**Humanising Political Violence: Lee Ann Fujii’s Legacies for Civil War Studies**[[1]](#footnote-1)

Anastasia Shesterinina

Abstract

This article highlights Lee Ann Fujii’s legacy of humanising our research on and understanding of political violence and contributions on the social embeddedness of participation in violence, the endogeneity of social categories to violence, and embodied and performative dimensions of violence. It argues that civil war scholars should draw on Fujii’s relational approach as an ethical radar for the methods we use and a reality check on our analytical frameworks.

Lee Ann Fujii was a phenomenal force in the study of political violence. She placed ordinary people and their interactions at the centre of analysis and brought to light the power of social ties to mediate between scripts for violence and its performance and of endogenous and embodied dynamics of violence to transform old and forge new identities, categories and orders. Working across commonly siloed forms of violence, she advanced her arguments in contexts as diverse as genocide in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and lynching in the United States. Her findings challenge macro-structural explanations of violence and its inevitability, reifying the malleability of social categories and the possibility of resistance in highly complex and ambiguous violent processes.

This relational approach to understanding political violence is also evident in how Fujii conducted her research. She drew on a range of sources while prioritising lengthy, often repeated interviews, especially with the lowest-level participants in violence. These interviews focused on not only what participants said but also what they did not, how the researcher’s and participants’ positions shaped knowledge production and other meta-data that Fujii reflected upon and interpreted as part of her research process. Research ethics in this process is an ongoing responsibility of the researcher rather than a box-ticking institutional approval exercise and what the researcher seeks to build are working relationships that acknowledge the humanity of participants and the researcher herself.

Fujii’s careful attention to human relationships draws out human dimensions both in our research on and understanding of political violence—its intimacy, contradictions, and mistakes. As McNulty et al. (2018, p. 679) say, Fujii ‘would not let us escape recognising the horror and violence inherent in the human experience. She held humanity accountable… [and] demanded that researchers be accountable in their relationships with research participants’ (see also Straus 2022, pp. 101-102). This humanising effort, what Manekin and Parkinson (2022, p. 121) call ‘writing humanity into violence’, is Fujii’s overarching legacy for the study of political violence.

Highlighting this ‘humanist ethos’ throughout the discussion, this article draws lessons from Fujii’s substantive and methodological contributions for research on civil war in particular (Fujii 2018, p. 90). One might argue that such siloing goes against the very goal in Fujii’s work to bring in conversation different forms of violence, from lynching to genocide, which occur not only ‘over there’ but also close to home, including in the US (Wood 2022, p. 114). But this is precisely the kind of lesson that we as civil war scholars can learn from Fujii’s path-breaking vision. I proceed in three parts. The first part, *Understanding political violence and war*, discusses Fujii’s approach to political violence as a social process focusing on her arguments on the social underpinnings of participation in violence and the endogeneity of social categories to violence and its performance, with implications for our analysis of civil wars as dynamic processes. The second, on *Researching political violence and war*, explores Fujii’s lessons on research methods and ethics. I conclude with a personal reflection and a summary of this work’s legacies for the field.

**Understanding political violence and war**

***Three observations on violence***

All scholars who work on questions of why and how people come to participate in political violence can benefit from insights that emerge from Fujii’s research on these questions. These insights stem from three important observations, first, it is ordinary people who are the crux of participants. Joiners, or the lowest-level participants in the communities Fujii studied in Rwanda, for example, were typically farmers who were married with children and did not hold positions of power or have training in combat before the genocide (Fujii 2009, p. 130). Second, these participants ‘stood to suffer the most from the destruction of their communities’ as they ‘were not just going after an abstract category of people, but actual neighbors they knew’ (Fujii 2009, p. 16, 185). That is, the violence they participated in was socially and physically intimate, involving family and friends and carried out ‘up close and face-to-face’ (Fujii 2009, p. 172). Third, Fujii observes that violence is consistently put on display, or collectively staged ‘for people to see, notice, and take in,’ including in counterproductive ways (Fujii 2021, p. 2). Fujii analyses the lynching of George Armwood in Maryland in 1933, the parade and murder of Muslim men in a Bosnian Serb-controlled village in 1992 and the killing of a prominent family during the Rwandan genocide to illustrate this observation.

***The level of analysis***

These observations feed into the puzzles of intimate mass violence among ordinary people and of violent displays, each posing significant risks and costs to the participants, that animate Fujii’s 2009 and 2021 books, respectively. They also make clear the level of analysis necessary to address these puzzles. As Straus (2022, p. 100) aptly puts it, Fujii ‘is willing to look hard when [and, I add, *where*] our minds and bodies want us to look away.’ By focusing on ‘the immediate context in which people act and interact for, against, and toward others’ (Fujii 2009, p. 18) and examining often temporally bounded episodes of violence in great detail (Fujii 2021, p. 10-11), Fujii takes us where macro-level or institutional accounts cannot, namely, to the social dynamics that undergird violence.

Ethnicity-based approaches, Fujii (2009, pp. 4-5) explains, for example, locate the causes of violence in ethnic categories, whether ancient or constructed. Under certain conditions, in this view, collective attributes and tendencies turn people associated with these categories into groups that commit violence against their enemies, regardless of individual motives and interests. State institutions in such approaches ‘reflect existing relations between “groups”’ and enable violence at the macro level (Fujii 2021, p. 19). Fujii instead shows how at the local, small community level social ties shape people’s participation in violence and the unfolding of violence shapes the meanings of social categories. I discuss these in turn.

***Social ties and participation***

Fujii’s point of departure for thinking about social ties and participation in violence is the alternative—the resort to such categories as ethnicity to explain why groups commit violence against each other. These categories are still prevalent in accounts of civil war, with ‘ethnic hatreds’ and ‘ethnic fears’ that Fujii (2009, p. 4) identifies as common ethnicity-based approaches used to make the leap from historical myths (‘hatreds’) and their manipulation by elites (‘fears’) to the ‘eruption’ of violence. But how do macro-level elite narratives connect to the violence that is carried out locally? And why is there variation in how people across and within ‘ethnic groups’ behave when violence begins?

For Fujii, these questions point to glaring shortcomings in ethnicity-based explanations of violence. Ethnic groups do not act as single units ‘but as a variety of groups and groupings that do not always follow ethnic lines’ (Fujii 2009, p. 5). This means that ethnicity does not have the explanatory power that it is often attributed. It also means that violence is not inevitable and there is scope for agency even in wartime. The problem with ethnicity-based explanations lies in their aggregation of different experiences into static blocks, which strips participation in violence from its complexity.

Looking closely at actual participants in violence reveals that people adopt multiple roles in violence and move between what are otherwise seen as fixed categories of ‘perpetrator,’ ‘victim’ and so on. Here the power of local ties comes to the fore. Fujii does not deny ethnicity a place in understanding violence, but this place is distinct from common approaches where ‘violence is the outcome of ethnic group relations, which are inherently competitive and often antagonistic’ (Fujii 2009, p. 4). Starting from the appreciation of different meanings ethnicity can have, Fujii (2009, p. 12) develops the notion of ‘state-sponsored ethnicity’ as a ‘script’ for violence that threatened central elites produce but that local power holders interpret to fit their interests and participants perform in diverse ways. In the ‘social interaction’ argument that follows, depending on the context, family, friendship and group ties variously serve as both mechanisms for initiation into violence and targeting and conduits between the script and its performance (Fujii 2009, p. 19). Ties enable local leaders to recruit and killing groups to create targets and pull participants. Ties also prompt participants to help their friends and neighbours if ‘[o]ut of sight of leaders or other killers’ (Fujii 2009, p. 128).

***Ambiguity, endogeneity and performance***

But the process Fujii (2009, p. 19) charts does not stop at joining violence: ‘Once initiated, Joiners continued their participation because killing in large groups conferred powerful identity on these actors, which led the groups to reenact the violent practices that were consistent with the group’s identity.’ In other words, group dynamics not only transform old identities but also generate new ones. In the Rwandan case, it was ‘an Interahamwe identity. To be a real Interahamwe meant engaging in [specific] acts [of killing]’ (Fujii 2009, p. 175). Similarly, to be a ‘real Serb’ in wartime Bosnia ‘meant parading former friends and students as prisoners rather than sharing a cigarette or drink with them’ (Fujii 2021, p. 90). And to embody ‘hyper-powerful whiteness’ in the Eastern Shore of Maryland was to enact rough justice, including ‘random physical assaults on black people going about their day’ (Fujii 2021, p. 83, 65). In all these cases the meaning of identities changed from what it used to be.

Theorising this transformation, Fujii arrives at a key point: violence is a process that changes the meaning of social categories, to assert new social orders. New ways of acting toward friends and neighbours helped bring about ‘the new genocidal order’ in Rwanda (Fujii 2021, p. 60). A similar process took place in wartime Bosnia and even the already segregated Jim Crow South. To view violence in this way is to recognise the ambiguity of social categories, whose boundaries are ‘often in motion and just as often blurred at the edges’ (Fujii 2021, p. 182), and ‘endogenous sources of change—transformation that occurs through the unfolding of the process itself’ (Fujii 2009, p. 8). Because social categories are ambiguous, the process of violence transforms the basis of belonging to these categories, thereby asserting the imagined differentiated order. But for the same reason, this process is contingent, and people can deviate from and contradict the newly inscribed meanings.

The process, for Fujii, is performative—this is where Fujii makes a unique contribution (Wood 2021, p. 186). Embodied action, or what everyone taking part in the performance collectively does with their own and others’ bodies, is at the centre of meaning-making in this approach, as bodies stand in for broader social categories. Zooming into violent displays in particular, Fujii (2021) finds that actors in each episode she calls the ‘main attraction’ are cast into different roles, stage and perform these displays, no matter how willingly and wittingly, with the ‘rehearsal,’ or events preceding an episode, and ‘sideshow’ performances all continually drawing in bodies toward enactment of a new order.

***Lessons for civil war studies***

What are the implications of this discussion for civil war scholars? First, systematic observations at the lowest participant level can help pinpoint inconsistencies and limitations in existing approaches to central questions that drive research on civil war and advance new understandings in the field.

Second, to address the puzzles that emerge from these observations, we have to look closely at the actors involved in the processes we study and how they relate to one another, to reconstruct events of interest within the social contexts in which they take place and capture their underlying dynamics.

Third, and relatedly, focusing on actual participants and the full range of their actions in civil war can help us move away from macro-level concepts to uncover the variation in actions across and within social categories and theorise the agency of those involved. Such concepts as ‘ethnic civil war’ are not only unhelpful in achieving these aims but are also dangerous as they uncritically reproduce elite narratives that we should instead challenge (Fujii 2009, p. 10; 2021, p. 81).

Finally, we should appreciate the importance of endogenous dynamics for the changes we observe in civil wars, the ambiguity of meanings underlying these dynamics and the contingency that results. This entails an overall shift in our focus from fixed outcomes to dynamic processes as we continue our efforts to understand civil war as a social process (Shesterinina 2022). Creative, interdisciplinary approaches can breathe new life into these efforts, as Fujii’s use of the performative framework demonstrates.

**Researching political violence and war**

***Relational approach***

The conceptual, theoretical and empirical contributions discussed above cannot be divorced from the relational approach that Fujii developed to research methods and ethics. Interaction between the researcher and research participants lies at the heart of this approach where research is jointly produced in a specific social context. Through interviewing in particular, the researcher is able ‘to gain insight into participants’ worlds’ (Fujii 2018, p. 1). Underlying this learning is ‘a critical, ongoing examination’ of positionality, that is, the impact of personal characteristics and background on how the researcher engages with participants, research assistants and other interlocutors and how this shapes the research process, and ethical treatment of participants ‘at all times, regardless of how likeable or unlikeable they turn out to be’ (Fujii 2018, p. 1). The emphasis on participants’ meanings and the researcher’s reflexivity and ethical sensibility situates this approach within the interpretive strand of social science research but its implications can and should be applied beyond this tradition.

***Working relationships***

The approach Fujii (2018) calls ‘relational interviewing’ departs from the advice in existing textbooks on social science interviewing to build rapport and instead proposes building ‘working relationships’ that ‘are negotiated between the interviewer and interviewee’ to ‘arrive, explicitly or implicitly, at mutually agreeable terms for interacting, conversing, listening, and talking with one another’ (Fujii 2018, p. 3, 15). In challenging settings of political violence where research participants might be implicated in violence in one way or another, rapport might not be possible or even desirable—the researcher and participants might not like each other—but working relationships are. For example, being on good terms, or having rapport, can in fact make the participant hesitant discussing her involvement in violence in an interview. And fearing the participant due to this involvement can limit the researcher’s ability to ask difficult questions (Shesterinina 2019). In contrast, starting from the recognition of ‘the interests, values, backgrounds, and beliefs’ the researcher and participants bring can lead to a frank if unpleasant exchange (Fujii 2018, p. 3). Working relationships are thus characterized not by closeness or trust but the awareness of how the researcher and participants see each other and of their ‘differences in power, social status, and privilege,’ which is essential to communicating with one another with respect and dignity (Fujii 2018, p. 15, 90).

***Reflexivity***

Reflexivity enables this awareness. Interviews in this approach are relational, produced as much by what the researcher brings to the interview as how participants view and interact with the researcher in the particular interview setting. Therefore, the influence of positionality on the research process is situational: ‘Which characteristics matter will vary not only across different sites, but also across different researchers working in the same site, even those with similar backgrounds’ (Fujii 2018, p. 17). Ongoing reflexivity is key to understanding ‘how and why a given interview and the process as a whole are unfolding the way they are,’ not least how and why people’s positions shape whether they participate and what they convey in the interview and how and why the researcher is taking advantage of or harming anyone involved (Fujii 2018, p. 90-91). This is a crucial point that Fujii makes and that other researchers advance drawing on her work (see, e.g., Glas and Soedirgo 2018).

Another key point I highlight here is that reflexivity involves openness about changes to the research as it unfolds, including as a result of ‘mistakes’ and ‘accidents.’ This means being honest and explicit about how field realities challenge the researcher’s prior assumptions and understandings and how this helps adjust the original research design rather than treating it as predetermined and thus fixed. Being faced with incongruence between ‘mistaken’ conceptualisations and interview responses or ‘failed’ interactions with research participants, Fujii explains borrowing from theatre improvisation, is a ‘gift’ that if taken can generate findings (Fujii 2018, p. 49). Similarly, ‘unplanned moments’ outside of the interview, such as ‘hear[ing] a surprising story or notic[ing] an everyday scene,’ can be a way to deepen understanding of the broader context in which the research is embedded, following the method Fujii (2015, p. 525) terms ‘accidental ethnography.’ In each case, reflecting on these moments enables the researcher to learn and adjust the research accordingly.

***Meta-data***

In Fujii’s relational approach, the researcher also learns from ‘spoken and unspoken thoughts and feelings’ that research participants do not articulate in interview responses but that emerge from their silences, evasions, denials or reliance on inventions and rumours (Fujii 2010, p. 231). In a critical intervention on interpreting testimonies of violence and war, Fujii shows that these ‘meta-data,’ or ‘data about data,’ are integral to data collection and analysis (Fujii 2010; 2018, p. 4). Active listening, that is, taking in ‘what the interviewee says and leaves unsaid,’ which is involved in collecting meta-data, is a fundamental element of interactions between the researcher and participants emanating from Fujii’s approach (Fujii 2018, p. 4). Meta-data in particular reveal how present conditions shape what people do and do not say about the past, why some fear talking to the researcher and how to ensure participants’ safety during and after field research, for example, by pointing to reprisals for having talked to the researcher that participants can face. Paying attention to meta-data is part of Fujii’s broader perspective on research ethics as an ongoing responsibility of the researcher.

***Ethics as an ongoing responsibility***

Viewed as an ongoing responsibility, ethics is not ‘a discrete task to be checked off the researcher’s “to do” list’ in accordance with institutional review board requirements but rather ‘ethics in practice’ in the life span of the research (Fujii 2012, p. 717). In other words, ethics does not start or stop with obtaining institutional approval and subsequently consent for one’s interviews. It involves navigating dilemmas of power, potential identification of participants through the researcher’s mere presence in a site and professional incentives. These and other context-specific ethical dilemmas accompany research from its design to publication and entail often difficult choices based on ongoing reflection. Developing ‘ethical sensibility that can alert the researcher to practices or strategies that might be exploiting or harming participants, assistants, and other interlocutors’ requires such reflection (Fujii 2018, p. 6). This is why reflexivity is the ‘main ingredient’ of the relational approach (Fujii 2018, p. 1).

***Lessons for civil war studies***

Fujii’s methodological contributions point to a number of valuable lessons for civil war scholars, particularly but not only those engaged in field research. First, we should continually reflect on rather than assume how our own and others’ positions affect the research process and especially the ethical treatment of participants and other interlocutors by asking ‘How do you know that?’, as Fujii did in response to assertions about positionality and its effects (Glas and Soedirgo 2018, p. 54).

Second, and relatedly, our decisions about how to adjust our research and address ethical challenges that arise in any given situation should stem from ongoing reflection on what we learn in the course of our research rather than from fixed research designs and institutional ethics review protocols.

Third, this learning is not limited to what we hear in our interviews but includes a range of spoken and unspoken data that we should collect in and outside of the interview and analyse to better understand the meanings people give to their social worlds, the context in which the research takes place and how this context shapes what people tell us and what they omit.

Finally, we should be honest about why we make our decisions and how our initial research designs, with our assumptions and conceptualisations, change as a result of interaction with our participants and larger research contexts. Otherwise, the illusion of ‘detachment’ from our research participants and contexts can lead to faulty conclusions and unethical treatment of participants as ‘means’ rather than ‘ends,’ as ‘human subjects’ rather than ‘fellow human beings’ (Fujii 2018, p. 6, 9).

**A personal reflection**

I have followed these lessons in my research on mobilisation in civil war and would not have become the scholar of civil war that I am without what I have learned and am still learning from Lee Ann. It is for these reasons that I dedicated *Mobilizing in Uncertainty* to Lee Ann (Shesterinina 2021). Below I draw on my book to illustrate how the lessons that I outline in this article can be applied in the study of civil war.

***Understanding civil war mobilisation***

The research underlying my book was situated in a setting different from Lee Ann’s work, the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-1993, but similarly to Lee Ann, I focused on a broad range of ordinary participants and non-participants in this setting. One observation, the recurring references in my research to the intense uncertainty that the regular Abkhaz experienced when Georgian forces entered Abkhazia in August 1992, helped me identify and challenge the common assumption in the civil war literature that individuals know the risks involved in mobilisation and decide whether to participate or not and how based on this knowledge. Instead, men and women who spoke with me described the Georgian advance as uncertain: it ruptured daily life, brought to bear difficult dilemmas and could have different meanings to different people. Paying attention to *local* meanings, as Lee Ann encouraged us to do, suggested to me that people did not have the knowledge of risk that analysts expect and motivated me to focus on the puzzle of mobilisation in uncertainty.[[2]](#footnote-2)

To address this puzzle, I looked at the actors in the Abkhaz mobilisation as embedded in systems of relations, building on Lee Ann’s work, and reconstructed their actions during the first days of the war within the social networks with which potential participants found themselves at the time. This focus on social interactions helped me capture the underlying mechanism I call ‘collective threat framing,’ through which uncertainty was channelled into different mobilisation decisions. In this mechanism, information needed to make sense of violence filters from national through local to quotidian levels to define threat, who should be protected and how. People come to view threat in different ways as a result and mobilise to protect those segments of their community they perceive to be threatened.

While national leaders play an important role of articulating threat with reference to uniform social categories, such as ‘Georgian’ and ‘Abkhaz,’ local elites adapt national frames to the needs of local defence, as Lee Ann similarly found in Rwanda. But the account does not end at the local level as it is within the immediate networks of close family and friends that threat frames become consolidated and people act in varied and sometimes unexpected ways. This social mechanism and the resulting variation in mobilisation decisions question essentialising explanations of mobilisation and highlight ‘the possibility for agency at every level,’ which Lee Ann asked us to consider (Fujii 2009, p. 14).

Endogenous dynamics are at the heart of this account. As Lee Ann argued, participation in violence confers powerful identities on people as part of the group that enacts violence. I apply this insight to understand transformation of what I term ‘collective conflict identities,’ or people’s self-perceptions in relation to and as part of broader conflict. These identities, I find, develop through observation of and participation in everyday confrontation, political contention and especially violent opposition, which dramatically changes people’s views of their roles in the conflict and of each other. Collective conflict identities situate and help potential participants navigate the uncertainty of the war’s onset.

***Researching civil war mobilisation***

These findings would not be possible without the approach to research that I adopted and here, too, Lee Ann’s influence was profound. Conducted between 2010 and 2013, long before Lee Ann’s book on relational interviewing came out in 2018, I intuitively embraced this approach in my fieldwork. I paid careful attention to whether and how the puzzle of high-risk mobilisation underlying my original research design resonated with interlocutors in Abkhazia and continually adapted my research design instead of treating it as fixed. While I selected my field sites to capture the variation in structural characteristics that could pose different risks to potential participants in the war, people did not refer to these risks in explaining their mobilisation decisions and these decisions did not systematically differ across the selected sites. Instead, they emphasised uncertainty people faced. This meant that I had to reframe my research question from why people mobilize in civil war despite the high risks involved to how they navigate uncertainty of the war’s onset. As Lee Ann insisted, I have been open about these and other changes to my research design and what I call ‘ethnographic surprises’ behind these changes.

Having adjusted my interview questions as I went, I accessed local meanings of the first days of the war through lengthy life histories with participants and non-participants in the Abkhaz mobilisation. These interviews were deeply relational. How interviewees saw me and how I engaged with them shaped the interview dynamics and ultimately the data that we jointly produced. This involved both our different positions and the emotions that characterised different interviews. In other words, ‘all the vulnerabilities and proclivities that go along with being human’ were part of my interviews and I reflected on these during and after my fieldwork (Fujii 2018, p. 9). For example, I noticed that I was empathetic toward some interviewees but feared others and learned that this, first, was a result of interviewees’ proximity to violence and, second, affected the questions I could ask and the insights I gained (Shesterinina 2019). As Lee Ann suggested, this reflection helped me better understand the present context of violence in Abkhazia and how it influenced what participants said about the past.

But what participants said in the interviews was not the only source of my insights. Silences, stories, rumours and other forms of meta-data, which Lee Ann encouraged us to incorporate in our research, were also crucial, alongside a range of secondary and archival materials. For example, the silence of women who lost their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons about their experience of the first days of the war pointed to the need to speak about the men they lost before turning to their trajectories. Rumours about men who did not participate in the war shed light on the stories these men told me in the interviews. As Lee Ann advised, I did not challenge these stories but saw them as a way to grasp the importance of wartime roles for reputation and status after the war.

In line with Lee Ann’s call, I understood these and other decisions as my part of my responsibility for the ethical treatment of research participants and other interlocutors throughout my research and have explained such decisions and associated dilemmas in my writing (see, e.g., Shesterinina 2016). This helps the reader make sense of my research process regardless of their disciplinary background.

**Conclusion**

Lee Ann Fujii’s contributions are diverse and deep—but above all, for scholars of civil war, I wish to emphasise Fujii’s legacy of humanising how we understand and research political violence and war. Challenging the primacy of ethnicity and other macro-structural explanations of violence, stressing the role of social embeddedness in participation in violence and taking seriously the endogeneity of social categories to violence are some of the entry points into this humanising agenda that Fujii pointed to. In terms of methods, this agenda translates into ongoing reflection on positionality, ethical dilemmas and research participants’ verbal and non-verbal cues that would be easy to brush off as ‘lies’ or ‘biases’ but that carry important meanings for participants in our research and thereby for the questions we study. Building working relationships with participants is central to gaining access to these meanings.

Future studies of civil war should draw on Fujii’s approach to researching and understanding political violence as an ethical radar for the methods we use and a reality check on our analytical frameworks. More broadly, we should draw inspiration from Fujii to break out of narrow boundaries of studying civil war in isolation from other forms of political violence and to appreciate the power of creativity in studying violence in interdisciplinary ways. Her courage to address some of the most challenging questions about human experience openly and creatively and her presence, not only as an inspiring scholar but also as a mentor, colleague and friend, are deeply missed.

**References**

Fujii, L.A., 2009. Killing neighbors: webs of violence in Rwanda. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Fujii, L.A., 2010. Shades of truth and lies: interpreting testimonies of war and violence. *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (2): 231–241. doi: 10.1177/0022343309353097.

Fujii, L.A., 2012. Research ethics 101: dilemmas and responsibilities. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45 (4): 717–723. doi: 10.1017/S1049096512000819.

Fujii, L.A., 2015. Five stories of accidental ethnography: turning unplanned moments in the field into data. *Qualitative Research* 15 (4): 525–539. doi: 10.1177/1468794114548945.

Fujii, L.A., 2018. Interviewing in social science research: a relational approach. New York: Routledge.

Fujii, L.A., 2021. Show time: the logic and power of violent display. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Glas, A. and Soedirgo, J., 2018. A posture of active reflexivity: learning from Lee Ann Fujii’s approach to research. Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, 16 (1), 53–55. doi: 10.5281/zenodo.2563098.

Manekin, D. and Parkinson, S.E., 2022. Writing humanity into violence. *Violence: An International Journal*, 3 (1), 121–124. doi: 10.1177/26330024221087089.

McNulty, S., Tolley, E., and Turner R., 2018. In memoriam. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 51 (3), 678–680. doi: 10.1017/S1049096518000707.

Shesterinina, A,. 2016. Supplementary materials to collective threat framing and mobilization in civil war. American Political Science Review 110 (3), 411–427. doi: 10.1017/S0003055416000277. Available at: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-political-science-review/article/abs/collective-threat-framing-and-mobilization-in-civil-war/330C40CA3925F3DA0DDC93BFA40F5C32#supplementary-materials.

Shesterinina, A,. 2019. Ethics, empathy, and fear in research on violent conflict. *Journal of Peace Research* 56 (2), 190–202. doi: 10.1177/0022343318783246.

Shesterinina, A,. 2021. Mobilizing in uncertainty: collective identities and war in Abkhazia. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Shesterinina, A., (2022). Civil war as a social process: actors and dynamics from pre- to post-war. *European Journal of International Relations* 28 (3), 538–562. doi: 10.1177/13540661221095970.

Straus, S., 2022. Introduction to the Special Section on Lee Ann Fujii’s Show Time. *Violence: An International Journal*, 3 (1), 100–104. doi: 10.1177/26330024221102194.

Wood, E.J., 2021. Epilogue. In: Fujii, L.A. *Show time: the logic and power of violent display*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Wood, E.J., 2022. The contributions of Fujii’s Show Time to scholarly understanding of political violence. *Violence: An International Journal*, 3 (1), 114–117. doi: 10.1177/26330024221087090.

Anastasia Shesterinina

Professor and Chair in Comparative Politics, Department of Politics, the University of York

anastasia.shesterinina@york.ac.uk

1. This article benefited from the discussion of Lee Ann Fujii’s influence with Laurence Broers at the *Mobilizing in Uncertainty* Book Launch chaired by Simon Rushton at the University of Sheffield in March 2021 and the panel on ‘Remembering Lee Ann Fujii’ at the Political Violence in Comparative Perspective Workshop organised by Nick Cheesman and Elisabeth J. Wood at Yale University in November 2022. The writing was funded by the UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship (Grant Title: “Understanding Civil War from Pre- to Post-War Stages: A Comparative Approach”; Grant Reference: MR/T040653/1; start date 1 January 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In fact, this puzzle—and the argument that I developed—crystallised in conversations with Lee Ann. Being a junior scholar at the time, Lee Ann’s encouragement gave me ‘permission’ to focus on uncertainty in my book. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)