One recent development in international politics is that interstate war is more important, or has more of an impact on world politics than civil war. Many people believe this because interstate wars have more countries involved so there is more at stake for multiple international players. But since World War II there have been more civil wars than interstate wars. A proxy war is a war initiated by a major power that does not become directly involved. Military intervention is when a state introduces troops or some kind of military power in an already existing conflict. The type of war with the most battle deaths in a majority of wars since 150 is civil wars with foreign intervention. In sum, the majority of wars today are civil wars, and civil wars with foreign intervention result in more human suffering. It is thus important to consider which countries are more likely to intervene in these conflicts.

My thesis project builds on the work of Colgan (2013), who argues that revolutionary petro-states are more likely to be militarily aggressive than those that are not revolutionary or petro-states. Colgan gives two reasons that revolutionary governments are more likely to be aggressive than non-revolutionary governments. The first is that revolutionary politics is more likely to select leaders that are more risk tolerant and ambitiously progressive than non-revolutionary leaders. The second reason is that revolutions usually “eliminate domestic political constraints that might otherwise restrain an aggressive leader from taking a state into conflict or war” (Colgan 33). As an extension of Colgan’s theory, which focuses on revolutionary petro-
states involvement in interstate war, my research is focused on revolutionary petro-states’ involvement in intrastate war intervention.

I hypothesize that when comparing governments, those that are revolutionary petro-states are more likely to intervene with direct military forces instead of indirect support such as finance, intelligence, etc. I also hypothesize that those governments that are revolutionary petro-states are more likely to intervene in civil wars during/after the revolutionary period than before the revolution takes place.

In order to test these hypotheses, quantitative analysis will be used to determine the relationship between the variables. The data set used in this study will be “UCDP External Support Data.” Using the UCDP data, I will measure the propensity of each of these states to intervene in civil wars over time before during and after revolution. My theory expects that the number and scale of such interventions should increase sharply immediately after the onset of revolution, and to decline after the end of the revolution. Using the UCDP data, I will measure the propensity of each of these states to intervene with direct military action and indirect non-violent action. My theory expects that the nature of the revolutionary states’ interventions will be primarily direct military action. Following the measures of the UCDP data, I will select a smaller number of the eight countries examined in order to see if the mechanisms involved in the theory actually influenced a state’s likelihood to intervene.
Works Cited
