



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

MERSHON CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY STUDIES

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 2026

ABOUT MERSHON CENTER

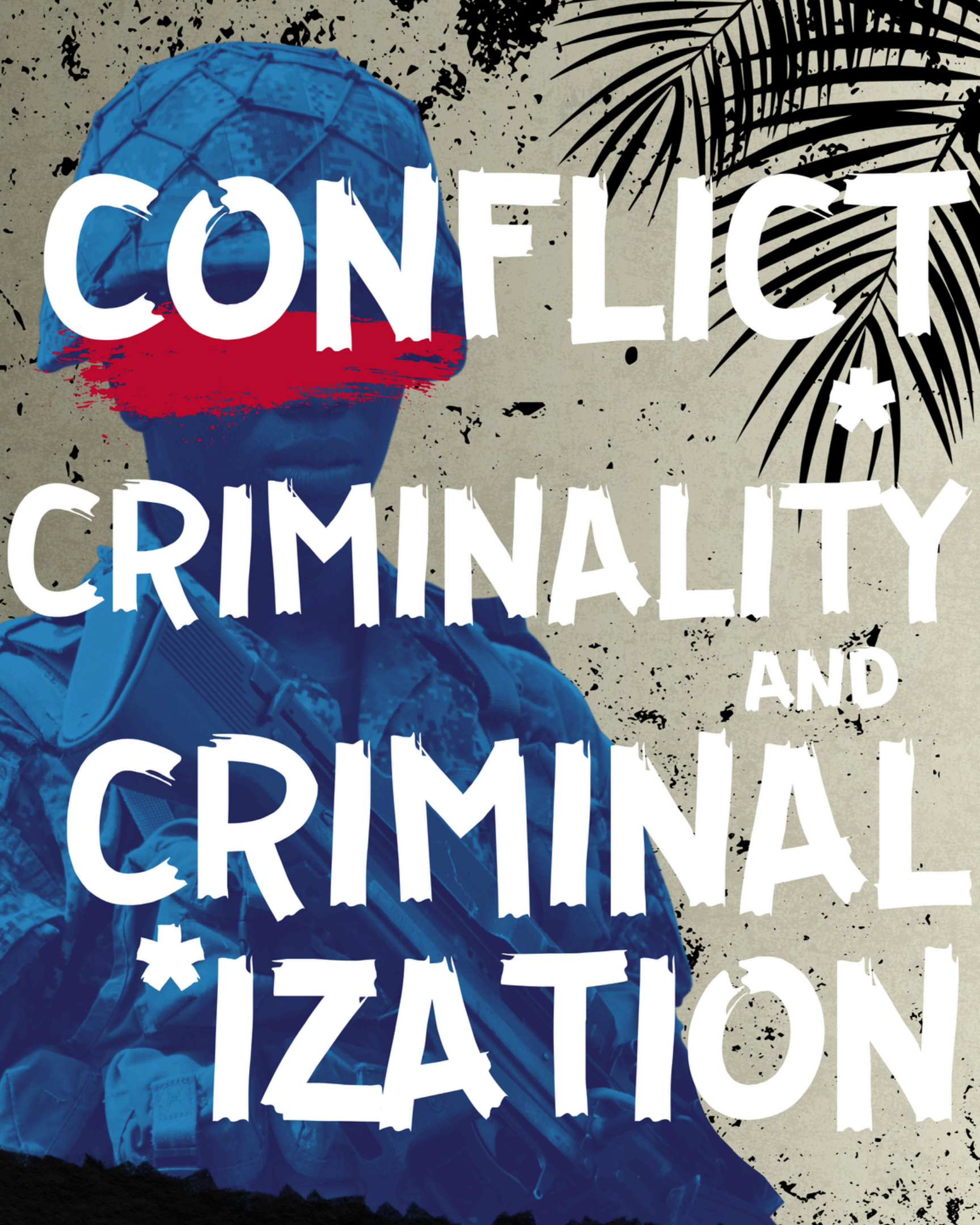




The Mershon Center for International Security Studies (Mershon Center) convenes researchers across disciplines for the collaborative exploration of international, national, and human security questions. Our goal is to advance understanding of the human and social dimensions of security challenges. This integrated vision improves established approaches to problem-solving and generates new ones.

*Mershon Center
2025-2026 support for
projects exploring the
human factor of security
studies **exceeded half a
million dollars** and
included funding for 20
faculty projects, 11
graduate student
projects, and one
residency.*





CONFLICT * CRIMINALITY AND * CRIMINALIZATION

In 2025-2026 the Mershon Center launched two major new peacebuilding initiatives. **Mershon Search Lab** is a partnership with Unidad de Búsqueda de Personas dadas por Desaparecidas (UBPD) that includes interdisciplinary research, training, and practice on the Search for Disappeared Persons in Colombia. **From Conflict to Criminality** explores the legacy of armed conflict through the nexus between violent political conflict and criminality.

2025-2026
HIGHLIGHTS





INTERNATIONAL HISTORY SEMINAR (IHS)

IHS explored new areas of research in international history and featured R. Joseph Parrott, Keisha Blain, Renata Keller, David Glovsky, Jordan Howell, Molly Wood, Mary Elizabeth Walters, Yiğit Akın, and Jason C. Parker.



VISTING SCHOLAR IVAN KURILLA
September 18

Mershon Center Visiting Scholar Ivan Kurilla spoke on the
“Political Use and Misuse of the Past in Russia, the United
States, and Elsewhere.”



CON CRIM CRIMINAL *IZATION

October 2, 2025

Roddy Brett - University of Bristol, UK, Anthro/Poli Sci
Kendra McSweeney - The Ohio State University, Geography
Mat Coleman - The Ohio State University, Geography
Eric Schoon - The Ohio State University, Sociology

 **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**
Mershon Center for International
Security Studies



CONFLICT, CRIMINALITY AND CREIMINALIZATION

October 2-3

This two-day event marked the launch of a new Mershon Center project, “From Violent Political Conflict to Criminality,” led by Professor Roddy Brett of the University of Bristol and Dr. Teri Murphy.



NATIONAL SECURITY SIMULATION (SIM) October 23-25

An unforgettable two-day, real-time role-play and professional training experience that bridged the academic and work worlds, the Sim included 200+ players simulating governance at the federal, state, and local levels, plus the media and private sector.



**FORMER SENATOR & AMBASSADOR
JEFF FLAKE
November 5**

The ASC Leadership Major presented Former Senator and Ambassador Jeff Flake on "Why the World Needs Leaders," which was co-sponsored by the Mershon Center.





**FURNISS BOOK AWARD LECTURE
TYLER JOST ON BUREAUCRACIES AT WAR
November 6**

Tyler Jost, Brown University, received the 2024 Edgar S. Furniss Book Award for his book "Bureaucracies at War: The Institutional Origins of Miscalculation" (Cambridge Studies in International Relations, 2024).



Measuring Peace

Research Discussion Series

MEASURING PEACE
DR. CLARA VOYVODIC
November 13

As part of the Mershon Center's Measuring Peace Research Discussion Series, Dr. Clara Voyvodic, University of Bradford, spoke on rebel governance and politics of access.



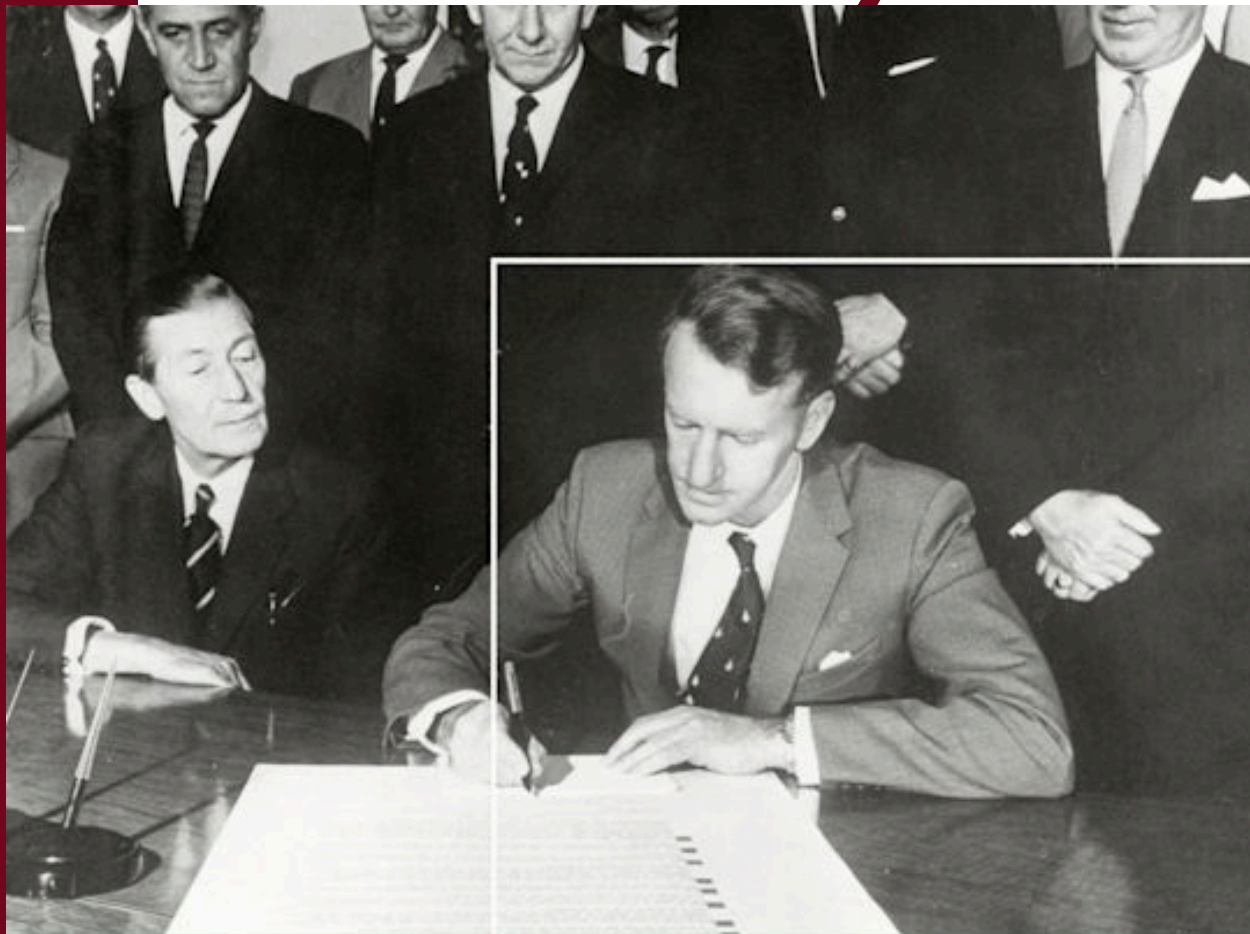
THE OPERATION IN VENEZUELA LAW, OIL, GEOPOLITICS January 15

Co-sponsored by the Ohio State Center for Latin American Studies, this forum offered a range of perspectives informed by law, history, geography, and political science on Operation Absolute Resolve.



NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE January 29-30

Ohio State's first America250 event, this conference included panels on encounters, people and place, labor, mobility, law, education, settlement, and the economy, plus keynote Speaker Annette Gordon-Reed, Brown University.



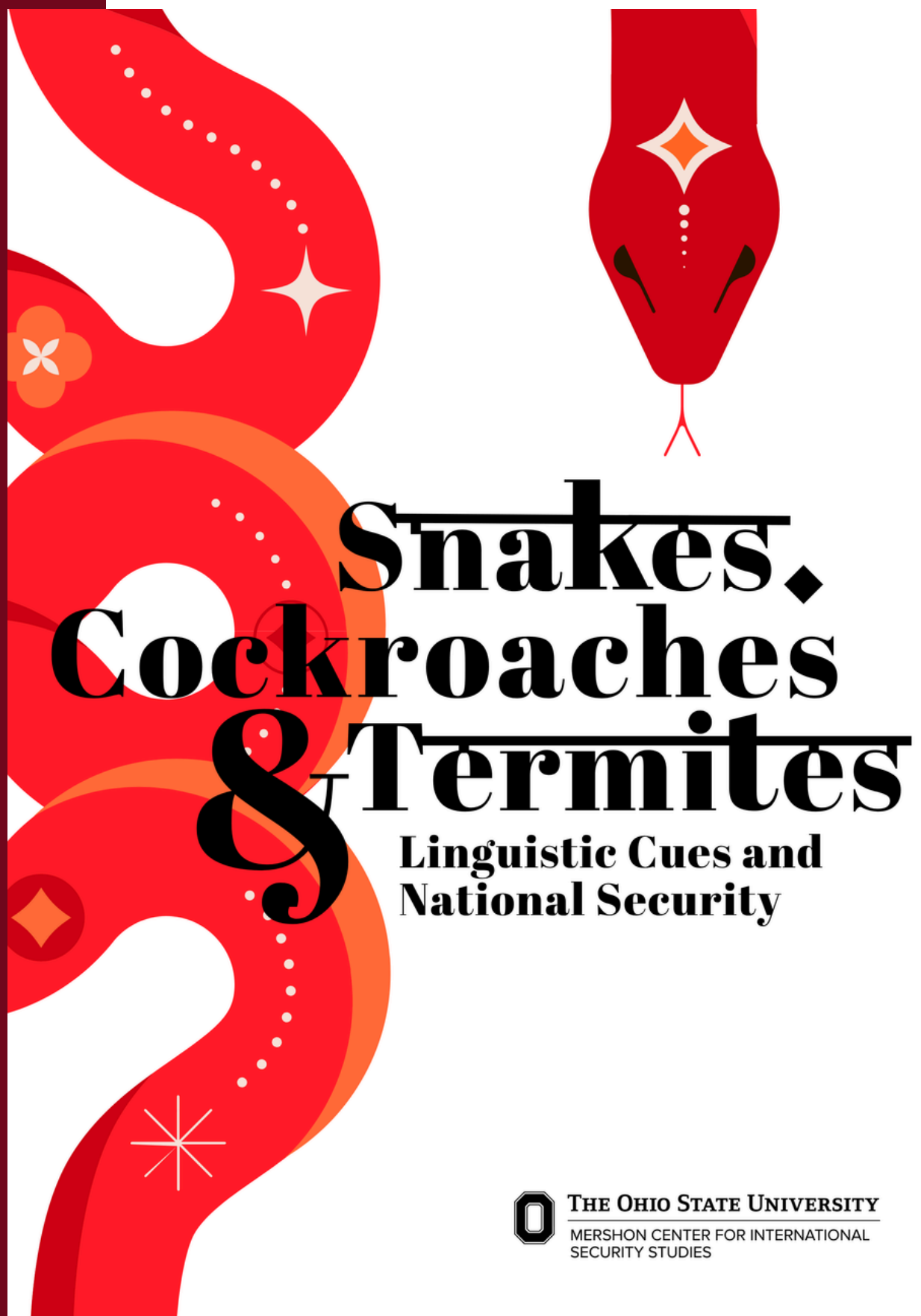
Edited by Hugh Pattenden,
Carl P. Watts & Sue Onslow

RHODESIA'S UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

National, Regional, International
and Transnational Perspectives

"RHODESIA'S ENDURING LEGACY, 60 YEARS LATER," CARL WATTS February 13

Co-sponsored by the Department of History and VIEW: Violence, Ideology, and Extremism Working Group, this book talk with Carl Watts explored "Rhodesia's Enduring Legacy, 60 Years Later."



**“SNAKES,” “COCKROACHES,” AND “TERMITES”
LINGUISTIC CUES AND NATIONAL SECURITY**

March 26-27

This two-day seminar brought together scholars across several disciplines to discuss how language use contributes to the deterioration of national and international security.



SKILLS AS SECURITY SEMICONDUCTOR RESHORING & THE PROMISE OF “GOOD JOBS” IN CHIPMAKING April 2

Julia Marino, Mershon Center Postdoc, and Madhumita Dutta, Associate Professor of Geography, led a discussion of their research on semiconductor reshoring and the promise of good jobs.





CHINA'S GRAND STRATEGY
KETIAN ZHANG

April 9

Ketian Zhang, Associate Professor of International Security in the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University, gave a book talk about her most recent publication “Economic Interdependence and Rising Power Grand Strategies.”

MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS

since



MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS SINCE 1945 April 10-11

Organized by Peter R. Mansoor, the Mershon Center Gen. Raymond E. Mason Jr. Chair of Military History, the Military Effectiveness since 1945 conference explored the development of effective (and ineffective) military organizations from 1945 to the present.

April 10-11, 2026

Bruce Bechtol Jr. - Angelo State University

Michael Kofman - Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Xiao-Bing Li - University of Central Oklahoma

Peter Mansoor - The Ohio State University

Allan Millett - University of New Orleans

Peter Roberts - RUSI

Jonathan Roll - Stanford University

Oliver Schmitt - University of Southern Denmark

Craig Stockings - University of New South Wales Sydney

David Stone - Naval War College

Arjun Subramaniam - India National Defence College

Katelyn Tietzen - US Army Center of Military History

Steven R. Ward - USAR (ret.)



RETHINKING AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY

May 29-30

Co-organized by Christopher McKnight Nichols, Mershon Center Wayne Woodrow Hayes Chair in National Security Studies, this conference brought together exceptional scholars and thinkers, eminent figures and rising stars to rethink the past and present of American grand strategy.



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THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS
OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS

Summer Institute: Strategic Cultures
June 21-24, 2026



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**SOCIETY FOR HISTORIANS OF
AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS
SUMMER INSTITUTE**

June 21-24

Co-directors Christopher McKnight Nichols and Andrew Preston, University of Virginia, welcomed selected Ph.D. candidates to Ohio State to explore the variety of U.S. strategic cultures that emerged in response to previous moments of international crisis.

OUR TEAM





DOROTHY NOYES, PH.D.
Director

Arts & Sciences
Distinguished Professor
of English and Professor
of Comparative Studies



TERI MURPHY, PH.D.
Associate Director

Leads global peacebuilding
scholarship, research,
projects, partnerships, and
Mershon Search Lab



KYLE MCCRAY
Business Operations Manager



MEGAN LAWThER
Associate Manager



MELISSA FERGUSON
Communications Associate



JULIA MARINO
Postdoctoral Scholar



HELEN MURPHEY
Postdoctoral Scholar



NICK NYACHEGA
Postdoctoral Scholar



EMILY LYNCH
Student Assistant

Heading to law school after
obtaining a Honors
Bachelor of Arts in Spanish
and International Studies



FIONA KUMAR
Student Assistant

A third year
International Studies
student, specializing in
Security and Intelligence



SARA WEINSTEIN
Communications Associate

Recipient of the Morrill
Distinction Scholarship
and studying
International Affairs



CARLIN STARR EVANS

Research Assistant

Chadwick F. Alger
Scholarship recipient
majoring in International
Studies and French and
Francophone Studies

We house three endowed chairs and two designated professorships to support core activities in military history, peace studies, and national, international, and human security. Our faculty and graduate affiliates, supported by our director, postdoc cohort, and professional staff, contribute their energies to broaden and thicken our intellectual networks.

16	Academic Departments
131+	Affiliates
68	Collaborating Institutions



THANK YOU

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