Workshop on *Best Practices in the Collection and Presentation of Conflict Data*
Post-Conference Report.
International Studies Association Annual Convention
San Francisco, CA. April 2, 2013.

From: Idean Salehyan, Workshop Chair
To: Cameron Thies, Chair, ISA Workshop Grants Committee
CC: Jeanne White

April 29, 2013

Workshop Proceedings
On April 2, prior to the 2013 ISA annual convention, leading scholars involved in collecting and analyzing conflict data were present to discuss best practices in data collection. The day was divided into three sessions. First, leading data collection projects (e.g. Correlates of War; the Cingaralli-Richards Human Rights Data) discussed their own data collection and validation processes. They shared lessons from their own practices and discussed some of the difficult choices made as data coding protocols were established. Second, a series of papers were presented, which analyzed specific themes including media bias, comparisons of existing data, and data integration across sources. These proposed various analytical techniques for assessing data quality. Finally, a brainstorming session was held in which participants discussed a series of "lessons learned" and also planned a course of action for future data integration. The agenda for the workshop and list of participants are included below.

ISA Workshop on "Best Practices in Data Collection"
International Studies Association Annual Convention
San Francisco, CA.   April 2, 2013
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9am – 9:15am: Welcome and Introductions
9:15 – 9:30am: Overview of the workshop, Idean Salehyan
9:30-10:30am: Data Projects I (10 min each)
    Bennett, COW
    Hensel/Mitchell, ICOW
    Oberg/Sollenberg, Uppsala ACD
    Jenkins, World Handbook
    Schrodt, GDELT

10:30-10:45: Break

10:45-12:00pm: Data Projects II (10 min each)
    Behlendorf, GTD
    Crenshaw, Mapping the Militants
    Cunningham/Gleditsch/Salehyan, NSA
    Chenoweth, NAVCO
    Hendrix/Salehyan, SCAD
    Buhaug, PRIO-GRID
    Clay, CIRI

12:00-1pm: Working Lunch (Discussion of Existing Data)

1pm-3pm: Substantive Papers I (10-12 Min Each)
    Weidmann, "On the Accuracy of Media-Biased Conflict Event Data"
    Jenkins, "Getting Attention: What Gets in to International News Wires"
    Kreutz, "There's A War on the News: Media Coverage of Southern Thailand Political
        Violence."
    Bagozzi/Schrodt, "The Dimensionality of Political News Reports."

3pm-3:15pm: Break

3:15pm-4:10pm: Substantive Papers II (10-12min Each)
    Asal/Gleditsch, "Shared Contentious Actor Registry."
    Conrad, "Political Institutions, Plausible Deniability, and the Use of Stealth Torture."
    Wright, "Autocratic Instability"

4:10-5:30: General Discussion and Next Steps

Participant List

Victor	Asal	vasal@albany.edu
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Follow up Plans

Several of the workshop participants have agreed to pursue a symposium for a journal on the topic of data collection. We have contacted *PS: Political Science and Politics,* as well as the *Journal of Peace Research.* We are still waiting to hear back from the editorial boards of these journals as to whether they would be amenable to such a symposium. If approved, 6-8 contributions in the range of 2,000-3,000 words will be selected to address the general workshop theme.

In addition, we have submitted a roundtable for next year's ISA meeting including representatives from Correlates of War, Minorities at Risk, the Global Terrorism Database, the Uppsala Armed Conflict Database, and the Penn State Events Data Project. The submission confirmation for the roundtable is included below. Participants are also organizing a panel submission on the topic of media bias and conflict data. This submission should occur well in advance of the deadline.

Title:

Best Practices in the Collection of Conflict Data

Participants:

- [Idean Salehyan](#) (Chair)
- [D. Scott Bennett](#) (Participant)
- [Johanna K. Birnir](#) (Participant)
- [Margareta Sollenberg](#) (Participant)
- [Philip A. Schrodt](#) (Participant)
- [Erin E. Miller](#) (Participant)

Section/Theme/Organization Designations:

- Theme: Spaces and Places: Geopolitics in an Era of Globalization
- Scientific Study of International Processes

Abstract: Research on conflict and political violence has made use of increasingly sophisticated data and methodological analyses. While scholars have devoted significant attention to appropriate statistical methodologies for analyzing data, rarely does the research community think critically about the choices made during the data collection processes. At the 2013 ISA Convention in San Francisco, a workshop was held bringing together several of the major data collection projects to discuss best practices in collecting, presenting, and integrating data. This roundtable brings together leading scholars to discuss some of the common pitfalls of data collection and important lessons for the conflict studies community. Representatives from the Correlates of War project (Bennett), the Global Terrorism Database (Miller), Minorities at Risk (Birnir), the Penn State Event Data Project (Schrodt), and the Uppsala Armed Conflict Dataset (Sollenberg)

will be present at the round table to discuss a common set of best practices in data collection.

Budget and Expenses
We requested and received funding for AV equipment, meals and coffee, hotel accommodations, and per diems for each of the presenters, as outlined in our original proposal. Three of the participants did not request reimbursement, and this money will be retained by the ISA. LaFree did not attend the conference, but sent an (unfunded) representative from the University of Maryland (Brandon Behlendorf) to take his place. Mitchell received conference funding from another source and did not request funding from the ISA. Oberg did not request a hotel stay as he shared a room with Sollenberg (his wife). All receipts and reimbursement forms have been submitted to Jeanne White in accordance with workshop guidelines.