiro's BOPE and Police Pacification: Fear and Intimidation in Complexo da Maré," *Anthropopoliteia*. June 6.

2013, "The Rio Protests: Who, What, Why and Will They Matter?" *The Monkey Cage*. June 28.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Panels/Conferences Organized

2023, "Extra-Legal Governance in Global Perspective," Center for Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, Brown University, October 20-21.

2022, "Illicit Economies and Extra-Legal Actors," US-Mex Center, University of California San Diego, San Diego, CA, October 13-14.

2021, "The Politics of Illicit Economies, Organized Crime, and Extra-Legal Actors Mini-Conference," American Political Science Association Conference, Seattle, WA, September 29-October 3.

2019, "Armed Groups and Elections," American Political Science Association Conference, Washington DC, August 29-September 1.

2019, "Academia, Activism, and the Ethics of Research Collaboration in Rio's Favelas," Latin American Studies Association Congress, Boston, MA, May 24-27.

2019, "Maré de Dentro: Life amid the Militarization of Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Brown University, Providence, RI, March 5.

2019, "Maré de Dentro: Life amid the Militarization of Rio de Janeiro's Favelas," Bard College, Red Hook, NY, February 28.

2016, "The Politics of Violence: How and Why Organized Crime is Political," Criminal Actors in the Americas Conference, UW-Madison, April 1.

2016, "Perspectives of Ethnography: The Role of Research Collaborators," Latin American Studies Association Congress, New York City, NY, May 27-31.

Papers Presented

2024, "Resident Resistance: The Territorial Logic of Denouncing Organized Crime Groups in Rio de Janeiro," Latin American Studies Association, Bogotá, CO, June 11-14.

2023, "Resident Resistance: The Territorial Logic of Denouncing Organized Crime Groups in Rio de Janeiro," European Initiative for Security Studies, Barcelona, SP, June 29-30.

2022, "Criminalized Democracy: The Electoral Consequences of Gang Territorial Control in Rio de Janeiro," American Political Science Association, Montréal, CA, Sept. 15-18.

2021, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Organized Crime in Rio de Janeiro," and "Criminalized Democracy: The Electoral Consequences of Gang Territorial Control in Rio de Janeiro," International Studies Association (virtual), April 6-9.

2020, "The Logic of Criminal Territorial Control: Military Intervention in Rio de Janeiro," American Political Science Association (virtual), September 10-13.

2019, "A History of Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," A Home of My Own: The Shifting Signifiers of Racialized Space in Metropolitan America Workshop, Brown University, Providence, RI, February 15.

2018, "Criminalized Democracy: The Electoral Consequences of Gang Territorial Control in Rio de Janeiro." American Political Science Association, Boston, MA, August 30-Sept. 2.

2018, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Gangs in Rio de Janeiro." Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics, Montreal, QC, June 21-23.

2018, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Gangs in Rio de Janeiro." Latin American Studies Association Congress, Barcelona, ES, May 23-26.

2017, "Resident Resistance: A Quantitative Analysis of Gang Denunciations in Rio de Janeiro." Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 6-9.

2016, American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, September 1-4; Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 7-10.

2015, Latin American Studies Association Congress, San Juan, PR, May 27-30; Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 16-19.

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION

2025, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," University of Milan, November 25.

2025, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Criminalized Groups in Rio de Janeiro," TE Lawrence Program on the Study of Conflict, Oxford University, November 24

2025, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies, Brown University, November 19.

2025, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Criminalized Groups in Rio de Janeiro," CrimGov Workshop, Sciences Po, November 6-7.

2025, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Institute of Latin American Studies, Columbia University, October 8.

2025, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Center for the Americas, University of Oklahoma, October 7.

2025, "Rebels or Criminals? Criminalization and the Politics of Classifying Non-State Armed Groups," Political Violence and Its Legacies, Yale University, September 3.

2025, "Gang Evolution in Rio de Janeiro: Centripetal and Centrifugal Processes," Comparative Politics Workshop, The Graduate Center, CUNY, February 19.

2024, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Department of Government, Uppsala University, April 19.

2024, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Department of Peace & Conflict Research, Uppsala University, April 18.

2024, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Department of Political Science, University of Oslo, April 12.

2024, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Department of Political Science, Bergen University, April 10.

2024, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," The Extra-Legal Governance Institute, Oxford University, March 22.

2023, "Governança Criminalizada: Complexo da Maré e além," 2º Congresso Falando de Segurança Pública na Maré, Rio de Janeiro, December 8.

2023, "Inside Criminalized Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," The Graduate Center, CUNY, October 17.

2023, "Inside Gang Governance: How and Why Gangs Rule the Streets of Rio de Janeiro," Centre for International Relations, Leiden University, April 14.

2023, "Resident Resistance: Denouncing Organized Criminal Groups in Rio de Janeiro," Institute of Political Science, Leiden University, April 13.

2023, "Predators or Protectors: Understanding Urban Gang Violence Around the World," Knowledge Against Violence Speaker Series, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation (virtual), February 16.

2023, "Democracy Endangered: The Case of Brazil," The Free Speech Project, Georgetown University and Oxford University (virtual), February 15.

2022, "Monopolies of Violence: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," Politics and Government Seminar, CIDE (virtual), 7 December.

2022, "A Theory of Gang Governance," Non-State Armed Governance Working Group (virtual), October 21.

2022, "A Theory of Gang Governance," University of California Irvine, Comparative Politics Seminar, October 20.

2022, "Civilian-Armed Group Relations," ODI's Centre for the Study of Armed Groups (virtual), June 21.

2022, "Maré from the Inside: Representation and Community Participation in Public Art Projects," Solas Festival, Perth, SCOT, June 18.

2021, "The Logic of Criminal Territorial Control," Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security, Oxford University (virtual), September 16-17.

2021, "Criminal Governance in the COVID-19 Era," University of Nevada, Reno, Second Tuesdays Webinar Series (virtual), February 9.

2020, "Criminality and Conflict Workshop," Peace Science Society (virtual), November 9-10.

2019, "Monopolies of Violence: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," Boston University, Research in Comparative Politics Workshop, Boston, MA, November 20.

2019, "Monopolies of Violence: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," Iowa State Political Science Department, Ames, IA, November 14.

2019, "Career Fair: Landing a Postdoc," American Political Science Association Conference, Washington DC, August 29-September 1.

2019, "The Origins of Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," Utrecht University, Utrecht, NL, March 21.

2019, Bridging the Gap Workshop, University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, February 24-26.

2018, "Monopolies of Violence: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro," UMass Amherst Legal Studies Seminar, Amherst, MA, November 7.

2018, "Mapping Criminal Territories in Rio de Janeiro: 2002-2018." Criminal Governance in the Americas, The University of Chicago, October 26.

2018, "Borders, Bocas, and Bailes: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro." RAND: The Politics of Organized Crime, Arlington, VA, October 15.

2018, "Border, Bocas, and Bailes: The Social Order of the Drug Trade in Rio de Janeiro." The Institute for Design and Public Policy: Trafficking Systems Studio, Rhode Island School of Design, February 3.

2017, "Borders, Bocas, and Bailes: Gang Governance in Rio de Janeiro." The Governance of the Global Narcotics Trade Workshop, George Mason University, Washington, DC, February 3.

2016, "Criminal Politics: An Integrated Approach to Crime, Politics, and Violence." Order, Conflict, and Violence Workshop, Yale University, December 5.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

2025, "Criminalized Governance in Rio's Neighborhoods," *Orion Policy Institute*. April 21. (<https://orionpolicy.org/nicholas-barnes-criminalized-governance-in-rios-neighborhoods/>)

2019, Castro, Montserrat G. "Burling exhibit explores life in Brazil's Complexo da Maré," *The Scarlet & Black*. November 7. (<http://www.thesandb.com/article/burling-exhibit-explores-life-in-brazils-complex-da-mare.html>)

2019, "A Look Inside Rio's Favelas," on *Brazil Unfiltered* with James N. Green, March 26. (<https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/brazil-unfiltered/a-look-inside-rios-favelas-aYOQpqlrnMi/>)

2019, “Governing Rio de Janeiro’s Favelas,” on *Trending Globally* with Sarah Beneich-Baldwin, March 17. (<https://soundcloud.com/watsoninstitute/governing-rio-de-janeiros-favelas>)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of St. Andrews, Scotland, UK

Research Methods (PhD), 2021 (Autumn), 2022 (Autumn), 2023 (Autumn)

Organised Crime and Corruption, 2020 (Autumn), 2022 (Spring), 2022 (Autumn), 2024 (Spring)

Armed Governance (Masters), 2022 (Spring), 2024 (Spring)

The Politics of Violence and Resistance in Latin America, 2021 (Spring), 2023 (Autumn)

Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA

Introduction to Political Science, 2019 (Autumn), 2020 (Spring)

Political Violence in the 21st Century, 2020 (Spring)

The International Politics of Organized Crime, 2020 (Spring)

State and Society in Latin America, 2019 (Autumn)

FIELDWORK AND INTERNATIONAL STUDY

Brazil (48 months total): 5/2011-6/2011; 6/2012-8/2012; 10/2012-12/2013; 2/2014-2/2015; 9/2015-10/2015; 1/2017-2/2017; 6/2018-7/2018; 1/2023-4/2023; 6/2024-9/2024; 1/2025-2/2025; 6/2025-7/2025; 1/2026

Israel/Palestine (11 months): 8/2008-7/2009

Ireland (11 months): 8/2007-7/2008

Thailand (8 months): 9/2004-4/2005

Spain (5 months): 7/2002-12/2002

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Reviewer for *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *American Sociological Review*, *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Crime, Law and Social Change*, *European Research Council*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Studies Review*, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Latin American Politics & Society*, *Latin American Research Review*, *Perspective on Politics*, *Politics & Policy*, *PS: Political Science & Politics*, *Social Problems*, *Sociological Forum*, *Urban Studies*, *Violence: An International Journal*, *World Development*

Member of the Latin American Studies Association (2012-present), American Political Science Association (2015-present), International Studies Association (2019-present), Peace Science Society (2020-present), and Conflict Research Society (2024-present)

LANGUAGES

English (native), Portuguese (professional fluency), Spanish (basic fluency)

ArcGIS, STATA, R, Excel, Tableau

PHD STUDENTS

Nathan Southern, 2023-present

Benjamin Weber, 2024-present

Katelyn Knutley, 2024-present

Agustín Berea, 2024-present

Sike Li, 2025-present