GENDER, LAW, AND SECURITY

LIECHTENSTEIN INSTITUTE ON SELF-DETERMINATION
AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
STUDENT RESEARCH SERIES

VOLUME I
GENDER, LAW, AND SECURITY

Selected Student Research from the
Project on Gender and the Global Community

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LIECHTENSTEIN INSTITUTE ON SELF-DETERMINATION
AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
STUDENT RESEARCH SERIES

VOLUME I
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*Beth English and Barbara Buckinx*  

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Foreword

In her 2012 *Foreign Policy* article, “What Sex Means for World Peace,” political scientist Valerie Hudson asserted, “[T]he very best predictor of a state’s peacefulness is not its level of wealth, its level of democracy, or its ethno-religious identity; the best predictor of a state’s peacefulness is how well its women are treated.” Reflecting the findings of her own empirical studies and a growing body of international relations scholarship using gender as its primary analytical lens, she continued, “On issues of national health, economic growth, corruption, and social welfare, the best predictors are also those that reflect the situation of women. What happens to women affects the security, stability, prosperity, bellicosity, corruption, health, regime type, and (yes) the power of the state. The days when one could claim that the situation of women had nothing to do with matters of national or international security are, frankly, over.”

Fast forward to January 2017 when some 4-5 million protesters in nearly 500 cities across 81 countries—men and women alike—took to the streets under the banner of a “women’s march,” a visible sign of the determination of women across the globe to protect the strides made and rights gained in the decades leading up to the current political moment shaped by a rightward political shift and rise of reactionary “populist” candidates. These protesters marched to give voice to the fight to sustain the gains they have won, to staunch the tide of abrogated rights, and to fight for new rights, protections, and equal participation and representation within existing political systems. We are now living in a moment when equipping students with gender analysis skills is arguably more crucial than ever.

Women across the world have long sought to influence and shape the nature of their own lives, with a gendered understanding of power and how hierarchies of power are not only created, maintained, and perpetuate inequalities, but also how they can potentially—whether through direct grassroots action or policy interventions—be reorganized and remade. Recognizing this, the research agenda and related activities of the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination (LISD) at Princeton University’s Project on Gender in the Global Community use gender as a primary lens for analysis and starting point for broader dialogues about sustainable development, state building, economic and political participation, negotiation and mediation, peace, and security. This work has highlighted the gaps that exist and challenges that remain in moving toward gender equality and gender inclusion not only in policy but in implementation and practice—from engagement of key stakeholders and resource allocation, to security and judicial frameworks.

LISD began its gender-focused work during the 2009-2010 academic year. The Institute officially launched the Project on Women in the Global Community at a September 2010 panel convened around the 10th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, the broadly ambitious thematic resolution marking the first time that the UN Security Council directly addressed the disproportionate impacts of crises and armed conflicts on women, upheld the importance of women’s equal and full participation as agents of peace and security, and recognized the valuable contributions of women toward conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peace building. Renamed the Project on Gender in the Global Community (GGC) in 2017, the proj-

ect examines and interrogates the functioning of gendered structures and norms in the international system, focusing especially on security, human rights and human security, economic activity, governance, and institution building. The project to date has undertaken work related to 1) on-the-ground implementation of the United Nations’ Women, Peace and Security Agenda, especially in the context of women’s inclusion in peacemaking, mediation, and negotiation processes, 2) gendered dynamics of work and economic security, 3) children in conflict situations, and 4) gender-inclusive approaches to conflict related sexual and gender-based violence.

The GGC Student Fellows Program, inaugurated during the 2017-18 academic year, is an integral complement to this work. Building on student interest in the GGC project and modeled on the successful student fellows program organized as part of LISD’s Project on Religion, Diplomacy and International Relations (PORDIR), a dedicated cohort of 15 Princeton students—ranging from first year undergraduates to Ph.D. candidates—was selected through a competitive application process. Students met twice monthly throughout the academic year in sessions that combined discussions of readings and students’ ongoing research, with presentations by invited scholars and policy practitioners. Guest speakers at these meetings included Ai-jen Poo, Executive Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance; Beatrice Duncan, Constitutional and Access to Justice Advisor for UN Women; Sharon Bassan, international surrogacy and human rights law scholar in residence at Princeton’s University Center for Human Values; Douglas Massey, the Henry G. Bryant Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University; Charu Lata Hogg, Project Director of the All Survivors Project; and Aziza Ahmed, Professor of Law at Northwestern University and visiting scholar focusing on global health policy with the Woodrow Wilson School’s Program in Law and Public Affairs.

Over the course of the year, GGC fellows pursued independent, academically rigorous research around a topic of their choosing, a sampling of which is presented in this publication. In April 2018, they presented their year-long projects at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs as part of an intensive research day with the students of Professor Yasmine Ergas, Director of the Program in Gender and Human Rights at Columbia’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights. The papers in this volume represent a variety of disciplines and methodologies, and the range of work undertaken by students throughout the year—some in connection to course work, junior policy seminars and senior theses, others as stand-alone research papers, and still others as short framing essays intended to serve as starting points for larger long-term research projects.

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and
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PART I

Conflict and Sexual Violence
ABSTRACT

Despite the UN’s zero tolerance policy, sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers remains a major problem. This fact is troublesome, considering that the purposes of peacekeeping operations include creating peace and security, protecting local communities, and promoting human rights. Given this responsibility to do right by civilians, it is clear that sexual exploitation directly conflicts with the intention and function of peacekeeping operations. In fact, because of the abuse, peacekeeping missions may be doing more harm than good to the post-conflict communities they serve.

This paper presents a quantitative ex-post facto analysis of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers in post-conflict Liberia from 2003-2017. The United Nations Mission in Liberia is an interesting peacekeeping operation to study because of the several changes to the structure of its peacekeeping mission, namely the deployment of nine all-female peacekeeping units from India to Liberia in 2007 and the drawdown and eventual redeployment of peacekeeping troops as the security situation has changed over the years. By looking at a single mission, the paper is able to develop a better understanding of the factors that ameliorate and exacerbate sexual exploitation and abuse.

The dependent variables in the analysis include reported counts of sexual exploitation and abuse measured by the number of allegations, the number of identified peacekeeper perpetrators, and the number of identified victims. The independent variables used represent characteristics of the peacekeeping force in Liberia that have changed over time since its initial deployment, and are elements that the United Nations is capable of controlling or changing. The characteristics include the size and gender composition of the mission. Thus, the research question becomes: How should the United Nations structure its peacekeeping mission in Liberia to reduce the overall level of sexual exploitation and abuse?

This regression results support the general hypothesis of this paper: mission-years that integrate gender equality into their structure by increasing the proportion of female peacekeepers were associated with a lower number of reports of sexual exploitation and abuse. These variables produced a commensurate decrease of up to 140 reports of abuse.
Based on the findings, the paper offers a set of policy recommendations pertaining to improving data collection and reporting procedures and cultivating gender equality norms within the mission. By doing so, it hopes that the UN peacekeeping missions—in Liberia and elsewhere—a can improve the health and security situation of local men and women it serves, as well as enhance the effectiveness and legitimacy of the UN abroad.

INTRODUCTION

The news of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) scandals first spread during the 1990s, when UN investigators found that peacekeepers stationed in Bosnia and Kosovo frequented brothels that used women forced into prostitution.\(^1\) However, it was not until 2003 that the UN declared SEA unacceptable; two years later, it instituted a “zero-tolerance” policy. Despite the UN’s public disapproval of SEA, allegations made against its personnel are mounting and tarnishing the reputations of peacekeeping operations worldwide.\(^2\)

In early 2017, the Associated Press reported nearly 2,000 formal claims of sexual exploitation and abuse by 75,000 peacekeepers and other UN personnel stationed in 17 countries worldwide between 2005 and 2016. Only a fraction of these perpetrators have been investigated for the offenses, and even fewer have been convicted.\(^3\)

The accounts of abuse are horrific. In the Central African Republic, a young woman was given a bag of rice and the equivalent of $17 USD as compensation for being raped, impregnated, and infected with HIV by a peacekeeper.\(^4\) Another seventeen-year-old woman interviewed by the Center for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of Children in Bangui, Central African Republic confessed to not filing a formal report for being raped at gunpoint by two peacekeepers because sexual assault by UN soldiers is “so common.” In Haiti, three Pakistani peacekeepers raped and abused a mentally disabled thirteen-year-old boy, and then arranged for his abduction when UN investigators wanted to interview him about the abuse. Another teenage boy was gang-raped by a group of Uruguayan peacekeepers that filmed the assault and posted the degrading video online.\(^5\)

As is made clear in their individual mandates and the UN’s codes of conduct, peacekeepers are deployed for the purpose of protecting civilians and restoring security and stability.\(^6\) Sexual violence during armed conflict is rampant and difficult to control, but the actuality of peacekeepers as perpetrators of this violence adds another dimension to an already widespread and distressing problem. Violations of this duty contribute to breakdowns of trust with the local population and disillusionment with the UN.

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3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
This section provides an overview of the existing literature on sexual exploitation and abuse in the context of UN peacekeeping missions and illustrates the necessity of further quantitative research to investigate variations of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers on a country-by-country basis.

A 2013 paper by Nordås and Rustad of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) was the first attempt in academia to quantitatively analyze and compare sexual exploitation and abuse across all peacekeeping missions from the United Nations, NATO, ECOWAS, and the African Union (AU) and over time from 1999–2010. The Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeepers (SEAP) dataset they developed from their research records variables such as mission size, gender composition of the mission, laws protecting women, the economic development of the host country, and the intensity of violence in the preceding conflict. Using the dataset, they attempt to determine the conditions under which sexual abuse and exploitation might be more or less likely.8

Nordås and Rustad find that SEA is more frequently reported in larger operations, in more recent operations, in less developed countries (as measured by GDP per capita), and in operations where the conflict involved high levels of battle-related deaths and sexual violence. They used the presence of laws against spousal rape in a country as an indicator of gender equality and found that the measure does not influence the level of sexual abuse and exploitation, contrary to what previous literature suggests.9

More recently, Sabrina Karim of Emory University and Kyle Beardsley of Duke University have focused on whether gender-related variables describing the composition of mission personnel might also affect the levels of SEA in UN peacekeeping missions. Their analysis is derived from literature that suggests the relatively weak role of militarized masculinity in capturing the patterns of SEA in UN peace operations. Given this, they develop two factors to account for variations in gender equality across missions and peacekeepers. The first variable, the representation of women in missions, is measured based on proportion of women in the labor force as an indication of non-traditional gender roles and with the ratio of girls to boys in primary school as a gauge of early gender differentiation in societal participation. The second variable, the norms and practices related to gender equality in the peacekeepers’ countries of origin, is measured by the extent to which legal institutions protect women from abuse and characterizes the potential dimension of patriarchy in society. Karim and Beardsley consider data from 2007 to 2013, and like Nordås and Rustad, their scope of analysis is on the global level.10

Karim and Beardsley find some support for the claim that missions with a higher proportion of female peacekeepers are associated with fewer SEA allegations. Although the relationship is not statistically significant, increasing the proportion of women in the mission from 0% to 5% was shown to reduce the expected count of SEA allegations by more than half. The relationship is statistically significant and holds the same for missions with more peacekeepers originating from countries with better records of gender equality. Karim and Beardsley conclude that effective peacekeeping requires incorporating practices that reflect

9. Ibid.
gender equality (i.e. improving the legal protection of women) in the mission, host country, and countries that send peacekeepers to serve abroad. Most notably, just increasing the number or proportion of females in the peacekeeping mission is not sufficient to generate substantial impacts on SEA levels.\(^{11}\)

The majority of the academic literature on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers analyzes variations in the number of SEA allegations across several missions on a global scale. While this broad sweeping approach can identify countries or regions where SEA is concentrated, it does little to account for specific factors within the host country that might influence UN peacekeepers to commit acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.

In her University of Oslo Masters Thesis on the subject, Fürer attempts to explain the variation of sexual exploitation and abuse between 1999 and 2016 in nine UN peacekeeping missions stationed across Africa. In doing so, she aims to identify patterns, if any, of SEA in UN missions on the African continent and compare them to Nordås and Rustad’s findings on the variation of sexual exploitation and abuse on the global level.\(^{12}\) Fürer adopts the seven variables used in Nordås and Rustad’s analysis, namely those related to practices of gender equality in the host country and the troop-contributing country, the mission size, the economic development of the country, and the intensity of prior armed conflicts. She also includes three additional mission-specific factors: the number of female peacekeepers, the number of troop-contributing countries, and the presence of troops from specific countries that have records of higher reported incidences of SEA.\(^{13}\)

Fürer’s regression analysis finds that reports of SEA are more likely in missions that mention women in the mandate, that have sizeable numbers of personnel, that are deployed to host countries that are not very developed, and that reported a high level of sexual violence in the previous conflict. Unlike the pattern found on the global level, on the African level there is some support for a positive and statistically significant effect of a spousal rape law in predicting lower levels of sexual abuse and exploitation. However, her finding with respect to the number of female peacekeepers in a mission is in the opposite direction than expected. The data show a statistically significant negative effect, supporting the claim that a greater female presence increases the likelihood of SEA reports. She attributes this to the fact that female peacekeepers in UN peacekeeping missions are still a big rarity, and the small number of observations might not accurately reflect the pattern. Lastly, the findings prove that higher numbers of involved troop-contributing countries in a single mission are associated with a greater number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse.\(^{14}\)

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES**

**Research Objectives**

This paper presents the first quantitative analysis of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers in the United Nations Mission in Liberia over its operations from 2003 to 2017. The purposes of looking at variations in levels of SEA from this perspective include

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11. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
developing a better understanding of why SEA happens and of the factors that may exacerbate it. Thus, the research question becomes: How should the United Nations structure its peacekeeping missions to reduce the overall level of sexual exploitation and abuse?

The paper builds on the research described in the literature review in two ways. First, it attempts to analyze incidences of sexual exploitation and abuse by a single mission (UNMIL) in order to understand whether the patterns that Nordås and Rustad have found on a global level and those found by Fürer on the African level remain true for an individual mission. Second, recognizing that the number of allegations received by the mission is not an accurate indicator of the level of SEA because of issues like underreporting and procedural processes for filing allegations, the paper also accounts for SEA levels using the number of identified perpetrators and the number of identified victims.

Hypotheses and Theoretical Framework

In order to answer the research question, the theoretical framework of this paper focuses on three explanatory factors related to the structure and composition of UN peacekeeping missions and how they might inform policy measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse.

First, it can be assumed that the reports of sexual exploitation and abuse will grow as the number of individuals involved in the mission grows, simply because a larger group of people brings with it a higher likelihood that the group will include a perpetrator. However, studies in the context of government security forces also attribute this inference to a lack of bureaucratic control that develops when organizations grow larger because commanders can pay less attention to each soldier’s motivations and have less power to individually delegate and enforce commands. Butler et al. coins the principal-agent model to describe this phenomenon, and finds that in when leaders of larger troops experience this dilution of control, soldiers are likely to revert to their personal preferences and tendencies as drivers of their behavior. In the context of this research, this lack of oversight can potentially increase the risk of misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Mission-years with a larger troop size will be associated with higher reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers.

Related to the size of the mission are the composition of the mission, and more specifically, the ratio of female peacekeepers to male peacekeepers. In March 2005, Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid al-Hussein, permanent representative of Jordan in 2004, prepared a comprehensive report on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers drawing on consultations with representatives of the troop-contributing countries that provide peacekeepers to peacekeeping operations and on his visits to the United Nations peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2004. Based on his observations, in the report,


he recommended that the number of female peacekeeping personnel should be increased. Recognizing that victims of SEA tend to be female, he argued that victims might be more likely to confide in and report incidents of SEA to female peacekeepers because they might be less ashamed or bashful when speaking about those sensitive subjects. This would, in turn, reduce the problem of underreporting.\textsuperscript{18} Kent suggests the same phenomenon, and also adds that the presence of female peacekeepers might promote the responsibility and reflectiveness of male peacekeepers with respect to SEA.\textsuperscript{19} Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Mission-years with a higher number of female peacekeepers in the troop will be associated with fewer reports of SEA peacekeepers.

H3: Mission-years with a higher proportion of female peacekeepers in the troop will be associated with fewer reports of SEA peacekeepers.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Establishment of UN Peacekeepers in Post-War Liberia

The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was established on September 19, 2003, by Security Council Resolution 1509.\textsuperscript{20} The Resolution came at the heels of the Second Liberian Civil War, which lasted from 1999 to 2003 and was the result of the centralization of power among elites and the ensuing exclusion of the majority from political processes. This conflict created factions along ethnic lines, facilitated government corruption, and left many Liberians in poverty. The war ended with a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by President Taylor and the two rebel armies, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL).\textsuperscript{21} The CPA institutionalized a national transitional government that would be supported by the UN Mission. The significance of the CPA must be highlighted. It brought to end a fourteen-year period of civil war, which had caused more than a quarter million deaths and the displacement of one million individuals.\textsuperscript{22}

The mission was deployed on October 1, 2003—two weeks prior to the implementation of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL)—and was meant to remain for a period of two years to oversee the transition.\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{20} “UNMIL Peacekeeping.” United Nations.
\bibitem{23} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
port the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protect United Nations staff, facilities and civilians; support humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assist in national security reform, including national police training and formation of a new, restructured military.”

As of December 2017, UNMIL has an authorized force strength of 15,000 uniformed personnel and a total force strength of 1,481 peacekeepers made up of individual police, program-specific experts, contingent military troops, and UN volunteers. The countries that have contributed the most peacekeepers include Nigeria, Ukraine, Pakistan, and China.

A drawdown of personnel began in 2006 with the Security Council decision to repatriate 1,000 peacekeepers. This decision was based on Liberia meeting benchmarks outlined in Resolution 1509, such as “the maintenance of a stable and secure environment; completion of ex-combatant, refugees, and internally displaced persons reintegration; security sector reform; and consolidation of state authority and governance capacity.” The second and third phases of the drawdown took place in 2007 and 2009, respectively, and on June 30, 2016, UNMIL completed the transfer of security responsibilities to the Liberian authorities.

As of March 2018, UNMIL has completed its mandate in accordance with Resolution 2239, adopted on September 17, 2015. The complete drawdown provides the UN an opportunity to critically analyze the lessons learned and best practices from their fifteen-year history in Liberia.

Gender and Violence in Liberia since UNMIL’s Establishment

Civil war in Liberia has increased the vulnerability of women and children, creating conditions that enabled sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV). A survey conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) on sexual- and gender-based violence found that almost 94 percent of women and girls from six of Liberia’s 15 counties had experienced some form of sexual abuse. Another in-depth study undertaken by the government of Liberia and the UN Joint Programme on Sexual and Gender Based Violence reported that 40 percent of the country’s population has experienced some form of SGBV (about 70% of which were women), with men often bearing witness to or committing the acts. Both reports partially credit these statistics to the displacement of women in times of armed conflict; forced to become the primary caretakers of their families, some engage in risky

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24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
behavior like transactional sex in exchange for food.\textsuperscript{31}

Recognizing that sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers exists within a larger context of violence and sexual exploitation, UNMIL was also the first United Nations peacekeeping mission with a mandate to mainstream Resolution 1325. In 2005, Security Council Resolution 1626 created a mission-specific conduct and discipline team to investigate adherence to the mandate.\textsuperscript{32} However, sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers continues to be an issue, as evidenced not only by discrepancies in the number of allegations and the number of investigations, but also by disparities in the number of specific actions taken to reprimand peacekeepers with substantiated claims against them.\textsuperscript{33} To contextualize the scope of the issue, the UN’s Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted an independent survey of 475 women living in Monrovia, Liberia in 2012. Extrapolating the data to the population at large estimates that about 58,000 women ages 18–30 in 2012 had engaged in transactional sex with UN personnel. This figure represents over one-fourth of adult women in Monrovia. It is important to note that transactional sex is only one form of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers.\textsuperscript{34}

Overall, Liberia, like many other post-conflict settings where UN missions are deployed, exhibits turmoil as lack of economic opportunity, poverty, and inequality. Coupled with the already-widespread problem of sexual- and gender-based violence, weak justice systems, and ineffective law enforcement mechanisms, these factors create fragile environments that facilitate sexual exploitation and abuse.

Public Opinion About UNMIL’s Work in Liberia

At the request of the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Dr. Jean Krasno of the City College of New York and Yale University conducted a public opinion survey in January 2006 to gather information about how the people of Liberia view the work of the UN peacekeeping operation in Liberia. Two Liberian organizations, the Foundation for Democracy and Human Rights (FOHRD) and the National Youth Movement for Transparent Elections (NAYMOTE), assisted in distributing and collecting the questionnaire from nearly 800 Liberians.\textsuperscript{35}

Generally, when asked if UNMIL had treated them with respect, 93 percent of survey participants expressed “always” or “sometimes.” Similarly, in a question asking for information about the professional conduct of peacekeepers, only 9 percent of respondents reported the behaviors as “fair” or “poor.”\textsuperscript{36}

When asked about the improvement of human rights conditions in Liberia, 88 percent of participants answered positively, citing improvements in the court system, freedom of speech and movement rights, and human rights awareness programs. Still, 12 percent dissented, with some believing that the peacekeepers worsened the human rights situation.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} “Public Opinions Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia.” ReliefWeb. April 19, 2006.
\end{itemize}
One respondent said: “UNMIL has not helped to improve human right conditions because they are the same people who were involved in ritualistic killings, to be specific, the Nigerians.” Of the dissenters, 50 percent cited allegations of sexual abuse. About half of these individuals claimed that the allegations to UNMIL were not pursued through the court system.37

These responses, when compared to public opinion surveys conducted for other UN missions, makes Liberia the most successful U.N. peacekeeping operation on record.38 However, the problems raised by a few responses in the question on human rights improvement suggest room for improvement and contrast with the overall satisfactory assessment of UNMIL in the question on respect.

One of the last questions in the survey asked the respondent to describe the worst thing that UNMIL has done. As an open-ended question, it allowed individuals to express anything that previous questions may not have captured. Sixty percent of respondents listed a variety of complaints. The most common offense was rape (167 mentions, or 22 percent), and respondents supplemented the answer with details about the age of the victim and the nationality of the peacekeeper perpetrator. Other offenses mentioned included engaging in prostitution and sexual harassment. According to the report prepared in response to the study, Liberians blamed Nigerian peacekeepers specifically for the prevalence of prostitution in Montserrado County.39

In essence then, the DPKO survey provides a mixed response. While many offered criticisms about UNMIL’s integrity and behavior, it seems that they framed those negative perceptions in the context of the good that peacekeepers have accomplished in Liberia. However, because not all respondents have interacted with every UNMIL peacekeeper, it is also possible that the majority of peacekeepers behave appropriately, but that the actions of the few who do not are despicable enough to merit mentioning.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Dependent Variables: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeeping Personnel

Data for this outcome was collected from the dataset on sexual abuse and exploitation available on the Conduct in UN Field Mission’s website. Pre-2007 data was not available in this dataset and was instead found through newspaper articles and reports by NGOs. Data for 2003 and 2004 were not available because the UN did not begin to collect data until March of 2005.

For every mission-year coded with a (1), the annual number of allegations was recorded. OIOS measures allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation by counting the total number of reports received. The graph below displays variations in the number of SEA allegations since the UNMIL’s initial 2003 mandate. This recent increase in reports is disconcerting as it suggests that, despite its efforts in the past 15 years, the UN has not succeeded in its efforts to reduce to zero the number of allegations, and more importantly, to reduce to zero the number of victims affected by sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by United Nations personnel.

37. Ibid.
Figure 1. Data on the allegations, perpetrators, and victims of SEA by UNMIL.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of SEA allegations</th>
<th># of SEA perpetrators</th>
<th># of identified SEA victims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The UN is the only available data source on the number of allegations of SEA, and has in its interest a reason to artificially deflate the statistics in order to maintain its credibility as a peace-making institution capable of creating security in even the most endangered environments. Therefore, its numbers should be critically regarded for reliability and transparency.

As demonstrated by the variation in the number of reports in Figure 1 above, one dependent variable, such as the number of allegations, is insufficient in accounting for all reports of sexual exploitation and abuse. For this reason, two additional dependent variables are used to capture levels of SEA by peacekeepers: (1) the number of perpetrators implicated for SEA and (2) the number of identified SEA victims. Both these data points are derived by OIOS from the content written in allegation reports and have been conveyed on a monthly basis since 2010. The monthly totals are summed on an annual basis from 2010 to 2017 to match the frequency in reporting of other independent variables. The table below provides a summary of the variation across the three dependent variables in this analysis.

### Table 1. Descriptive statistics summary for all dependent variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEA Allegations</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17.15</td>
<td>19.44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA Perpetrators</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.12</td>
<td>14.35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA Victims</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent Variables

This paper uses three independent variables to explain the variation in sexual exploitation and abuse described above. These independent variables represent gendered-charac-
teristics of the UNMIL peacekeeping force that have changed over time since its initial deployment, and are elements that the United Nations is capable of controlling or changing. Liberia specifically is an interesting lens from which to analyze this data because of the several changes to its peacekeeping mission, namely the rotations of nine all-female peacekeeping units from India from 2007 to 2016 and the drawdown and eventual redeployment of peacekeeping troops as the security situation has changed.

The purpose of analyzing these peacekeeping mission specific factors is so that any relationships discovered between the dependent and independent variables can inform the ways in which the UN structures its peacekeeping missions to reduce the overall level of sexual exploitation and abuse. The paper recognizes that host-country-specific factors, like economic development, may contribute to reported levels of SEA by peacekeepers (e.g. in instances where transactional sex is the most common type of allegation), but that these host characteristics cannot serve the same purpose simply because they are not in the direct control of the UN’s Department of Peacekeeping Operations and require more complex interventions to address them adequately.

The independent variables used in this paper describe the physical presence of gender in the mission. The following paragraphs describe each variable, the source of the underlying data, explanations of any missing values, and any adjustments or corrections made for the purposes of this analysis. The table below provides a summary of the variation across the three variables.

1. **Size of UNMIL:** The size of the mission reflects the number of uniformed personnel (military troops, military observers and police) involved in a peacekeeping operation. Data from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ dataset on Troop and Police Contributors gave monthly counts of all uniformed personnel working in UNMIL and further breakdowns on the number of contingent troops police, and experts on the mission. This data was summed on an annual basis to match the recording frequency of other variables. It is important to note that this data was available on several pages within the DPKO website, but that different pages sometimes reported different statistics, which speaks to the quality of data from collected and monitored by UN sources. In these instances, the highest value was used to describe the mission’s size.

2. **Number of Women in UNMIL:** This variable measures the female presence within a peacekeeping mission in an effort to discover any effects that may point to a representation of women as equals deserving of respect. Data from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ dataset on Gender gave a monthly breakdown of the number of male and female uniformed personnel working across our missions. The monthly totals of females were summed on an annual basis to obtain the values for this variable for every mission-year from 2003 to 2017.

3. **Percentage of Women in UNMIL:** This variable was established to identify the same effect that female presence mentioned above may have on behaviors regarding sexual exploitation and abuse, and more specifically, to measure the gender ratio of

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all mission-year observations in the military and police component of UNMIL. It is different from the “number of women” variable in that it seeks to determine whether there is a dilution in the effect of the female peacekeeping presence on SEA levels when the male presence is more apparent. The percentage of women is calculated by dividing the total number of female peacekeepers by the total number of peacekeepers in a mission-year observation. Data on monthly gender statistics of military and police personnel in peacekeeping operations was collected from the same UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ dataset on Gender as above.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics summary for independent variables pertaining to the presence of the mission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission size</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9605</td>
<td>4885.37</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>16901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of women in the mission</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>239.5</td>
<td>165.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of women in the mission</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control Variables

Two control variables were created to account for factors outside of the peacekeeping mission’s control that may affect the behaviors of peacekeepers. They are described below:

1. Increased Attention to SEA post-2005: Several scandals surrounding sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers in the Central African Republic, Haiti, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Liberia flooded the international news landscape in 2004. Since then, the UN has altered its approach to preventing and responding to SEA allegations, as described and recommended in the 2005 Zeid Report. This variable was created in an effort to control for the sudden vigilance and long-term increased attention on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. Years before 2005 were coded with a (0) and years after 2005 were coded with a (1).

2. Active Years for Mission: The implementation of sexual exploitation and abuse reporting and accountability mechanisms may not immediately realize tangible effects and also evolve over time the longer the peacekeeping mission is active. By accounting for the number of years a mission has been active, the analysis is able to control for an increased ability to monitor and respond to SEA allegations. In the case of UNMIL, 2003 (the mission’s first years of operations) was subtracted from the mission year to obtain the number of years active.

The table below provides a summary of the variation across the two control variables.
Table 3. Descriptive statistics summary for control variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased Attention to SEA post-2005</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Years for Mission</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative Methods

As shown in the tables above, the data in each indication have very different magnitudes; for example, the mission size values are in the thousands, while the proportion of women peacekeepers variable is in the hundredths. To facilitate the interpretation of the scale of the values in the regression, this analysis uses the logarithmic transformation function for values that were: (a) exceptionally large or (b) fractions or decimals.

There were also a number of missing values as a result of poor data collection practices prior to 2010. Because of the small number of mission-year observations and therefore, the inability to accurately forecast a trend, the paper avoided using estimation tools to mathematically predict any missing observations. In the analysis, it is indicated whenever missing values may have affected the findings.

This paper uses three regression models to estimate the effect that the three independent variables have on reports of sexual exploitation and abuse. The central aim of these models is to explore the relationship between independent and dependent variables within the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia, whose individual characteristics vary across mission-year observations. The models abide by the following generalized formulas:

(1) \( Y_{SEA\ Allegations} = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \ldots + \beta_kX_k + \epsilon_i \)

(2) \( Y_{SEA\ Perpetrators} = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \ldots + \beta_kX_k + \epsilon_i \)

(3) \( Y_{SEA\ Victims} = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \ldots + \beta_kX_k + \epsilon_i \)

Where

- \( Y_{SEA\ Allegations} \) represents reported counts of allegations of SEA by peacekeepers over time
- \( Y_{SEA\ Perpetrators} \) represents reported counts of peacekeeper perpetrators of SEA over time
- \( Y_{SEA\ Victims} \) represents reported counts of victims of SEA by peacekeepers over time
- \( \beta_0 \) is the constant term or intercept
- \( \beta_1 \) is the coefficient for the corresponding independent variable \( X_1 \)
- \( \beta_kX_k \) is the general term for additional independent and control variables
- \( \epsilon_i \) is the error term
QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4. Regression Results: Explaining SWA with the Presence of the Missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable:</th>
<th>SEA Allegations (1)</th>
<th>SEA Perpetrators (2)</th>
<th>SEA Victims (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission Size</td>
<td>-61.020 (43.250)</td>
<td>-108.758*** (13.058)</td>
<td>-129.728** (30.624)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Women in the Mission</td>
<td>0.259 (0.204)</td>
<td>0.415*** (0.064)</td>
<td>0.507** (0.150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Women in the Mission</td>
<td>-101.128 (61.131)</td>
<td>-108.657** (19.688)</td>
<td>-140.709* (46.170)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Attention to SEA Post-2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years Mission is Active</td>
<td>2.920 (5.127)</td>
<td>-2.715 (1.900)</td>
<td>0.479 (4.455)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>126.349 (184.822)</td>
<td>523.189*** (63.886)</td>
<td>548.427** (149.821)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>0.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.480</td>
<td>0.947</td>
<td>0.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Std. Error</td>
<td>13.219 (df = 7)</td>
<td>3.307 (df = 3)</td>
<td>7.755 (df = 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Statistic</td>
<td>3.535* (df = 4; 7)</td>
<td>32.193*** (df = 4; 3)</td>
<td>8.994* (df = 4; 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

This regression table captures the effects of the mission’s presence on levels of sexual exploitation and abuse with three independent variables (mission size, the number of women in the mission, and the proportion of women in the mission) and two control variables (increased attention to SEA post-2005 and number of active mission-years).

Overall, it seems like the three independent variables capturing the dynamics of the mission’s presence in terms of female representation were not significant predictors of the number of allegations of SEA in post-conflict Liberia, but were significant predictors when SEA was measured by the number of SEA perpetrators and the number of SEA victims. The R² value of 0.977 and 0.923 for the second and third models indicates that the model explains a large portion, and in fact, almost all of the variability of the response data around its mean.
Figure 2. Relationships between mission size, number of women, proportion of women and reported counts of allegations, perpetrators, victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Because the first variable, mission size, is coded as the natural log of mission size, regression outputs need to be interpreted carefully. Using the logarithm of one or more variables instead of the un-logged form makes the effective relationship non-linear, while still preserving the linear model. A 1% increase in the size of the mission will decrease the number of allegations by 61 reports (standard error = 43.250), will decrease the number of perpetrators by 109 individuals (standard error = 13.058), and will decrease the number of victims by 129 individuals (standard error = 30.624). However, only the last two results were statistically significant, at the 0.01 and 0.05 levels, respectively. This contradicts the initial hypothesis that larger missions are associated with a greater number of SEA reports. It's possible that larger troops have more capable peacekeepers that are better able to prevent and/or handle cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. This can be explained in two ways. First, it's important to highlight that most peacekeepers come from countries facing their own security challenges because of the attractive per-soldier reimbursement rate offered by the UN, and that the UN usually relies solely on these peacekeepers to fill their troop targets. However, when there are not enough of these readily available peacekeepers, the UN must recruit peacekeepers from other countries. Therefore, an increase in the size of the mission might reflect the addition of contributions from stable countries that have more
capable, professional, and better-trained peacekeepers that might not be deployed initially.\textsuperscript{42} Second, some literature suggests that increased contributions to UN peacekeeping forces are linked to increased threats to peace in the host country of the mission. In this instance, the UN might provide more funding to maintain a capable and ready peacekeeping force in the case that the country is faced with a crisis.\textsuperscript{43}

Another dimension describing the presence of the mission is the number of women peacekeepers involved in the mission. This independent variable reflects the extent to which females are visible and represented within the troop. The findings, statistically significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 level when the dependent variable is the number of perpetrators and the number of victims, respectively, suggests that the presence of females contributes to a small increase in the level of sexual exploitation and abuse reported. This complicates the hypothesis that there will be less sexual exploitation and abuse when female peacekeepers are involved in the mission because they will have a neutralizing effect on militarized masculinity.

The finding, however, could be valid given that the number of female peacekeepers was so small that their presence was not larger enough to contribute to the visibility and respect of women. Perhaps the proportion of women involved in peacekeeping missions is a better indicator. However, it is also possible that the increase in reports of allegations is a consequence of increased reporting by victimized women who might otherwise feel uncomfortable reporting abuse to male peacekeepers. This was the case when a 130-person all-women Indian troop was deployed to Liberia in 2007.\textsuperscript{44}

From another angle, it could be possible that the recommendation of including more women ignores the fact that female peacekeepers themselves are often not respected by their male counterparts and are themselves the target of frequent sexual harassment.\textsuperscript{45} Other researchers suggest that in practice, female peacekeepers countering the abuse are not a substitution for the broader goal of improving gender equality in peacekeeping operations. The quick fix of including more female peacekeepers can actually further internalize the “boys will be boys” attitude of male peacekeepers in the mission.\textsuperscript{46}

Along similar lines, the variable describing the proportion of women involved in the peacekeeping mission also sought to stand for female representation within the mission, but sought to understand whether there was a dilution effect if the number of females involved was proportionately low compared to the number of men when mission sizes were very large. The variable, because it was a very small number, was also converted to a logarithmic scale for the purposes of the regressions. The table displays large, negative, statistically significant regression coefficients, indicating that increasing the proportion of women, as opposed to the number of women, peacekeepers involved does in fact contribute to decreased levels of sexual exploitation and abuse. These results are consistent with the hypothesis that peacekeeping missions with a higher gender ratio of female peacekeepers will report lower


\textsuperscript{44} “Progress of the World’s Women: In Pursuit of Justice.” UN Women. 2011.


levels of SEA by peacekeepers, but inconsistent with the results above pertaining to the number of women involved in peacekeeping missions.

The data shows that the number of women involved in UNMIL’s peacekeeping has ranged from 0 percent to 10 percent. The figure has increased steadily since 2006 and corresponds to the decreasing trend of SEA allegations. The pattern can be explained by the fact that men tend to be the predominant perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse, and therefore, increasing the percentage of females actually decreases the pool of perpetrators. Another explanation may be that female peacekeepers act as enforcers of proper conduct and are deterrents of SEA. Bridges and Hall suggest that women may police men’s behavior, report misconduct, and confront offenders with their argument for why sexual abuse is wrong and gender equality is necessary in the mission.

Addressing Limitations of the Model

While the previous section outlines the findings of this study, there are certain limitations to the quantitative analysis that should be acknowledged.

1. Accessibility of corroborating data: Since the UN’s webpages are the only source for all data regarding incidents of SEA by UN peacekeeping missions, it is important to remain critical of the reported numbers. A high record of allegations reflects poorly on the UN, and so they create a conflict of interest in being both the collectors and reporters of the data that reflects on the value of their contributions to local populations where their peacekeeping operations are stationed.

2. A low number of observations: UNMIL only has a 15-year presence in Liberia and so the datasets on sexual exploitation and abuse track reports on a yearly basis. From a quantitative perspective, this means that there are not enough observations to make statistically sound conclusions. Gaps in the collection of data prior to the establishment of digital datasets on UN websites in 2010 further this limitation because this implies that only 8 observations are easily accessible to researchers.

3. A high degree of underreporting: Peacekeepers are required to report any instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by other UN personnel that they witness. However, immunity from local legal systems and the lack of internal committees for administering justice may be preventing peacekeepers from filing reports on their colleagues’ misconduct. Victims or local witnesses of SEA by peacekeepers can also file reports (although the procedures surrounding how, where, and to whom to report to are unclear). Stigma and shunning by their community, resigning to the fact that they won’t receive justice, and an unawareness of how to report are also some main factors that contribute to victims and their families not reporting offenses.

4. Primary focus on women as victims and males as perpetrators: The Conduct in UN Field Missions webpage does not provide data related to the gender of perpetrators.

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or victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. This sustains the predominant understanding that perpetrators are male and victims are women, and while this claim is supported by statistics gathered by NGOs, the analysis thus excludes the possibility of females being perpetrators and of males being victims. In a way, this assumption is dangerous because it falls prey to gender stereotypes. As a result, any conclusions made from the regression analysis on the effect of women's presence as peacekeepers and as indicators of gender equality norms must be formulated with caution.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section draws on the significance quantitative findings to develop a list of policy recommendations. The recommendations are grouped into three categories: improving data collection and reporting, achieving gender equality in UNMIL in number, and achieving gender equality in UNMIL in practice. Each policy category is addressed to the specific entity that would be responsible for implementation. Each recommendation is followed by commentary on the advantages and challenges of implementation.

To the UN Conduct in Missions Office and the Office of Internal Oversight: Improve sexual exploitation and abuse data collection and reporting procedures.

1. Report statistics by gender:
   In the past few years, the UN has improved the quality of the statistics it publishes by including the nationalities of alleged peacekeeper perpetrators, the age of victims, and the status of investigations. However, the dataset still does not report the gender breakdowns of perpetrators and victims. A clear statistical understanding of gender would allow the UN to devise policies and structure programs in a way that responds adequately and effectively to the different needs, behaviors, and experiences of both women and men.
   This recommendation would not require significant resources to implement. It is likely that the gender of the victim and perpetrator is already recorded as a part of the allegation or can be inferred from the nature of the sexual exploitation and abuse that is described in the content of the allegation.

2. Report sexual exploitation and abuse data on a monthly basis:
   As mentioned in the research's limitations, the quantitative analysis was based on just fifteen observations, a rather low number, because of the fact that UN data on victims, perpetrators, communications, and other variables was reported on an annual basis. This weakened the confidence with which relationships between variables could be reported.
   The nature of the subject of analysis makes it difficult to gather more data; researchers cannot simply wait for UNMIL to generate more observations on SEA by remaining in Liberia for many, many more years. Reporting the data on a monthly basis is a solution for this and would increase the number of data points by twelve-fold. Monthly observations would not only boost the statistical validity of future analyses; it would also allow for more nuanced studies of trends in the data and disruptions to those trends as a result of specific events or policies.
   Adopting this timeline might require data collection and reporting more work
to be done by UNMIL’s personnel more frequently, but the investments into implementing such a practice are negligible given that someone in the peacekeeping operation is already trained with organizing, tracking, formatting, and reporting the data on an annual basis.

3. Provide peacekeepers with incentives for reporting any SEA that they witness:

It is difficult to understand the magnitude of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers because the data is underreported. This is a result of both victims and peacekeepers not reporting the misconduct that they personally experience or witness. Many articles and case studies identify barriers that prevent victims from reporting SEA, which include stigmatization by their community, a fear that the perpetrator will find out, and a lack of faith in the ability of the UN’s reporting process to help their situation. These barriers are often difficult to overcome from a policy perspective; they require cultivating relationships of trust between locals and the UN.

For this reason, this paper recommends incentivizing UN peacekeepers to report any sexual exploitation and abuse by their peacekeeper colleagues that they witness. Such incentives could take the form of individual monetary payments to the reporting peacekeeper for substantiated allegations, but this begs two questions: where will the financial compensation come from and how will such a policy influence peacekeepers’ motivations to excessively report SEA?

Another non-monetary incentive might be positive recognition for reporting misconduct. Currently, the UN does the opposite; its dataset has a list ranking troop-contributing countries based on the number of SEA allegations against their peacekeepers. This incentive would work in the reverse direction of naming and shaming. It would applaud troop-contributing countries with high SEA reporting rates. With this, however, comes the possibility that perpetrators learn which peacekeepers with high reporting rates to avoid or be careful around. If this were to happen, SEA would go back to being underreported and would be even more difficult to track because it would be done more covertly.

In any case, the incentive provided must be enticing enough to convince silent peacekeepers to change their current behavior of not reporting.

To the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations: Achieve gender equality in UNMIL in number.

1. Provide incentives for troop-contributing countries to recruit more females to participate in peacekeeping operations:

The impact of increasing the proportion of women involved in UNMIL’s operations on reported levels of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers was significant, as demonstrated by the regression analysis in Table 5 and the studies of the all-female Indian troops deployed to UNMIL described in theoretical framework and the discussion of results. The UN has also recognized this impact; the Security Council has called for doubling the number of women in peacekeeping

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by 2020. Right now, this goal is far from attainable and with current methods of recruiting, that goal will not be met until 2352.\textsuperscript{52} In order to reap the impact women can have in peacekeeping operations, something must be changed in the incentive structure.

Several articles recommend the use of financial incentives as a recruitment tool. Some suggest the UN providing an additional payout to troop-contributing countries per-women per-month on top of the normal reimbursement rate for peacekeepers.\textsuperscript{53} Other studies recommend a “gender balance premium” that rewards not only the participation of women in peacekeeping, but also other factors like their rank in the mission and whether the peacekeeper had undergone training on gender mainstreaming.\textsuperscript{54} In any case, the size and requirement criteria of the additional payout remains contested and would be negotiable.

There is proof that troop-contributing countries respond to financial incentives. Poor countries like Nigeria and Bangladesh provide the most troops to UNMIL and receive $1,400 USD per-peacekeeper per-month. And the practice of additional payouts is not new. The UN already provides additional payouts of $300 USD to troop-contributing countries that provide specialist teams.\textsuperscript{55}

This policy recommendation, however, might be met with resistance. Again, the practice of providing financial incentives begs the question of where the money to fund the additional payouts will come from. The United States, Japan, France, Germany, and the UK are already the top contributors to the UN’s peacekeeping fund and might oppose the change.\textsuperscript{56} If the resistance proves insurmountable, a two-year pilot of the incentive structure could be negotiated on, deployed, assessed, and then renegotiated based on the impact of the program on reducing SEA.

It is also important to note that the policy is not a permanent fix and could not be sustained indefinitely. At some point, other incentives to increase female participation in peacekeeping would need to be explored.

\textit{To the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations: Achieve gender equality in UNMIL in practice.}

1. Implement in-person, interactive modules for sexual exploitation and abuse training for UNMIL peacekeepers:

Since September 2016, the UN has required all peacekeepers to complete an e-training program that covers standards of conduct and issues of sexual exploitation and abuse.\textsuperscript{57} However, with the online program, there is no way of ensuring that the peacekeepers truly understand the information that is being conveyed to


\textsuperscript{53} UN Women. \textit{Exploratory Options On Using Financial Incentives To Increase The Percentage Of Military Women In UN Peacekeeping Missions}. Report. 2015.


\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{56} UN Women. \textit{Exploratory Options On Using Financial Incentives To Increase The Percentage Of Military Women In UN Peacekeeping Missions}. Report. 2015.

\textsuperscript{57} “UN Launches E-learning Training to Tackle Sexual Exploitation and Abuse | UN News.” Unit-
them and how it applies to the reality of the country they are working in. In other words, while UNMIL’s peacekeepers have access to content, they do not have programs that allow them to practice the content effectively.

One way of strengthening the delivery of this content is by developing and implementing interactive, in-person modules that engage peacekeepers in role-playing SEA perpetrators, victims and interveners. Lori Cohen, a lecturer at Yale University’s Jackson Institute who facilitated a class on improving policing practices in Liberia, suggests that helping peacekeepers practice intervening and reporting abuse will help them feel more comfortable with intervening when they actually need to. Switching between the roles of perpetrator, victim, and intervener would allow peacekeepers to understand the negative impact of sexual exploitation and abuse to the victim and the positive impact of stopping SEA from occurring or at the very least, reporting it.58

In order to develop the gender component of the training, different versions of the modules could require peacekeepers switching off between playing the role of male and female; this could begin to let peacekeepers understand how gender influences susceptibilities, reactions, and responses to sexual exploitation and abuse.

The training should not pose many implementation challenges. The modules, because they rely on people and knowledge, are low maintenance, low cost, and low technology. A one-time training by someone outside UNMIL would be necessary for the modules to work, but after that, the responsibility could be passed on to UNMIL’s gender experts.

CONCLUSION

This paper has identified the gender composition of a peacekeeping mission as a significant contributing factor in accounting for the high levels of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers in the United Nations Mission in Liberia. There are, of course, other components to the structure of peacekeeping operations that were out of the scope of the quantitative analysis. Three in particular are the cultural understandings of gender equality brought into the mission by peacekeepers from different troop-contributing countries, the deployment periods of each peacekeeper, and the command hierarchy of the mission.

UNMIL’s drawdown as an opportunity to critically analyze the lessons learned and best practices identified in their fifteen-year history in Liberia and apply those best practices and lessons learned to other peacekeeping missions. Was its legacy more helpful than harmful? What were its achievements and failures? What could it have done better? These reflections are essential for truly grasping the impact of peacekeeping operations and an occasion to begin to remedy what has been broken in the system.

58. Lori Cohen of the Jackson Institute provided the information used to structure this policy recommendation in a phone interview on March 31, 2018.


Peace Agreement Between The Government Of Liberia (GOL), The Liberians United For


MAYA ARONOFF

SILENCE OF THE MAJORITY

Transitional Justice, Sexual Violence, and the Valech Commission

After the fall of the Pinochet dictatorship in 1990, the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation was created as an investigative, fact-finding mission to uncover the human rights abuses by the regime against citizens who had been killed. This first step was limited in its scope due to the political realities of the post-Pinochet regime, and it wasn’t until 2003 that the National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture (Valech Commission) was chartered to investigate human rights violations against those individuals who survived—specifically, to investigate the torture of Chilean citizens by the dictatorship.1 This Commission revealed that of the 3,400 women survivors interviewed, almost all had experienced sexual violence as a weapon of torture. Yet, in 2014, Nieves Ayress Moreno brought first complaint over sexual violence during the Chilean military regime to court—40 years after the crimes were committed. In order to address the lack of scholarship on the presence of sexual violence as a weapon of torture in the Valech Commission, the specific dynamics of gendered violence during the Pinochet regime, and the factors contributing to the response by the Chilean transitional justices processes, it is vital to examine the context and consequences of the Valech Commissions chapter on violence against women. First, the Commission broke a decade-long silence on the prevalence and gendered nature of sexual violence as a weapon of torture during the dictatorship. However, due to pressure for additional accountability in general, changing priorities of civil society organizations, and new developments in international law, the Commission explicitly carved out a space for this issue to be engaged with. Although efforts at confronting the legacy of this violence through memory sites and reparations have been positive, obstacles to addressing the unique legacy of sexual violence on society persist. Further scholarship will require thorough, sustained investigations into the experiences of individual Chileans and government officials, and their perceptions of the issue, in order to fully understand how best to prevent future atrocities in Chile and heal.

In 2003, the Chilean National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation (or “Valech Commission”) was chartered to document the human rights abuses by the Chilean dictatorship that did not result in death or disappearance. During the Pinochet dictatorship, the National Intelligence Directorate (DINA) coordinated the detention of at least 27,255 individuals in a network of over 1,200 torture centers throughout the country. These centers included barracks, jails, sports stadiums, and secret facilities designed for physical and psychological torture.

Most of the detained were men, due to both the regime’s strategy to eliminate the opposition, and the access of men to the opposition party. First, one of the primary goals of detention, torture, and disappearance was to eliminate political opposition, particularly leadership. Chilean gender expectations encouraged male political activism and contributed to not only more men participating in opposition parties, but a path to political leadership for those men.²

However, 3,400 torture victims that gave testimony to the Valech Commission were women—and almost all of them described suffering sexual violence as a weapon of torture while in detention.³ Some men also testified to experiencing sexual violence, but a much smaller percentage.⁴ More than half of the women reporting were detained in 1973, although the duration of their detention varied. Of these women, 299 were pregnant during their detention, 11 of which clarified that their pregnancy was due to rape.⁵ Several women who were pregnant reported being forced to have abortions, or beaten until they miscarried. The sexual abuses described ranged from sexual harassment and humiliation, to gang rape. Many women reported being forced to watch other women be raped, being forced to have intercourse with their male relatives, being raped with objects, by specially trained dogs, or the insertion of rodents or insects.⁶ An enclosure in Santiago, nicknamed “The Sexy Band,” was particularly infamous for these techniques. The testimonials did not gloss over descriptions of the assaults, despite the psychological trauma associated with them.

The number of women assaulted in this manner by DINA is likely much greater than indicated by the testimonials for a number of reasons. First, the stigma attached to describing such sexual violence may have discouraged some women from coming forward—as it does when it comes to sexual violence in any context.⁷ Second, because many women described watching others being raped before being executed, there is no way to know how many of the deceased suffered this violence. The numbers of women who became pregnant due to rape are even more likely to be skewed, given the intense trauma such a revelation could result in not only for the testifier, but for their children—potentially unaware of this legacy.

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⁴. The Commission defined sexual aggression as “forcing a person through physical or psychological coercion, to perform or suffer sexual acts.”
⁶. Ibid., 217.
The patterns of violence described in the testimonials reveal important dimensions to the strategy of the Pinochet regime and the ways in which the dictatorship sought out its objectives. Although a common misconception since the 1990s is that sexual violence occurs during all war and conflict, Elizabeth Wood argues that the sexual violence in war varies according to its prevalence, the systematic or organized nature of such violence, and the groups targeted. For example, in the Sierra Leone civil war sexual violence was widespread but random, while in the Sri Lanka civil war it was infrequent but targeted Tamils. In Bosnia-Herzegovina (1990s), sexual violence was a top-down strategy of dehumanization and displacement of Muslims. But in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict sexual violence does not occur—which involves displacement of one group. Similarly, sexual violence as a tool of state oppression varies in prevalence and form. For example, in Uruguay, men and women were targeted evenly for abuse; while in other dictatorships around the world only women were targeted, or sexual violence was not a prevalent tactic of state oppression at all. Thus, it is necessary to ascertain the specific dimensions of sexual violence during the Pinochet dictatorship, in order to isolate the causal variables of such a phenomenon and prevent future atrocities.

Evidence in the Valech Commission and the reports preceding it indicated that such torture was coordinated by the army, police, and civilian paramilitary operatives in a precise and coordinated manner. Investigation by Chilean human rights organizations both during and after the dictatorship argue that torture and detention were aimed at destroying, and traumatizing left-wing trade unions and political opposition psychologically, rather than gathering any real information. The patterns of sexual violence revealed by the Commission bear this out, but complicate the relationship between the Pinochet regime, state oppression, and gender. First, the fact that nearly every woman detained experienced sexual violence indicates a level of coordination and suggests a top-down organized approach to such violence specifically. Second, the fact that the victims of such attacks were primarily women, but many men were threatened by sexual violence, suggests that this violence was gendered—where for some reason, it was determined that the dehumanization of men was best achieved by the threat of such violence, and the dehumanization of women was best achieved through its enactment.

The ways in which the Pinochet dictatorship conceived of and imposed gender roles may provide important context for this trend. During the Pinochet regime, the government intentionally promoted traditional gender roles, idealizing the figure of the mother in the home. Simultaneously, the regime engaged in the brutalization of women they accused of political activism—activism that defied not only the regime, but that gender role. Specifically, women were targeted for sexual violation with lasting impacts on intimacy and family life, and choices regarding motherhood were destroyed. Symbolically, then, deviance from the regime’s prescribed gender roles was punished by gendered violence. In order to establish the relative impact of such dynamics on sexual violence when compared to other

9. Ibid., 314.
factors, it is necessary to conduct future comparative studies with other countries where similar gender norms are enforced or not. Interviews with the perpetrators would also yield valuable insight into this dynamic, although the Valech Commission—like the first Truth Commission before it—does not name perpetrators.

CONTEXT OF THE COMMISSION:
INCREASING DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ON TORTURE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Commission did not specifically ask for testimony about potential sexual violence experienced during detention, but the testimony on that issue which emerged on its own was codified into its own chapter of the report and contextualized carefully within international law. Chapter 5 details methods of sexual violence as a torture tactic and specifically discusses the disproportionate impact of these methods on women. The Report argues that it is “necessary to highlight separately the situation of sexual violence experienced by women detainees … as well as its moral and cultural significance in Chilean society.” This section also emphasizes the Geneva Conventions and Protocols with regards to the consideration of sexual violence as a potential crime against humanity. The Commission, which was conducted in under a year, enacted a 50-year confidentiality measure and did not name perpetrators of the crimes (similarly to the Rettig Commission over a decade earlier). Finally, the Commission provided recommendations for a system of reparations.13

The Commission’s treatment of its findings attempted to balance the quest for truth with peace, reckoning with the past without destabilizing Chile's democratic future through accountability—a balance particularly significant in its treatment of sexual violence, given the silence around that issue until that point. In order to explain the silence prior to the Commission, and the way in which the Commission presented its findings to break that silence, it is necessary to analyze the domestic and international context in which the commission was issued.

First, according to Christian Correa, legal secretary of the Valech Commission, the Commission members were given a prerogative by the government to conduct a process that was “welcoming but massive and expedient and with short term results.”14 The 1998 arrest of Pinochet was an important catalyst for a wave of reforms aimed at confronting, but moving on from, the past. Prior to President Lagos’ ordering of the commission, there was a failed attempt to levy an acusación constitucional against Pinochet, which nonetheless lessened the taboo of pursuing justice. In 2000 Chilean Supreme Court stripped Pinochet of impunity and put him under house arrest.15 Newly elected President Richard Lagos needed to appease human rights' organizations popular pushes for consideration of torture victims. Lagos was persuaded by individuals close to him, including human rights lawyer and contributor on the Rettig Commission José Zalaquett, that he needed to give “the newly-visible survivors’ movement specific recognition.”16

The incentives facing the government in 2003 are necessary but insufficient to explain the Commission’s investigation of torture during the Pinochet regime, and emphasis on the widespread use of sexual violence as a method of torture. The mobilization of civil society organizations, particularly women’s organizations, played a key role in the construction of the Valech Commission, and was likely a contributing factor in the Commissions’ emphasis of the international criminal law on sexual violence as a uniquely damaging form of torture.

The Chilean National Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 1990 was only concerned with “persons who disappeared after arrest, who were executed, and were tortured to death,” and only mentioned sexual violence as one form of torture in passing, without further discussion or specific recommendations. Feminist historian Catherin O’Rourke argues that because the initial commission focused on deaths and disappearances, it created a “gender imbalance in those recognized as ‘direct victims.’” During this period women’s organizations capitalized on Pinochet’s reverent image of the Chilean madre in order to advocate for investigations into the disappearances of their family members. Chilean human rights organizations prioritized “direct victims” by stressing the identification of the disappeared. But because men working on the commission itself did not actively take a gender-sensitive approach to truth-seeking, the focus of the first commission was primarily on the experiences of male detainees.

Meanwhile, while women’s organizations were vital in advocating for truth-seeking surrounding their (mostly male) disappeared relatives, many feminist movements during the first decade after the fall of the dictatorship were primarily focused on shaping the future, rather than contending with the past. During the dictatorship, women’s movements primarily organized around domestic violence in face of the impunity abusers faced in the courts. This issue continued to be a priority after the regime changed. Feminist political activity during the transition was also focused on the advocacy of women’s democratic rights and political agency, to ensure their participation in the new form of government. Although O’Rourke’s claim that “women’s movements did not engage with the debate on how to deal with the past” in the 1990s is overstated, it is the case that women’s movements had a diverse set of priorities, none of which were focused on truth-seeking for surviving victims of sexual violence during torture. Because of the Report’s silence on the unique harms suffered by women detainees, and the organizations focused on securing democratic rights, the extent to which women detainees suffered—specifically suffered sexual violence—was not publicly acknowledged until the Valech Commission.

By 2003, many of the feminist political movements which had focused so intensely on an effective democratic transition in the 1990s began to look back towards the past and refocus their energy on completing the project of truth-seeking that began with Rettig. Even before 1998, activists were pushing for more general accountability towards the end

17. TRC, Part One, Chapter Two, A.1.
of Pinochet’s career. Women led movements such as “Memories of Occupation” and a human rights tribunal in 2003, bringing gender more prominently into the transitional justice conversation. This new focus and pressure on the government was directly impacted by changing international context.

First, broad changes in international criminal justice had paved the way for a Chilean confrontation with the past in general. Pinochet’s 1998 arrest in Britain had dismantled the sense that accountability was impossible. This incident sparked a wave of reforms within Chile pertaining to amnesty and democracy in general.

However, the Commission’s understandings of the relationship between state oppression and sexual violence were specifically influenced by changing international justice norms and the experiences of other countries. These changes took place regionally, globally, and in international law. The visibility of widespread sexual violence as a weapon of war in Bosnia and in Rwanda sparked reconsideration of transitional justice frameworks among activists worldwide. Women activists in the Chilean Memories of Occupation movement articulated that the new visibility of sexual violence as a weapon of war motivated different groups to discover whether Chilean “women, militants as well as sisters, daughters, and wives of militants suffered … sexual violence as torture” as well.

Changes in international criminal law surrounding sexual violence as a weapon of war, as well as the transitional justice processes of other countries surrounding that issue, gave these movements and the 2003 Commission a conceptual framework for investigation. In the decade between the two Truth Commissions, the concept that although they might perform similar roles as men during conflict, “women political activists can also suffer gender-specific forms of harm”—including sexual violence—became more widespread in international law. The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in 2000 codified the idea that both violent conflict, and the resolution of violent conflict, are gendered. Rape was recognized as a component genocide framed in the Geneva Conventions, and this concept was codified in the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court with an explicit recognition of sexual violence as a crime against humanity and war crime. Prosecutions in Sierra Leone, Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Peru based on these legal principles sparked a new wave of activism on the issue in the years before the Valech Commission.

Despite these trends in domestic and global politics, Christian Correa recounted that his fellow Commissioner—and were “shocked…and surprised” when they conducted testimonials and heard about the widespread use of sexual violence as a weapon of torture. “We knew about the torture,” he said, but “most of the knowledge about human rights

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23. Catherine O’Rourke, Gender Politics In Transitional Justice, (Routledge, 2013), 40.
25. Memorias de Ocupación. 137.
27. Catherine O’Rourke, Gender Politics In Transitional Justice, (Routledge, 2013), 21.
violations was based on killings and disappearances.” This meant that the questions asked during Rettig and in the decade since had focused on what a former detainee might have seen which could lead to discovering another disappeared person—not on what had happened specifically to the living detainee. Correa also expressed the belief that the topic was especially difficult for people to talk about, even thirty years later. The sensitivity of the subject, focus on the disappeared from the perspective of transitional justice, and focus on democratization by the government and civil society organizations contributed to a silence surrounding the issue until the Valech Commission. However, the impact of these civil society organizations and international law is visible in the careful way the Commission does present the information it uncovered.

AFTERMATH OF THE COMMISSION:
DISCOURSE, REPARATIONS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SURROUNDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

After the Valech Commission was released, Chilean society experienced the same shock and horror as the Commissioners did when the extent of sexual violence as a weapon of torture was revealed. Although narratives exposing such violence existed—and thousands of women had experienced it—this was clearly not a part of the collective memory of the dictatorship at the time. After the Commission, Chilean society engaged with this information in complex ways.

On the one hand, the revelation of these atrocities—particularly their shockingly widespread nature—was incorporated into Chilean collective memory through museums, memorials, education, and dialogue, and was a part of a resurgence of civil society efforts for reparations, reform, and accountability. Sites for memory, such as the detention center Villa Grimaldi, have been erected to educate the public.30 Human rights organizations have challenged laws protecting amnesty and promoting impunity. The Valech Commission enacted an updated round of several thousand new testimonies in 2011, which although temporarily confidential, keeping the process of truth-seeking alive.31 Most successfully, reparations have been distributed to those affected by the detentions along the recommendations of the Commission.

According to the Commission, “reparations in a process of democratic transition are not merely a function of respecting the individual victim that should receive reparations, but also have important implications for social, historical, and preventative dimensions.”32 Each individual who gave testimony for the Valech Commission were given a lifelong pension of equal value to every other survivor, in addition to other forms of reparation conferable on one’s children. For example, university scholarship was available for testifiers and was eventually allowed to be passed on to one’s children or grandchildren. The reparations program also involves access to medical and psychosocial support.33 Survivors of sexual violence receive no specific reparations, but according to Correa,

30. Ed. Collins, Cath; Hite, Katherine; and Joignant, Alfredo. The Politics of Memory in Chile from Pinochet to Balachate. First Forum Press 2013, 45.
32. Interview with Christián Correa. Conducted by author. Skype. 01/08/2017.
this was intentionally designed to protect the privacy of each testifier. The medical and psychosocial support provided in the reparations program is completely paid for and tailored to the special needs of each survivor—ensuring that survivors of rape are provided the specific care they need. However, Correa said, “the idea was … you don’t have to say your specific issue … being detained was enough,” and that no suffering was treated as greater than another type of suffering.  

A crucial departure from early reparation framework was the recognition of children conceived during detention as fully eligible for reparations. This was vital due to the devastating psychological legacy of the violence, not only for the detainees, but for their families. For example, a 29-year-old woman testified for the Commission on behalf of her mother, who was 15 at the time of detention and became pregnant with the testifier due to rape. According to that testimonial, “there is a lot of rage inside her, I felt it. This has shaped my life and is eternal … I have had to carry this eternal weight … I began to drink after they told me … I believe that we, the children who were born just like me, were just as much prisoners and torture victims as those who were detained.” (VII Region, 1974).  

However, given the prevalence of sexual violence specifically, there is a surprising lack of emphasis on this aspect of government repression in and of itself in Chilean discourse, civil society, and scholarship on the topic. First, there is a deficit of scholarship on the Valech Commission in general. Unlike the earlier Commission, Valech was not officially translated into Spanish—perhaps limiting English scholarship on the document. Still, compared to other contemporary conflicts in Peru and Colombia where sexual violence was present, academic analysis is few and far between even in Spanish.  

Second, although memory sites such as Villa Grimaldi acknowledge the use of sexual violence as a weapon of torture, this methodology is not emphasized either onsite or on the website. The website, for example, articulates that “some” women experienced sexual violence—which is an understatement. There are no memorials specifically dedicated to women detainees or victims of sexual violence. Most visitors to memorial sights like Villa Grimaldi are foreigners, and according to Correa, the Valech Commission is not commonly read or constantly discussed.  

Scholars Loveman and Lira argue that Chile has a unique cultural approach to transitional justice (la vía chilena de reconciliación política) which has informed political processes and societal responses to trauma. This response includes both “impunity and resistance to impunity; a quest for truth and justice and a pragmatic resort to amnesties and pardons in the name of social peace and governability;” the effort to engage in labors of memory and punishment, while coupled with Christian forgiveness and corriendo el velo del olvido (drawing the veil of oblivion). The complex balance of these competing priorities has resulted in a “forward looking” Chilean approach to transitional justice, which has enabled the country to weather a number of political upheavals.

Given this framework, one possible contributing factor to the lack of prosecutions on

34. Interview with Christian Correa. Conducted by author. Skype. 01/08/2017.
35. The existing literature on the Valech Commission invariably mentions sexual violence, but only a few English sources focus on solely its prevalence during the dictatorship or activist response. (In contrast to dozens of articles on Peru and Colombia focusing on sexual violence during those conflicts).
37. Ed. Collins, Cath; Hite, Katherine; and Joignant, Alfredo, The Politics of Memory in Chile from Pinochet to Balachate, (First Forum Press 2013), 55.
the issue is the relative satisfaction of victims and their descendants with the reparations as a measure of justice. Although clearly not all victims believed reparations to be sufficient, going over traumatic testimonials is painful, and many individuals expressed that the Valech Commission would be the only circumstances under which they would be willing to retell the story.\textsuperscript{39} The “silence” around this issue could simply be a symptom of Chilean’s desire to draw the veil of oblivion, and an acceptance of the truth-telling and compensation which has taken place.

However, since the release of the Valech Commission, a wave of prosecutions and accountability measures have proceeded—not in high numbers compared to the number of crimes, but compared to the decades before. 2005 reforms allowed the President to fire military commanders, the National Security Council was stripped of all but advisory powers, and by 2009 779 individuals were charged with human rights crimes, with 59 serving sentences.\textsuperscript{40} This implies that Chilean society is not completely satisfied with the structure of the Valech Commission and human rights organizations are still advocating for increased accountability. Yet only one case to date brought in 2014—has dealt with sexual violence specifically as a crime.\textsuperscript{41} The suit, brought by four women, (Nieves Ayress Moreno, Carmen Holzapfel, Soledad Castillo and Nora Brito Corez), presses Chile to update its penal code to rape of political prisoners as a political crime, to enable harsher sentences. The presiding judge, Mario Corroza, attributes this breaking of the “silence” to updated human rights accords.\textsuperscript{42} However, the low number of suits being brought even after updates in human rights law implies that there may be something specific about the legacy of sexual violence which discourages conversation, and specific obstacles to pushing for more aggressive accountability measures.

One potential contributing factor to a unique silence around sexual violence is the Pinochet regime’s imposition of gender roles, the legacy of which persists today. First, the legacy of impunity surrounding domestic violence during Pinochet continues to be a priority for women’s rights organizations, such as La Morada, to combat. A 2004 Chilean National Women’s Service (SERNAM) study indicated that 50 percent of married women had suffered spousal abuse in Chile in the previous year.\textsuperscript{43} The epidemic nature of gender-based violence may impede conversation surrounding past abuses in two ways. First, present concerns about gender-based violence may consume women’s organizations that would be concerned with such issues—unlike mainstream human rights organizations which tend to focus more on torture in general. Second, given the 40 year legacy of recovery from Pinochet’s imposition of destructive patriarchal norms, Chileans may feel that the abuse female detainees faced was in some way an inevitable extension of the regime—no more or less perplexing than the brutality of the torture in general. The legacy of these taboos surrounding sexual violence during Pinochet may endure to a certain extent today, and a sustained

\textsuperscript{39} Elizabeth Lira, “Reconciliation, Memory, and Forgetting: Political and Ethical Dilemmas. The Case of Chile,” Psyke & Logos, 2009, 58.


\textsuperscript{43} Ministerio de la Mujer y la Equidad de Género. http://www.minmujeryeg.gob.cl/sernameg/.
effort to research the rhetoric surrounding the issue and opinions of everyday people would be necessary to evaluate this possibility.

That being said, organizers such as the four women of the Moreno case are pushing for accountability for crimes against humanity and the specific abuses of women. Rape and other forms of sexual violence are prohibited by international law under the 1949 Geneva Conventions and 1977 protocols—both of which Chile is a signatory to. In 1998, the International Criminal Court recognized in binding legal statute that sexual violence could be a crime of war or a crime against humanity.44 However, sexual violence is not considered torture under the Chilean Penal Code—a major obstacle to accountability on this issue specifically.45 Other countries have attempted to overcome similar obstacles through creative legal maneuvering. For example, Peruvian litigators have pursued cases against the government, arguing that international human rights treaties have primacy over international law, crimes of sexual violence can be prosecuted using an international framework in Peruvian courts. They have also attempted to argue that sexual violence is torture, which is a crime against humanity in Peru.46 Because the Chilean Supreme Court ruled that the 1978 Amnesty Law did not apply to torture, because it is a crime against humanity, if litigants can convince the courts that sexual violence was a form of torture during the dictatorship and increased measure of accountability for these heinous crimes might be realized.

The extent of the systematic sexual violence used by the Pinochet dictatorship against almost every female detainee was exposed fully to Chilean society for the first time with the release of the Valech Commission. The details within illustrate a campaign of gendered violence, potentially aimed at not only political oppression, but brutal punishment for the defiance of social norms through political action. Until the Valech Commission, the preoccupation with the disappeared among human rights activists—informed by the urgency surrounding the most brutal crimes and the constraints of the negotiated transition—meant that gendered concerns in the Rettig Truth Commission were pushed aside and the prevalence of sexual violence was ignored. However, over time, as womens’ organizations began to prioritize investigations into the past, as a result of changing international norms, the Chilean government was pressured to prioritize truth-seeking for torture victims and exposed this phenomenon. The reparations provided by the Commission served as one vital means of accountability—however, the report was limited in its ability to deliver further types of justice due to its omission of perpetrators and existing Chilean law preventing prosecution of gender-based violence as a crime against humanity. The complex relationship between memory, accountability, and gender-based violence in Chile requires further analysis, particularly to ascertain the reasons behind its continued lack of emphasis in mainstream Chilean advocacy as compared to other countries like Peru and Colombia.47

44. ICTY Kuranać Case, 2001
47. I swear I have not violated the University Honor Code in the writing of this paper, which represents my own work.
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Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.


RULING THE LIVING DEAD

Rebel Territorial Control and the Prevalence of Sexual Violence in War

Rape is a weapon even more powerful than a bomb or a bullet. At least with a bullet, you die. But if you have been raped, you appear to the community like someone who is cursed. After rape, no one will talk to you; no man will see you. It’s a living death.

— Jeanne Mukuninwa:
Survivor of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence has long been viewed as an inevitability of war, with most holding the belief that all groups would rape, loot, and pillage if the opportunity presented itself. However, recent literature exposes that this is empirically not the case, as there is wide variation between different armed actors’ use of sexual violence (Wood 2008, 2010; Cohen 2013). In fact, only sixty-five out of 275 rebel groups—less than a quarter—were reported as perpetrators of sexual violence between 1989-2014 (Cohen and Nordås 2014). Which armed groups have perpetrated sexual violence in recent conflicts? This article presents patterns from the new Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC).

It seems then important to ask, are there certain factors that make it more likely for actors to perpetrate sexual violence? There is a body of literature that addresses this question in terms of conflict-level factors and state-actor motivation for wartime rape (Leiby 2009; Inger 2001; Butler 2007). Simultaneously, civil war studies have increased focus on non-state actors in conflict, analyzing rebel motivations for violence and shifting away from country-level and conflict-level factors (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013; Pearlman and Cunningham, 2012). This literature on the logic of rebel violence against civilians has emphasized non-ideological motives, strength, and governance capabilities. However, there has been relatively little work on how these attributes of rebel actors shape their use of sexual violence in armed conflict. This paper seeks to understand whether rebel capacity shapes its use of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). I argue that rebel groups that

1. I give my greatest thanks to my advisor, Professor Melissa Lee, for her incredible guidance in the writing of this paper. All remaining errors are my own. This work draws in part from my fall prospectus and uses similar language as such.
control territory are more likely to use sexual violence in conflict. To test this theory, I use both quantitative and qualitative methods. First, I use cross-national statistical analysis to establish a significant relationship between rebel territorial control and the prevalence of CRSV across rebel groups and over time. Second, I use micro-level data from Sierra Leone to show a significant relationship between the Revolutionary United Forces’ (RUF) control of territory and the likelihood a civilian is affected by war-time rape perpetrated by the RUF. Finally, using qualitative evidence from Sierra Leone, I argue that rebel groups with territory are more likely to perpetrate sexual violence due to a need to coerce and terrorize civilians from whom they extract rents.

Motivation

This is an important research question for three reasons. First, it is motivated by a puzzle that emerges from the literature on sexual violence. Sexual violence is significantly more likely to be perpetrated by state-actors in armed conflict than by rebel groups or militias (Cohen 2015). This is a surprising discovery because rebel groups are more likely to engage in violence against civilians than state-forces, and even when states attack civilians they are likely to delegate this task to militias (Kalyvas 2004; Mitchell 2014). I want to see if this same trend reversal exists within rebel groups, where groups with territorial use sexual violence more than weaker groups, given that the literature on violence against civilians broadly predicts that weaker rebel groups attempting to consolidate territory are the most likely to use violence (R. M. Wood 2014). If found that sexual violence is used under opposite conditions than general violence and killing, this has important implications for literature on rebel violence moving forward. Specifically, it will highlight the importance of creating distinction between different violent behaviors. In the status quo, papers often refer to sexual violence as a phenomenon within war that follows the same patterns as other forms of violence against civilians such as killing and forced displacement (eg. Kalyvas 2006). The second motivation is that studying the relationship between sexual violence and territorial control could be valuable for future studies about violence as a facet of rebel governance. The third motivation is that identifying risk factors for sexual violence in war allows policymakers to “better understand current situations as well as likely future events” (UNHCR, 2000). This deeper understanding creates quicker and more effective responses to CRSV.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions

For this paper, I follow Cohen’s and Wood’s definition of sexual violence as a category of violence that encompasses multiple acts including rape, sexual torture, mutilation, sexual torture, sexual slavery, forced sterilization, and forced pregnancy (E. J. Wood 2009). When I refer to wartime rape, as I will in the Sierra Leone case, I use the definition provided by Wood (2009) referring to the penetration of a sexual or genital organ with any object or body part of a perpetrator by force or under threat of force. Rebel actors are armed groups that oppose the existing national government in conflict, thereby excluding pro-government militias (Harbom, Melander, and Wallensteen 2008). For the purposes of this paper, I will use the terms “insurgent” and “rebel” interchangeably. These definitions match the coding practices used for the data utilized in this paper.
Sexual Violence in War

In the 1990s, international attention turned to the conflicts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda, pushing the topic of sexual violence into the world spotlight. Both conflicts featured mass rape and systematic sexual violence as a feature of genocide and ethnic cleansing. With this attention, a body of work on sexual violence in war began to develop. The literature focused on conflict related sexual violence as a gendered phenomenon and the implication of sexual violence in ethnic conflict, with the conflicts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda as the primary cases of focus (Leiby 2009). These works challenged the assumption of rape as a product of war’s “anarchy”, but rather claimed that sexual violence was used systematically and intentionally (Bennett 1994). Rather than deeming CRSV as the result of societal breakdown, feminist literature argued that political violence with a sexual component reinforced societal norms surrounding gender and was an instrument of power that was used precisely because of pre-existing gender inequity (Brownmiller 1975; Enloe 1998; Kelly 2000). Arguments of sexual violence as an effective weapon of war, particularly ethnic cleansing, rely on the idea of sexual violence unique way to destroy communities and defile a nation through the women's body moved into mainstream political science literature as international law recognized mass rape as a crime against humanity and a genocidal act (Chappell 2011). This conception of CRSV emphasizes the symbolic nature of sexual violence and the importance of the victim’s identity in perpetrators exacting revenge and creating shame for a collective identity through the violation of the victims’ body (Hayden 2000; Baaz 2013; UNICEF 2017).

While these views are still articulated in current studies, the literature has moved towards two broad views of sexual violence: sexual violence as instrument war and sexual violence as a reflection of armed group organization.

Some authors view sexual violence as part of a package of violence or an atrocity that occurs alongside other forms of violence, making it akin to other classical methods of warfare (Leatherman 2011, Dolan 2010, Anderson 2010). This literature views sexual violence as an instrument of war employed to achieve specific political ends. However, this literature has exclusively focused on the use of sexual violence by state-forces against civilians, finding that sexual violence can be used selectively against civilians suspected to be sympathetic to rebels as a tool of terror or indiscriminately as a tool of repression (Leiby 2009; Kirby 2012).

Newer works explain variations in sexual violence between armed groups as an outcome groups’ internal dynamics such as hierarchical control and group cohesion. Butler et al. (2007) introduced the idea of sexual violence in war as a principal-agent problem, where-in soldiers can perpetrate sexual violence individually without it being a desired collective practice of the group. Explicitly, the logic underlying this argument is that individuals may be opportunistic and take advantage of war to The study specifically focuses on state forces, yet again, showing that when there is minimal discipline or a lack of accountability to superiors within the group, there is more likely to be high levels of sexual violence. This relationship is further explored by Elisabeth Wood (2009) who finds that highly centralized groups with clear command chains have lower propensities for sexual violence, using the case of the Tamil Tigers. While she gives credence to Tamil cultural values possibly restraining the use of sexual violence, she identifies the LTTE’s strict rules, such as a ban on non-marital sexual relations, and ability to easily punish transgressors as the primary reason why we see minimal sexual violence perpetrated by the LTTE (2009). The LTTE case is also valuable in that it is an example of when a rebel group did not use sexual violence but did commit other atrocities and human rights violations against civilians, showing that not all forms of
violence work in tandem. Dara Cohen has contributed several important findings, among them finding internal armed group cohesion a significant predictor of sexual violence. She finds that groups that recruit soldiers through abduction or force, rather than conscription or voluntarily, have low levels of social cohesion. She argues that these groups use gang rape and other forms of sexual violence to create in-group bonds and internal cohesion.

Cohen and Nordgas (2014) also identify some broad important trends about sexual violence, finding that ethnic conflict is not a significant predictor of sexual violence, that states are more likely to use sexual violence than rebel groups, and that state actors do not "delegate" the act of sexual violence to militias. Despite the rapid growth in the literature on sexual violence, we still lack meaningful research on how rebel groups’ material interests and external strength/capacity affects the prevalence of sexual violence in war.

Rebel Violence and Rebel Governance

Violence against civilians is generally thought of as a tool of weak insurgent groups. Civilian targeting is the intentional and direct killing of noncombatants in war (Stepanova 2009). The intentional targeting of civilian groups can take on three forms: irregular warfare, dispersive violence, and coercive violence. Rebels attack civilians as a part of irregular warfare. Research establishes when there is a greater imbalance of power or military capabilities between the state and the insurgent group, insurgent groups are more likely to resort to attacking civilians (Hultman 2007). This can occur because the insurgent group seeks to impose costs on government forces through civilian death, while lacking the resources to directly fight the state military (Kalyvas and Balcells 2014). The goal of the violence can also be to affect the civilians themselves rather than the host government. We see this with dispersive violence. Evidence shows that civilian targeting increases as insurgencies are attempting to expand territorial control (Raleigh 2012). This happens because soldiers need to loot to augment their resources for fighting (Azam and Hoeffler 2002) or they are trying to actively displace civilians from the land so the rebel group can permanently seize control (Wood 2014).

The third form of violence is violence as a way to terrorize and coerce civilians into supporting the rebel group. Weaker insurgencies do not have the capacity to provide services or goods greater than what the much stronger state can provide as a way to gain civilians as a collaborator in warfare, meaning the only option available to the insurgent group is violence against civilians (Wood 2010). This is supported by the finding that civilian targeting is responsive to the recruitment strategies used by the other armed groups in the conflict; civilian targeting by insurgent groups increases as the other side in the conflict provides more benefits to those it recruits (Hug and Schubiger 2016). In other words, if insurgents cannot incentivize, they terrorize.

While insurgents can attack civilians randomly and preemptively to coerce support, they also can target civilians as a punishment for disloyalty. This targeting can occur as selective targeting, attacking individual civilians known to have provided information to state forces (Condra and Shapiro 2012). The targeting can also be collective, in which insurgent groups attack groups of people that share an identity that would make them less likely to support the insurgency over the incumbent power. Attributes on which insurgents can collectively target include features like ethnicity, religion, education level, and political affiliation (Joshi and Quinn 2017). Additionally, Wood finds that civilian victimization also increases after material losses of insurgents, such as lessening territorial control (Wood 2014). Groups fear that losing consolidated control makes civilians more likely to support
the new force in power (Kalyvas 2006), meaning that the insurgent group resorts to attacking the civilians to coerce support.

This body of literature establishes killing and displacing civilians is to displace and coerce civilians in the process of acquiring and losing territory. However, this does not answer the question of what happens once a rebel group has established territory control that they are not in immediate threat of losing. How do rebels coerce civilians once they are already in power? The literature suggests in these cases that we get some form of rebel governance, contractual behavior in which the insurgent group provides public services, monetary reward, or protection in return for resources from civilians (Metelits 2010). This occurs not only to “win hearts and minds” but to additionally to have the civilians as some consistent source of revenue. This is consistent with Olson’s (1993) conception of a stationary bandit, who “monopolizes and rationalizes theft in the form of taxes” (Olson 2013). The literature is less clear about what happens when rebel groups fail to set up this form of governance but still maintain uncontested territorial control.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

I hypothesize that groups that control territory and groups that do not have a political wing are more likely to use sexual violence. In economic civil wars, rebel groups often have little intention to govern civilian populations. In such wars, warlords emerge to seize areas of control of a collapsed state not to govern or out of desire to form a new state (Merger 2016). Instead they attempt to garner additional advantages from come from territorial control such as “resource privilege”, which is the ability of a group in control—no matter how violently it came to power—has the ability to legally sell resources in domestic and international markets, amounting to great profit for warlords (Pogge 2004). Additionally, governance requires resources and political infrastructure to create a contractual obligation with the civilian population, which is a drain on rebel resources, especially when they have no intent to create a long-term state. I hypothesize that groups with territorial control employ sexual violence in place of governance, as sexual violence is a tool of the strong to establish control and coerce populations.

In economic civil wars, violence broadly is employed to create “fear and hatred for the purposes of controlling and subduing populations” (Merger 2016). Violence itself becomes a means of exerting control over civilians and regulating their behavior for specific market outcomes. For purposes of control, sexual violence is a uniquely powerful weapon of war. As a broad section of the literature has established, rape is broadly used in both ideological and non-ideological wars to punish, humiliate, and destroy civilians (Goldstein 2001; Yuval-Davis 1997; Bennett 1994). I believe that groups with territorial control will resort to sexual violence because it functions in two ways to establish control socially. First, sexual violence has a symbolic value of attacking and feminizing its victims, and by extension, the communities of people related to the victims of sexual violence in conflict (Pettman 1992). Second, sexual violence empowers perpetrators as a form of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a result of practices that legitimate men’s dominant position in society, socially justifying the subordination of those not masculinized (Sjoberg 2007). The combination of the feminization of victims and masculine empowerment of perpetrators provides sexual violence with a unique ability to demonstrate the comparative social power of rebels with territorial control over civilians.

Sexual violence also produces an easily coerced population. Rebels attempt to create
fear and an atmosphere of disorder among civilians to make the people under their control more likely to acquiesce to their demands, fearing violence and chaos (Merger 2016). Sexual violence is an effective means of producing a civilian population that is “weak, violated, silenced, docile, obedient, humiliated and craven” (Hawkesworth 2006). This results from sexual violence carrying a consistent shame or stigma, making it akin to a living death. This then produces a population that is less likely to fight against rebel groups as they seize lucrative resources and establish shadow markets. Additionally, such civilians are less likely to resist when rebels set up systems of repetitive, non-asset theft such as taxation systems, looting, and other economic endeavors that benefit the armed group (Merger 2016). It should be noted that is a direct parallel to Olson’s stationary bandit who uses systems of governance to utilize civilians as a source of continued revenue (Olson 1993).

Why would rebel groups use sexual violence differently than other forms of violence? Sexual violence can be better at coercing populations than other forms of violence. The first reason is explained above in the idea of it being a gendered violence that emphasis social disparities. Second, unlike murder or forced displacement, those that are sexually violated remain under the dominion of the rebel group. This is especially important in cases where the rebel group wants to consistent extract rents from a certain civilian population. The dead and the missing can't be looted repeatedly. To put it tersely, dead men pay no taxes. However, sexual violence functions as “a living death” where you create civilians who are demoralized and subservient but still physically present. The second reason why sexual violence is a better tool of coercion that other forms of violence is its shock value. Though consistently tragic, death is a facet consistently seen across wars, and the fear of death or theft in fighting takes on an inevitability in protracted conflict (Leatherman 2011). This mundanity of death can make it so that killing as a form of civilian targeting loses its efficacy in control, as civilians either become less fearful or simply more willing to die. To create truly lasting disorder, groups rely on continually pushing the boundaries of wartime behavior. Leatherman (2011) refers to this as “taboo violation,” in which groups become more grotesque or shock the moral and cultural sensibilities of their victims. Sexual violence that serves to maims and destroy victims rather than provide a perpetrator with sexual pleasure, along with the deep cultural shame that can be attached to sex, serves as an ultimate taboo violation, that when used against the weak serves to “reinforce, extend, and inscribe” perpetrator power (Leatherman 2011). It is important to note that sexual violence functions best in coercion and control, through the gendering mechanism and the taboo mechanism, when it is reinforcing existing power dynamics. This is why it is a functional tool for groups that have already gotten control of territory in war.

From the theory outlined above, I form three hypotheses that I set out to prove in this paper.

H1: Rebel groups that control territory are more likely to use sexual violence in conflict

H2: Among groups with territorial control, rebel groups that do not have a political wing are more likely to use sexual violence in conflict.
DATA AND METHODS

Sample and Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is the prevalence of sexual violence in conflict perpetrated by rebel groups. To test my hypotheses, I use the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) Dataset, as this is the most comprehensive and widely cited data to date in the literature on sexual violence (Cohen 2016). This data set looks at the prevalence of sexual violence perpetrated in war by conflict-actor-year as the unit of analysis, providing us with cross-national panel data. The dataset codes the use of sexual violence by looking to State Department annual reports (state_prev), Human Rights Watch reports (hrw_prev), and Amnesty International reports (AI_prev). Cohen and Nordas (2014) code levels of violence reported in the three reports and as three different variables. Prevalence of sexual violence in conflict is coded on a four-point scale, with “0” representing no reported sexual violence, “1” referring to isolated reports of sexual violence, “2” meaning widespread or frequent sexual violence, and “3” describing systematic sexual violence on a massive scale. Acts included in the dataset include rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, sexual mutilation, sexual torture, and forced pregnancy (Cohen and Nordas 2014).

In my analysis, I collapse the three different sources’ variables into one variable that attempts to capture the prevalence of sexual violence in war regardless of source (sv_prev). For each unit of analysis (actor-year), I code the variables so that the maximum level of prevalence between the three sources is chosen. I choose to code the maximum level of prevalence rather than the average of the three sources for three reasons. First, there is systematic underreporting of sexual violence in war and it is notoriously hard to collect data about sexual violence, therefore it is likely that deviation in the sources resulted from an inability of one of the groups to receive adequate reports. Second, between the three sources, there may be inconsistent interest in sexual violence or a certain conflict in given years, therefore a lower score from the groups could simply the result of less focus on sexual violence or that particular war. Third, all three of the measures suffer from missing data, with the HRW data missing over 500 scores of sexual violence prevalence. Given these drawbacks, a Type I error in the data is unlikely and justifies taking the maximum prevalence of the three sources.

The SVAC looks all actors in active armed conflicts between 1989-2014 as defined by UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict database (Gleditsch et. al 2002), however, given this paper’s focus on rebel behavior, I only look at rebels’ perpetration of sexual violence for my analysis by sub-setting the SVAC dataset by actor type.

Explanatory Variables

My primary independent variable in this study is whether or not rebels have territorial control. This is taken from set of variables in the Non-State Actors Dataset (Cunningham et. al 2013). Territorial control (tc) is coded as a binary variable, indicating that rebel groups either controlled any territory during a conflict or none at all. There is additionally another territorial control variable that codes group’s territorial control in conflict by year, still as a “0” if the group controlled no territory in a particular year or ‘1’ if the group controlled territory in a particular year. This is obviously not a perfect measure of territorial control given that it does not indicate how much territory was controlled by the rebel group or where that territory is. However, it is valuable to know that the rebel group was strong
enough to maintain territorial control at some point during the war. Additionally, there is a measure of efficacy of territorial control, with it coded as a factor of “low,” “medium,” or “high.” I predict that groups with territorial control will have a higher prevalence of using sexual violence in armed conflict.

The other explanatory variable that I look at is if the rebel group in question has an affiliated political wing (rebpolwing), also from the Non-state actor dataset. I expect for groups without affiliated political wings to have a higher prevalence of sexual violence perpetration. If a group has a political wing that seems to imply an interest in governance long term or ideological motivations for the fight. These groups would be less likely to use sexual violence to enforce control or a civilian population. Instead, groups with political wings would be more likely to either win hearts and minds or provide public goods to civilians to rule. This binary variable has a “0” for no affiliated political wing and a “1” for an affiliated political wing.

**Controls**

At the level of the rebel group as the unit of analysis, we institute multiple controls derived from the non-state actor dataset. We control for the group’s mobilization capacity (mobcap). Because we do not have granular data about where the sexual violence perpetrated by rebel groups is occurring, we cannot definitively say that these groups are using sexual violence against those in areas in which they already control. However, by controlling for mobilization capacity, we deal with the alternate possibility that strong groups that already have some territory are attempting to capture new territory and are employing sexual violence as a part of that mobilization. We control for the group’s fighting capacity (fightcap) generally, to control for the possibility that groups that are weaker and lack the ability to fight state forces are deploying sexual violence as a way of avoiding confrontation with state forces. If we find that rebel groups with a high fighting capacity are still using sexual violence or that fighting capacity has no effect, we can assume that groups are not sexually attacking civilians in lieu of conventional battle. We also control for whether or not these groups are organizing engaging in battles outside of the country of the civil war (externalterr) as these would be areas in which they would not have territorial control.

At the group-year level unit of analysis, we control for several factors as well. These controls are derived from Conrad’s (2018) dataset on the effect of natural resources and extortive industries on violence in civil wars. We control for the GDP (lngdp) of the rebel group’s country during that specific year. This is important because we to be sure that sexual violence isn’t just being used in areas where people are too poor to defend themselves, but rather that the effect for territorial control still exists regardless of the wealth of those being controlled. We control for the group’s organizational capacity (orgcapacity). Cohen (2014) predicts that groups with lower organization capacity are more likely to use sexual violence, so we want to be sure that independent of organization capacity, territorial control still affects the use of sexual violence in war. We additionally control for the relative strength (relativestrength) of the rebel group because stronger rebel groups are more likely to control territory, so we want to be sure that our effects of territorial control on sexual violence aren’t just capturing a larger trend of rebel group strength. We control for if the rebel group

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2. Due to limitations of data, there are different controls at the group level and the group year level. In an ideal data set the information would exist by group-year and by group aggregated for each data point, but such data is not currently available.
receives external support from another nation (\textit{external\_exists}) as groups that receive external support tend to be stronger and might be more willing to act with impunity because they are not as reliant on civilian support, so we want to be sure that the effect of territorial control on the prevalence of sexual violence exists independent of this.

Methods

Because the dependent variable of sexual violence in war is ordinal, not continuous, and the dependent variable is not normally distributed (see Appendix), an OLS regression is not appropriate for this data.\(^3\) Instead we use ordinal logistic regressions to test our hypotheses. We test our hypothesis 1 (territorial control) with two sets of regression models, one at the group level and one at the group-year level. It is valuable to have both models as the latter captures if accounting for groups gaining and losing territory over time affects their use of sexual violence rather than just looking at if groups that ever have territorial control in wars function differently than groups that never have territorial control.\(^4\)

For both sets of data (group-level data and group-year-level data), I include two models in the data. The first model in both is an ordinal logistic regression with territorial control as the dependent variable and all controls outlined in the section above. In both sets, I add a second model that looks includes an interaction between territorial control and a significant control. At the group level, I look at the interaction between territorial control and rebel political wings. At the group-year level, I look at the interaction between territorial control and organizational capacity.

I have two methods to test the second hypothesis that among groups with territorial control, those without political wings will have higher prevalence of sexual violence. First is using the interaction between territorial control and rebel political wings in the group-level ordinal logistic regression with all of the controls. The second test is an ordinal logistic regression seeing if rebel political wings have a significant effect on the probability of sexual violence in armed conflict after subsetting just for rebel groups with territorial control.

RESULTS

The results of the ordinal logistic regressions can be seen in Tables 1, 2, and 3 below. Overall there is strong support for Hypothesis 1 and moderate support for Hypothesis 2. In Table 1 we see the results of group level ordinal logistic regressions.

Both models cover 267 out of the 282 possible rebel groups accounted for between the years 1989 and 2013 in the Non-State Actor Database (due to massive underreporting of sexual violence, we lack any data for fifteen of the rebel groups’ use of sexual violence). As expected, rebel groups having territorial control at any point in the war makes it significantly more likely for the group to have a higher prevalence of sexual violence in the war. No-
tably, this result holds despite varying mobilization rates and capacities of the rebel groups, suggesting that sexual violence does not occur as a result of groups attempting to capture new territory. In fact, sexual violence is most likely when the rebel group is does not have the capacity to mobilize into new territories, as shown by the significance of modcapno. This finding is incredibly important given that other forms of violence against civilians is higher when rebel groups attempt to contest new territories than when they are stationary (Kalyvas 2006; R. Wood 2014).

Looking to Table 1, Model 1 we find that as expected, sexual violence is significantly less likely to occur when the rebel group has an affiliated political wing. This provides some evidence for our second hypothesis. When we look to Model 2 and the interaction between territorial control and rebel political wings, we see evidence that when groups have both territorial control and a political wing they are less likely to use sexual violence in armed conflict, but this relationship is not significant in our model. However, even when accounting for the interaction between rebel's territorial control and rebel's political affiliations, we find that rebel territorial control nevertheless stays a significant predictor of a higher sexual violence, strengthening the evidence for hypothesis 1. In Table 2, we can see the two models produced for the relationship between territorial control and sexual violence at the group-year level.

Table 1. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Territorial Control on the Use of Sexual Violence, Group Level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable: max_sv_prev</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terrco</td>
<td>1.586*** (0.329)</td>
<td>1.733*** (0.380)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebpolwing</td>
<td>-0.842** (0.332)</td>
<td>-0.520 (0.511)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcaplow</td>
<td>0.771 (0.813)</td>
<td>0.762 (0.817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcapmoderate</td>
<td>0.422 (0.801)</td>
<td>0.414 (0.806)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcapno</td>
<td>3.478** (1.700)</td>
<td>3.206* (1.731)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraterritorial</td>
<td>-12.653*** (0.00000)</td>
<td>-12.714*** (0.00000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fightcap</td>
<td>1.599*** (0.311)</td>
<td>1.630*** (0.314)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrcont:rebpolwing</td>
<td>-0.526 (0.664)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Table 2. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Territorial Control on SV Prevalence, Group-Year Level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dependent variable: sv_prev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tc</td>
<td>1.045*** (0.265)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lngdp</td>
<td>-0.419*** (0.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relativestrength</td>
<td>0.625*** (0.204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polity2</td>
<td>0.006 (0.026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>external_exists</td>
<td>0.261 (0.251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tc:orgcapacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orgcapacity</td>
<td>-1.065*** (0.264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

This model has 589 observations out of 880 group-year dyads. Yet again, from this model we find support Hypothesis 1, that groups with territorial control are more likely to have higher rates of sexual violence. Even when we account for variations in territorial control and rates of sexual over years, which is a more granular level of analysis than the group during the entirety of a conflict, we see that the relationship between territorial control and sexual violence still holds. This strengthens the evidence in support of Hypothesis 1.

Looking to the controls, we find some interesting evidence in support of the theory developed to explain the use of sexual violence in conflict. We see that sexual violence used significantly more by stronger rebel groups. This is an important finding, yet again, because it shows that sexual violence in conflict functions in an almost opposite way than other forms of civilian targeting. Civilian targeting, such as killing and forced displacement, has been found to be a tool of weak rebel groups that are too weak relative to the state to engage in conventional warfare, so they resort to terrorizing civilians. Sexual violence, however, seems to be a tactic used by rebel groups that are stronger relative to the state. However, it is important to note that even when controlling for the group’s relative strength, territorial control significantly tied to higher rates of sexual violence in armed conflict. The existence of democratic institutions as shown in the polity variable seems to have no bearing on the use of sexual violence in war, whereas rebel groups operating in conflict years with lower GDP are more likely to engage in sexual violence.

When we look to Table 2, Model 2, we can look at the interaction between territorial control and organizational capacity. This is an important relationship to examine in that we would expect more organized groups to be more able to control territory, which is why we
include it as a control in the first model. However, given that Cohen predicts organizational capacity is the primary driver of the use of sexual violence in war, it is important to see if outcomes are different when a group both has territorial control and low organizational capacity, but we do not find a significant relationship between the two. However, we do see that despite the interaction, but territorial control and organizational capacity remain significant predictors of the probability of higher levels sexual violence.

To test Hypothesis 2 further, I subset our data set just to look at rebel groups that have territorial control and test if among these groups there is a variation in the use of sexual violence based on the existence of an affiliated political wing of the rebel group. The results of this can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Ordinal Logistic Regression of RebPolStrength on SV among Groups with Territorial Control.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable: max_sv_prev</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rebpolwing</td>
<td>-0.981** (0.418)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>efftercontlow</td>
<td>-0.032 (0.622)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effterrcontmoderate</td>
<td>-0.338 (0.519)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

From this table we garner that among groups with territorial control, those without political wings have a significantly higher probability of employing higher levels of sexual violence in conflicts, even when accounting for the existing efficacy of their territorial control. Given the lack of controls, the findings which we can take from this analysis are limited. However, it does seem to provide support to our second hypothesis, even if it cannot entirely prove it.

**CASE STUDY: THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE**

**Case Selection**

I now examine the use of sexual violence in Sierra Leone perpetrated by the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Even though Sierra Leone is an extreme case of sexual violence in war, I use it for four reasons. First, it is one of the most prominent cases in the scant literature on the use of sexual violence in war (Marks 2013). This is the case that has been used to establish rape as a “weapon of war,” therefore if we can use this case to show that sexual violence is a function of territorial control, it could have large implications for the existing body of work. Second, Sierra Leone presents a puzzle that is motivating to my research question: does sexual violence function differently than other forms of vio-
lence? Sierra Leone is a case where the rebel groups perpetrated mass rape and brutal forms of torture, but there were no mass killings or a targeted genocide or politicide against any part of the civilian population (Cohen 2013). Third, Sierra Leone was systematically monitored by Human Rights Watch and the State Department, meaning that the international community actual documented the occurrence of sexual violence in the war. Given the lack of interest and monitoring in many civil war plus the assumption of a “baseline level” of sexual violence, there is systematic underreporting of sexual violence in armed conflict, so the case of Sierra Leone may not be as extreme as numbers would suggest. Finally, even if the case of Sierra Leone is extreme on our dependent variable of the prevalence of sexual violence in armed conflict, it is a typical case in other regards. It is not an ethnic conflict, there was no great power intervention, and it was an economic civil war (Cohen 2013).

I examine Sierra Leone in two parts. First, I analyze micro-level data on individual cases of war-time rape to provide more support for the hypothesis that rebel territorial control is associated with higher levels of sexual violence. Second, I use the case to illuminate why rebels use sexual violence in war to help explain the results seen in the quantitative analysis.

Quantitative Analysis

This data comes from Carlo Koos’s (2018) compiled from the 2011 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey which he used to study social consequences for women who have been raped in Sierra Leone. This is data at the individual level, not at the level of the rebel group, meaning that it cannot directly prove my hypothesis about rebel group actions, but it can provide evidence showing that women in areas under rebel control are more likely to be raped. I use Koos’s variable for whether or not a woman surveyed has been raped by the RUF, coded as a binary variable, as the dependent variable in this analysis. I use the variable HQ_RUF which denotes the number of RUF headquarters in the district where the woman surveyed lives as a proxy for the amount of territorial control the RUF has in the region, similar to what Koos himself extrapolates (Koos [Appendix] 2018). The number of headquarters in the region serves as the explanatory variable. I include whether or not the woman lives below the poverty line (poverty), whether she lives in an urban area (urban), and the stability of territorial control in the district in which the woman lives (s9q07) as controls.

I provide two models with this data, both of which are logistic regressions as the outcome variable of whether or not a woman was raped by the RUF is a binary. This means that the regressions tell us the probability of someone being raped by the RUF based on how many RUF headquarters are in their district, with the number of headquarters acting as a proxy for RUF territorial control. One of my models is a simple logistic regression, and in the other logistic regression is performed on a matched version of the data sorted on women’s demographic factors such as age, ethnicity, poverty, and urban living. These models can be seen below in Table 5.

Looking at the data, we can see that women who live in districts with higher numbers of RUF headquarters were significantly more likely to be raped in the Sierra Leone civil war than women who did not. This effect is stronger when women are matched on other demographic features. We additionally see that poverty makes it more probable that a woman in Sierra Leone will experience rape, whereas living in an urban area decreases that probability. This finding is especially interesting when we note that the RUF struggled to gain territorial domination over major cities in Sierra Leone such as Freetown and instead exerted control over rural strongholds and distant mining districts (Ginifer 2005). This is not to say that the RUF did not attempt to capture urban areas or did not fight
there. The RUF spent almost two years attempting to capture urban centers, particularly the capital city of Freetown (Peters and Richards 2015).

Table 4. RUF HQ Likelihood of Rape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable: raped</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HQ_RUF</td>
<td>0.041*** (0.011)</td>
<td>0.019* (0.011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poverty</td>
<td>0.072** (0.028)</td>
<td>0.051* (0.027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urban</td>
<td>-0.646*** (0.063)</td>
<td>-0.794*** (0.059)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cem_matched</td>
<td>1.078*** (0.098)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cem_weights</td>
<td>-0.157*** (0.061)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s9q072. Unstable</td>
<td>0.125 (0.090)</td>
<td>0.123 (0.090)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s9q073. Somewhat stable</td>
<td>-0.163* (0.094)</td>
<td>-0.210** (0.093)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s9q074. Stable</td>
<td>-0.091 (0.197)</td>
<td>-0.200 (0.194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s9q075. Very stable</td>
<td>0.801 (0.543)</td>
<td>0.642 (0.536)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.478*** (0.153)</td>
<td>-0.513*** (0.121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>6,727</td>
<td>6,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-4,135.920</td>
<td>-4,206.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>8,291.839</td>
<td>8,428.114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Though it is not able to tell us about the actions of rebel groups directly, the fact that Sierra Leonean women were significantly more likely to be raped when living in districts with high concentrations of RUF control and not in contested urban areas where the RUF struggled capture land, seems to provide some evidence for our first hypothesis.

Qualitative Analysis

This qualitative analysis traces when the RUF engaged in sexual violence against civilians alongside it’s history of territorial control.

First, it is important to provide some historical context about the RUF. The RUF formed
in 1991 in an attempt to overthrow the Sierra Leone government. Though it had stated political goals in its initial form, the RUF made very little effort come up with a coherent strategy governance and had no real political agenda (Erbrick 2013). Throughout the war it became clear that the RUF's primary goal in the war was not to gain political power, but rather to extract Sierra Leone's natural resources (Erbrick 2013). The RUF along with their ally group, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, AFRC, have been documented as the primary perpetrators of sexual assault, sexual slavery, sexual torture, and rape during the Sierra Leone conflict (Human Rights Watch 2003). The looting and non-governing nature of the RUF acts a basis for the sexual violence which they perpetrate in the second half of the civil war.

In the years of 1991-1993, the RUF mobilized throughout Sierra Leone in an attempt to acquire new land and had little established territorial control. During this phase of the war, though the RUF was contesting the government for new land and attempting displace, there was relatively minimal use of sexual violence (Cohen 2013). By 1993, state forces started to capture and control the Southern and Eastern districts of the country where the RUF had begun to take power (Erbrick 2013). Even as state forces cleanly captured possible RUF mining districts and the Kangari Hills in 1995, the RUF’s use of sexual violence was relatively low (Cohen 2014). It is important to note that this type of territorial contestation is often used as a predictor of violence against civilians. However, even as the army pushed some RUF forces out of the provincial capital and the RUF’s main base of operations was destroyed, the RUF did not engage in mass rape, with the state department marking this prevalence of sexual violence by RUF as “low” in 1995. In 1996, the RUF was at its weakest as it had signed the Abidjan Peace Accord from forced defeat, and lacked any territory in the country, even in the Kangari hills and Kailahun districts (Erbrick 2013). At this point the RUF lacked any capacity to conventionally fight against the Sierra Leone government, so we would expect to see the RUF resort to irregular warfare and civilian targeting. Nevertheless, sexual violence was not noted as systematic in Sierra Leone in 1996 (Nordas and Cohen 2014). This shows the relative lack of sexual violence during the process of territorial contestation and retreat when the RUF exerted minimal control.

In 1997, the RUF found a resurgence to power. A disgruntled section of the Sierra Leone Army staged a coup overthrowing democratically elected President Kabbah (Riley 1997). This group of soldiers established themselves as the AFRA, and they immediately entered into an alliance with the RUF rebels. By the end of 1997, the two groups together controlled the majority of Sierra Leone (Cohen 2014). It was in this year that the use of sexual violence against civilians spiked (World Peace Foundation 2015). Human Rights Watch, which had failed to document a case of sexual violence by the RUF in Sierra Leone before 1997, declared Sierra Leone as the site of the worst cases of sexual violence and human rights abuses in the world by the beginning of 1998 (Human Rights Watch 2003). The RUF perpetrated the majority of this violence in mineral-rich areas in the south and east that were already under its control. By late 1998, the rebels still had the upper hand in the civil war controlling over half the country and strategically important districts such as diamond-rich Kono (Human Rights Watch 2003). Nevertheless, 1997 and 1998 were among the most sexually violent years of the war with the most brutal forms of sexual violence being deployed in Kono. There were mass abductions and graphic cases of sexual torture of civilian women in these regions, but very few cases of mass murders during this time period in the south and east (Merger 2016). This speaks to the unique use of sexual violence by the RUF to attack civilians who were already under their control, outside of the context of military battles and engagement.
In 1999, the RUF/AFRC unsuccessfully attempted to capture the capital city of Freetown, leading to a bloody battle and three weeks of contested territorial occupation. During this time, sexual violence was used in Freetown to a systematic degree, despite the fact that the RUF did not exert territorial control. However, in this time period sexual violence was used as part of a wide range of abuses against the civilian population, including the murder of 5000 civilians (Human Rights Watch 2003). Though sexual violence was used in a horrific manner in this time period, its purpose was not to coerce the civilian population, but rather was part of a package violence meant to terrorize civilians and destroy the capital city itself.

By October 1999, the RUF/AFRC signed a ceasefire agreement and had been driven from Freetown. Additionally, at this point there was the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) present in the country. Human Rights Watch notes that during this time period there was a relative decrease in overall human rights abuses in the country (2001). However, the RUF continued sexual violence against civilians and abducted thousands of women in this same time period, but primarily against populations in the north and east—areas which were under stable and uncontested RUF control at this point (Human Rights Watch 2003). This sexual violence was found to be solely to “hurt, control, and humiliate” civilians already under the dominion of the RUF (Baksh-Soodeen and Etchart 2001). The purpose of the violence has been described as “inherently coercive” and a show of power by an occupying force (University of Oslo 2016).

The use of sexual violence in Sierra Leone alongside the RUF’s rise and fall from power shows that sexual violence is not a tool used by a force that is too weak to fight the state, retreating from conflict or facing land contestation. Rather, it was uniquely employed by the RUF in 1997 and 1998, the years in which they controlled the most of Sierra Leone, in the areas in which they had the most power. In late 1999, after other human rights abuses and civilian murders stopped in contested areas like Freetown, the RUF continued to employ sexual violence as a tactic in areas that had a strong dominance over in the north and the east, kidnapping, and raping thousands of women. The RUF had no desire to govern in Sierra Leone and never created a cohesive political agenda, and it grew its extractive shadow markets as it gained control over mineral parts of the country. In these regions, the RUF did not engage in mass killings or any conventional battles, but it did frequently and systematically use sexual violence against civilians under their own dominion, when they were at their strongest. This speaks to sexual violence as a tool of rebel groups with territorial control to replace governance, to terrorize civilians, and to coerce and humiliate communities.

CONCLUSION

I have shown that rebel group’s territorial control plausibly affects their use of sexual violence in war. Rebel groups who control territory and do not want to govern use sexual violence as a means of continually coercing a civilian population, without killing or displacing them. Sexual violence is an effective highlights social imbalances and control through a process of masculine hegemony and victim feminization. Sexual violence also carries a lasting stigma or shame, making it a “living death,” so that victims are subservient and demoralized while still alive to carry out the will of the perpetrators. Sexual violence also shocks civilians into obedience as a form of “taboo violation.”

To evidence this theory, I proposed two hypotheses. First, rebel groups with territorial control would have a higher prevalence of sexual violence against civilians (Hypothesis 1).
Second, among rebel groups with territorial control, those without political wings would be more likely to employ sexual violence (Hypothesis 2).

I found strong evidence for Hypothesis 1 and moderate evidence for Hypothesis 2 through quantitative analysis using both the cross-national and micro-level data. I showed that in both group level and group-year level analyses, rebel groups with territorial control are significantly more likely to perpetrate sexual violence at higher rates, even after accounting for a number of controls and interactions. I found moderate evidence that among groups with territorial control, those without political wings would be less likely to perpetrate sexual violence. In looking at the interaction between territorial control and political wings on rebel sexual violence, I found that rebel groups with political wings and with territorial control were less likely to use sexual violence, but this finding was not significant. When I just looked at the subset of rebel groups with territorial control, I found that rebel groups without political wings were significantly more likely to use higher rates of sexual violence. However, this analysis suffered from a lack of controls.

I cemented these findings with micro-level data and a case study from Sierra Leone. Through quantitative analysis, I showed that Sierra Leonean women in rebel controlled territories were more likely to have been raped. The case of the RUF in Sierra Leone shows how rebel groups employ sexual violence in isolation to coerce civilians in economically important areas already under rebel control.

In addition to showing sexual violence as a tactic of insurgent groups with territorial control and an inability or unwillingness to govern, this paper also highlights that sexual violence functions in opposite ways from other forms of civilian targeting when it comes to rebel strength and territorial control. This has broader implications for the work on violence against civilians in that it implies authors need to move beyond talking about rebel violence as a generalized package of actions and study different forms of rebel violence against civilians as discrete practices.

This study suffers from a few limitations. First, the data on sexual violence itself is very limited both in terms of lacking numeric measures of the rate of violence and missing data on key conflicts. This makes it hard to extrapolate the findings. Second, there was great deal of collinearity in my data, with almost every control or variable inputted into the ordinal regressions coming back as significant. This could point to an outside variable not controlled for that is driving the relationships we see in the data and affecting the other explanatory variables. Third, I have different controls in my group-level regression and my group-year level regression, making it difficult to compare the findings between the two or see if sexual violence functions in the same way when we take into account changes over time. Fourth, the Sierra Leone case suffers from a lack of primary evidence. Future studies could attempt to include interviews with military leaders, rebels, and victims.
### Appendix Table 1. OLS Regression of Rebel’s Territorial Control on the Use of Sexual Violence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>terrcont</td>
<td>0.437***</td>
<td>(0.125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extraterritorial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fightcap</td>
<td>0.575***</td>
<td>(0.125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebestimate</td>
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<td>(0.00000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prevactive</td>
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<td>(0.117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcaplow</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>(0.278)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcapmoderate</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>(0.276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobcapno</td>
<td>1.654*</td>
<td>(0.905)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebpolwing</td>
<td>-0.375***</td>
<td>(0.120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centcontrol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>(0.291)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Observations   | 229         |
| R²             | 0.206       |
| Adjusted R²    | 0.177       |
| Residual Std. Error | 0.851 (df = 220) |
| F Statistic    | 7.114***    |

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
REFERENCES


PART II

Political and Social Empowerment
INTRODUCTION

The legitimacy of a democratic government is only as strong as its ability to attract, empower, and retain elected representatives from all walks of life. In the United States, however, the proportion of women in government is far smaller than the roughly half of all Americans who are female. The scale of this gap is profound compared to other industrialized countries, with many societal and institutional factors in the United States perpetuating bias against female candidates. Other countries have overcome their own barriers to female enfranchisement by way of gender quotas. Most Western countries employ some type of quota system, though the United States does not. While the country at-large may not be ready for government-mandated gender quotas, significant evidence exists to suggest that liberals—more specifically, the Democratic Party—could implement such a system and pioneer electoral reform on a larger scale.

I argue that the Democratic Party should install a voluntary party quota to increase female representation in the US Congress and state legislatures. Not only are quotas an effective mechanism to address gender inequality among elected representatives, but many political factors within the Democratic Party lend themselves to quota adoption. This paper is organized in four parts: Part I describes the scale of gender inequality in US politics, the ways in which gender disparities impede representative democracy, and the barriers that hamper female participation in US electoral politics; Part II provides an overview of the structure and efficacy of quota systems currently in place around the world; Part III describes sources of resistance to quota systems in the United States; and Part IV offers recommendations as to the kind of quota system that may be successful in the US context.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE US POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Scope and Significance of Gender Inequality in US Political Representation

As of 2017, women represent 19.6 percent of the US Congress, holding 21 seats in the Senate and 84 seats in the House of Representatives.1 This level of female political represen-

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tation lags behind the UN-recommended target of 30 percent; it also pales in comparison to global and regional averages. Globally, women are represented at a rate of 23.3 percent in national legislatures, an average which is weighed down by a handful of outliers. In other high-income regions, the figure is much higher—Nordic legislatures, for example, boast 41.7 percent female political representation, with the rest of Europe at 24.9 percent, and the Americas at 28.2 percent. The United States ranks 100 out of nearly 190 countries in terms of female representation in the lower or single House.

The United States can, and should, do better. Gender inequality among elected officials threatens the appropriate function of US democracy, with women lacking both descriptive and substantive representation in government. Descriptive representatives—those who share experiences or characteristics with a given group of people—are able to more effectively communicate with group members, lend varied insights in policy deliberations, and improve perceptions of leadership potential in their group. Additionally, descriptive representatives call attention to substantive issues salient to their group where they may otherwise go unaddressed. Statistical and anecdotal evidence demonstrates that female legislators in the US Congress advocate for “women’s issues” to a greater degree than men in nearly every aspect of lawmaking. Congresswomen report that they assume such responsibility not only out of a sense of shared experience with American women, but because of “indifference” from male colleagues on issues related to women’s empowerment, health, and family welfare. Female legislators, therefore, provide an essential source of perspective and attention to women’s interests.

Sources of Gender Inequality in US Political Representation

The literature identifies numerous barriers which prevent women from running for and assuming elected office in the United States. The greatest factor thought to inhibit women from running for office is aspirational—women are often unmotivated to pursue elected office as a result of perceptions that they are either unsuited to political leadership, or that the option is not available to them. Research also demonstrates that women tend away from competition as compared to men of similar ability. Such a preference, alongside the heightened public scrutiny and media bias inherent to female candidacies, may deter women from running. Women also face greater costs to running for office in terms of their

2. Rohini Pande and Deanna Ford, “Gender Quotas and Female Leadership: A Review,” Back-
6. Ibid.
9. Many of these barriers are not unique to the US context.
11. Ibid.
disproportionate childcare responsibilities, which may inhibit their electoral motivations.\textsuperscript{12} The women who are motivated to run, however, face additional obstacles in entering and winning elections. Political parties often fail to actively recruit women for open seats or provide sufficient resources to female campaigns.\textsuperscript{13} Meanwhile, voter preferences are biased towards male candidates; in 2008, 26 percent of the American public reported that the prospect of a female president made them feel “angry or upset.”\textsuperscript{14} Attitudes towards the presidency are typically more pronounced than attitudes towards other elected officials, but such a result demonstrates extensive discomfort with female leadership among the population. Additionally, the dearth of female leaders in Congress makes voters susceptible to statistical discrimination, in which the small number of female leaders may bias voters’ estimation of female abilities in general.\textsuperscript{15}

These barriers present a formidable challenge to equal representation in the United States—a challenge likely to persist. The percentage of women both holding and seeking elected office has plateaued over the last several election cycles, with 2010 marking the first decrease in the percentage of women in the House since 1978.\textsuperscript{16} Though the results of the 2016 election have spurred a dramatic increase in the number of women planning to run for office, this influx of new candidates is largely comprised of progressive women.\textsuperscript{17} It is unclear whether this increase will be sustainable over time, or if heightened political interest will translate to increased female representation. The 2016 election also revealed the degree to which voters still hold implicit biases about female ambition and career goals.\textsuperscript{18} If the United States is to meet standards for female representation set by the global community in the near future, it seems that policy action is necessary to surmount the many barriers women face in pursuing elected office.

**QUOTAS AS A MECHANISM TO INCREASE FEMALE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Quotas are one such policy that can increase female representation in government. Quota systems specify a number or percentage of seats that should be occupied by an underrepresented group. The most common quota systems in use include: voluntary party quotas, for which a party commits to nominating a set percentage of female candidates for elected lists; candidate quotas, for which the law requires that a certain percentage of female candidates for office are nominated.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Anisa A. Somani, “The Use of Gender Quotas in America: Are Voluntary Party Quotas the Way to Go?” \textit{William \& Mary Law Review} 54, no. 4 (2013).
\item \textsuperscript{14} Streb et al, “Social Desirability Effects and Support for a Female American President,” \textit{Public Opinion Quarterly} 72, no. 1 (2008). This analysis likely underestimates the amount of discomfort held by Americans about a female president.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Pande and Ford, “Gender Quotas and Female Leadership.”
\end{itemize}
candidate positions be reserved for women; and reserved seat systems, for which a set number of positions within a legislature are legally reserved for women. These quotas are designed to rapidly increase the participation of women in government by placing the burden of recruitment on party and legislative systems.

**The Efficacy of Quota Systems**

Today, over half of all countries implement some form of gender quota, with quota implementation associated with dramatic increases in female political representation. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Labour Party’s introduction of “all women shortlists” in 1993 doubled the number of women in the House of Commons within one election cycle. Beyond expanding female leadership, quotas increase the supply of qualified women in the candidate pool and encourage women to collaborate in support of female leaders. Significantly, an influx of women legislators may shift public attitudes and stereotypes about female leadership, not only providing women with more role models in politics, but socializing voters to the concept of effective female leaders.

Quota systems are controversial, though the most common criticisms do not play out in practice. Some are concerned that quota systems encourage the recruitment of unprepared or inept leaders into elected office—crowding out qualified male candidates—or that parties will inevitably struggle to recruit eligible women. However, evidence from Sweden and other nations indicates that the opposite is true; when Sweden’s Social Democratic Party introduced a zipper quota, requiring that male and female candidates be alternated on ranked lists of party representatives, not only did the share of elected women increase by 10 percentage points, but the share of competent men elected to office also increased by three percentage points. No country has abandoned a quota system due to a lack of female candidates, and many women elected through quotas have greater or comparable experience to male peers. However, even where quota women have less experience than males, studies demonstrate that their experience “does not preclude effective leadership” in politics. Ultimately, it appears that quota systems strengthen, rather than undermine, meritocratic principles and competition, improving the overall quality of a country’s elected officials.

Perhaps a more valid criticism of quota systems is that they subject “quota women” to stigma and adverse reactions from male colleagues. Across developing and developed countries, women elected through quotas have reported being treated as second-class, that...
their work was undervalued, and that lingering stigma undermines their legislative contributions.\textsuperscript{29} Male legislators have also attempted to sideline female colleagues by using verbally aggressive language and controlling hearings and committee meetings as large numbers of women enter the legislature.\textsuperscript{30} This kind of stigma may make female legislators less likely to collaborate with or support their female colleagues.\textsuperscript{31}

However, the Sweden case suggests that stigma targeted towards quota women may not outweigh the potential of quotas to meaningfully expand female political representation. O’Brien and Rickne (2016) demonstrate through a series of regression analyses that the Swedish Social Democrats’ zipper quota did not have a negative impact on women’s political representation. Rather, quotas gave women accelerated access to leadership positions, and instances of quota-related stigma did not hinder women’s advancement in the political hierarchy.\textsuperscript{32} The authors caution that these results may not be generalizable to cases in which quotas do not increase the number of women perceived as qualified by traditional standards, or in majoritarian systems—further research is necessary to understand whether their findings hold in a variety of contexts.\textsuperscript{33} Nevertheless, their findings lend optimism to the notion that women can enter politics through quota systems without facing prohibitive backlash.

**BARRIERS TO QUOTA IMPLEMENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES**

Despite the efficacy of quota systems in increasing female representation in government, the United States has not implemented any form of gender quota: a “notable exception” among Western countries.\textsuperscript{34} The United States has yet to see a prominent movement for gender quotas, even from progressive parties. This lack of enthusiasm may have its roots in a variety of political, cultural, and legal obstacles.

Cultural norms in the United States place a large premium on meritocracy and individual responsibility and may create resistance to the adoption of political gender quotas. These norms help to explain much of the controversy generated by affirmative action programs in the United States, with critics regarding affirmative action as “reverse discrimination” against the majority group, or as subverting meritocratic hierarchies.\textsuperscript{35} With respect to corporate gender quotas, which are increasingly implemented across Western countries to expand female leadership on corporate boards, even American women are wary of the bias they could face if promoted through a quota system. American women “want the world to know [their positions] are fairly earned;” it stands to reason that they would regard political quotas in a similar fashion.\textsuperscript{36}


\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{34} Pande and Ford, “Gender Quotas and Female Leadership.”


Numerous legal barriers also hamper quota implementation in the United States. Though Congress has broad regulatory discretion over election procedures, it may only legislate over procedural, and not substantive, aspects of elections. As such, legal scholars suggest that because gender quotas affect the kinds of people who can run in an election—a substantive aspect—Congress would likely violate its constitutional power in mandating a reserved seats or candidate quota. Further, even if Congress could legally mandate a quota, it would likely face scrutiny either for violating the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause or its First Amendment. American jurisprudence has historically “disfavored the use of outright quotas by state actors” given that they discriminate on the basis of identity. A legal candidate quota may also infringe on the First Amendment rights of parties to set their own qualifications for membership.

VOLUNTARY PARTY QUOTAS AS A SOLUTION TO INEQUITABLE REPRESENTATION

Voluntary party quotas, therefore, remain the only path forward if the United States is to implement a realistic form of gender quota. While many of the aforementioned political and cultural barriers in the United States will complicate quota adoption on a national scale, conditions within the Democratic Party are perhaps more suitable for quota reform.

Women's Movements and Commitment to Female Leadership in the Democratic Party

Quota adoption may be preceded by a number of factors, including the mobilization of women's groups, a country or party's general commitment to equality, and the presence of female leadership within party structure. Many features of the Democratic Party today—in terms of both leadership and membership base—reflect such conditions. The 2016 election and its aftermath has proved a watershed moment for the women's movement in the United States, with campaigns including the Women's March and #MeToo mobilizing women on a national scale. As previously mentioned, record numbers of women have decided to run for office in 2018, primarily as Democrats. Support for these women's movements, and for feminism generally, is highly correlated with support for the Democratic Party. By instituting a voluntary party quota, the Democratic Party could signal to its base that it is committed to promoting equality for women within its ranks. This action would not only lend credibility to the efforts of prospective female candidates, but it may also serve to expand the party's female base. Such an effort could be ushered in by the party’s notable female leaders, including House Minority Leader

37. Somani, “The Use of Gender Quotas in America.”
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
Nancy Pelosi or potential presidential candidates Senators Elizabeth Warren, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Kamala Harris, all of whom have expressed the importance of expanding female leadership.

Potential Drawbacks to Voluntary Quota Mechanisms

While voluntary party quotas are the most common type of quota used to expand female representation in the industrialized West, they are associated with certain drawbacks. Quotas are typically easier to introduce in proportional representation systems as opposed to majoritarian systems, where male and female candidates vie for a single seat. As such, the Democratic Party stands to face backlash in adopting a gender quota, likely from male candidates. Additionally, the impacts of voluntary quotas are difficult to measure. Voluntary quota adoption is typically correlated with leftist party values, as well as changing public attitudes towards female representation. Therefore, it is often unclear whether increases in female representation that occur after quota adoption are the direct result of imposed quota, or of the attitudes that inspired quotas in the first place. This problem is compounded by the fact that no longitudinal data exists on voluntary quota implementation. As such, it is difficult to assess voluntary quotas as compared to other types of quota systems in their ability to expand female representation.

A voluntary quota instituted by the Democratic Party, meanwhile, will be no panacea in addressing gender inequality across the entire US Congress. Women will be fully represented in the US government only when they are adequately represented in both major parties. Presently, in 2018, just 25 percent of women in Congress are Republican. While a Democratic Party quota could potentially place pressure on Republicans to either adopt a quota of their own or invest greater resources in recruiting female candidates, it may be that there is little motivation within the party to do so. The work of expanding female participation in politics will never be complete until all major parties put forth the necessary effort.

CONCLUSION

Despite controversy, quota systems are an effective method of increasing female representation in government. Over 100 countries have signaled their commitment to gender equality by adopting some form of quota. That the United States has not taken greater steps to reduce gaps in female representation throughout Congress is a detriment to the quality of American democracy and the United States’ global reputation.

The crescendo of feminist movements across the United States, as well as an influx of prospective female candidates, provides a unique window in which quota adoption may be feasible. Given the Democratic Party’s stated emphasis on inclusion, it would seem a natural

44. Pande and Ford, “Gender Quotas and Female Leadership.”
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
fit for Democrats to embrace and champion institutionalized female inclusion throughout their ranks. Even in the self-described ‘progressive’ party, such a process will be complex and difficult, but in the interest of giving women equal representation in government, such reform cannot come soon enough.
ABSTRACT

Research within feminist scholarship has isolated women’s inclusion as indispensable toward promoting security and fostering sustainable development (Hudson et al. 2012). Simultaneously, research in the field of development has increasingly highlighted the role domestic governmental and civic institutions play in fueling economic growth and promoting development (Rodrik, Subramanian, and Trebbi 2004). This paper contributes to the intersection of these discussions through statistical analysis of how the reservation of legislative seats within local government institutions in India, Panchayati Raj Institutions, fosters women’s inclusion in society, or the ability of women to fully and equally participate in political, economic, and cultural life.

Existing research in this area has focused on how reservations for women at the Panchayat level affect the elected women representatives who fill those seats, how the presence of elected women representatives affects the manner in which local bodies function, and how reservations for women leaders influence community perceptions about female leadership and the role of women. A more limited, but growing body of research has begun to evaluate whether reservations for female leaders fulfill their intended purpose of promoting women’s inclusion more broadly. This paper contributes to that discussion through a comparison of four women’s inclusion metrics as measured by the third and fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS) between Indian states which reserve one half of all local government seats for women and those which reserve only one third of Panchayati Raj seats. An analysis of the rates at which states improved or deteriorated along these metrics between the third and fourth survey periods (2004-2005 and 2014-2015, respectively) indicate that for at least some metrics, increased levels of women’s reservations correlate to higher levels of inclusion more broadly.

Additionally this paper contributes a more detailed history of state-level increases in the percentage of reserved seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions than what is currently available. This history may prove useful to other researchers seeking to understand the effects of increased reservations.
INTRODUCTION

The modern conception of local government in India traces most clearly back to Mahatma Gandhi’s vision of Indian self-rule and Jawaharlal Nehru’s faith in liberal socialism. For Gandhi, villages represented the most exciting possibilities for cultivating prosperous, harmonious, and morally sound communities in contrast to the dehumanization guaranteed by the unwieldy size of state and national governments (Mathur 2013).

Although Nehru and the framers of India’s constitution favored and established a powerfully centralized government, they also recognized the crucial role villages would need to play in order to lift India’s masses out of poor economic conditions. In 1952, Nehru established the Community Development Program (CDP) as a separate central government ministry responsible for identifying and executing economic development projects on the local level across India (Mathur 2013).

Due to the widespread failure of the CDP, the government appointed Balwant Rai Mehta to review the entire program. His 1957 report called for a three-tiered system of Panchayati Raj Institutions which would operate at the village/gram, block (groupings of villages), and district levels. These institutions were seen as tools central and state governments could use to implement their local development agendas and thus received very few independent powers.

Following the adoption of the Mehta committee’s recommendations, the central government failed to provide adequate support to Panchayati Raj Institutions. By 1960, having lost both financial and political support, the Panchayati Raj Institutions stagnated into bureaucratic limbo; they remained in official existence, but held no powers or responsibilities and did not have elections. Local development programs once again came under the purview of centralized programs akin to the early CDP (Mathur 2013).

Following Indira Gandhi’s Emergency rule, the Janata Party became the first non-Congress party to control India’s central government in 1977. Part of the Janata Party’s reforms sought to re-explore decentralization as a means to promote better governance outcomes. The government appointed Ashok Mehta to lead a committee on how to best revitalize Panchayati Raj Institutions. Notably, this committee recommended both using Panchayati Raj Institutions as means to implement centralized programs and according them self-governing status with limited powers of taxation. Throughout the 1980s, support for a more self-governing Panchayati Raj system grew as policy-makers increasingly recognized the ability of local populations to address their own needs (Mathur 2013).

This support eventually translated into India’s 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments which came into force in 1993. They established a uniform, three-tiered system of self-governing Panchayati Raj Institutions for rural areas and an analogous system of municipal government for urban areas. The amendments also included India’s first national system of political reservation for women. One third of seats across each tier of local government were constitutionally reserved for women. The amendment set a reservation floor, but left states the power to raise that floor.

In 2006, Bihar became the first state to raise its reserved seat floor to 50 percent at the Panchayat level. At the time of writing, 19 of India’s 36 States and Union Territories have followed. This study utilizes the staggered adoption of this higher reservation floor to investigate the possible correlation between higher rates of representation and more dramatic improvements in metrics of women’s social inclusion. The remainder of this paper consists of a review of literature on women’s empowerment in Panchayati Raj Institutions, a more detailed history of state increases in Panchayati Raj reservation floors, methodology, and
analysis of the correlation between raising the reservation floor and rates of improvement in metrics of women's inclusion as measured by the 3rd and 4th National Family Health Surveys, and a discussion of the findings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The majority of existing scholarship on women's reservations in Panchayati Raj Institutions has examined 1) how reservations for women at the Panchayat level affect the elected women representatives who fill those seats, 2) how the presence of elected women representatives affects the manner in which local bodies function, and 3) how reservations for women leaders influence community perceptions about female leadership and the role of women. A fourth more limited, but disproportionally exciting body of research has begun to evaluate whether reservations for female leaders fulfill their intended purpose of promoting women's inclusion more broadly.

The largest national survey of elected women representatives conducted by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj found that elected women leaders reported improved effectiveness in their decision making capabilities, self-esteem, self-confidence, and respect within their households after winning elections. In addition, winning elections enabled women representatives to gain a more active voice in household decisions, and lessened their need for male permission to leave the house and interact with broader society. Finally, elected women representatives reported decreased household chores and increased household responsibility-sharing among family members following their elections (Ministry of Panchayati Raj 2008). As over 1.3 million women currently serve in Panchayats across India, the direct effects of reservations on elected women representatives carry significant magnitude (Government of India 2017).

Elected women representatives have also been shown to perform differently in qualitative metrics than their male counterparts. Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) found that women representatives in West Bengal and Rajasthan prioritized drinking water, roads, and welfare programs in their speech and resource allocation when compared to their male colleagues. Additionally they found that in both states, female leadership of elected bodies correlated to higher levels of investment in drinking water and better road quality in West Bengal. Beaman et al. (2010) expand on this research with data from 11 states to show that, on average, gender reservations increase investments in drinking water and education. Additionally, the authors find that increased provision of goods in policy areas prioritized by female leaders does not decrease service provisions in other areas. This finding is consistent with earlier research by Duflo and Topalova (2004) which showed that gram panchayats reserved for women leaders provided more public goods to their communities. Independently, Munshi and Rosenzweig (2008) find that when caste is accounted for, elected women representatives provide more resources for their constituencies despite having less education and experience than their male counterparts.

One possible explanation for more effective governance points to evidence that elected women representatives are less corrupt than their male counterparts. If villagers no longer need to bribe government officials to receive public goods, more will take advantage of these services. Beaman et al. (2010) as well as Duflo and Topalova (2004) also find that citizens living in grams reserved for female leaders were less likely to pay bribes. Lindgren, Inkinen, and Widmalm (2009) offer another possible explanation for women leaders’ ability to provide more services to their constituencies with lower costs. They find that the pres-
ence of women members in local governing bodies improves the ability of the body to reach consensus between elite and mass viewpoints on a range of issues, enabling these bodies to identify policy solutions which more precisely reflect the needs of their constituencies.

A third body of research focuses on how female leadership in local bodies affects community perceptions of female leaders. Beaman et al. (2009) found that in West Bengal, men in never-reserved villages (villages which had never been governed by a female president), associate women with domestic activities faster than leadership abilities in Implicit Association Tests. This association bias weakens in villages which had experienced female leadership. In addition, the study performed Goldberg Paradigm experiments where male villagers were asked to evaluate political speeches delivered by hypothetical male and female leaders. Men in never-reserved villages ranked the recordings of female leaders .055 standard deviations below those of male leaders while those in reserved villages ranked the recordings of female leaders .096 deviations above those of male leaders.

Only recently, have researchers begun to focus on how political reservations for women translate into broader benefits to women's political, economic, and social inclusion in India. Beaman et al. (2010) found the presence of a woman village president increased the likelihood that a woman villager speaks in a village meeting by 25 percent. Beaman et al. (2012) find that in villages which were twice reserved for female leaders, the gender gap in aspirations closed by 20 percent in parents and 32 percent in adolescents. More significantly, the gender gap in adolescent educational attainment was erased, and girls spent less time on household chores. Iyer et al. (2012) showed that an increase in female representation in local government induces a large and significant increase in documented crimes against women as a result of higher reporting rates rather than higher crime rates. In addition, the authors found that women in villages with female leaders were significantly more likely to report that police had solved their case, less likely to pay bribes to police, and less likely to report that police refused to register their complaint. These factors point to a shift in attitude among police towards women in villages with female leadership.

Iyer et al. pioneered a new technique which utilized state-level variation in effective implementation timing of the 73rd Amendment's one-third reservation requirement to isolate for effects of the reservations. Ghani et al. (2013) borrow this technique to understand the relationship between reservation implementation and women's economic inclusion. Though they did not find any statistical effect on women's employment following implementation, they found that women's reservations increased the creation of women-owned businesses by 40 percent. Finally Priebe (2017) found that in Maharashtra, the presence of a female village leader increases the chances women had voted in the last election, met personally with the village president, received information about village meetings, could name a member of the village panchayat, had political conversations with a member of the village panchayat, were satisfied with the level of unity among the village's women, and described an increase in the level of unity among women in the village.

FIFTY PERCENT RESERVATIONS: A BRIEF HISTORY

India's Ministry of Panchayati Raj maintains a list of states which have raised their reservation floors, but the MoPR does not include when each state raised its floor or when the first election with the new floor was held. To the author's knowledge, this information cannot be found in any single source. Future investigations into the effects of increased reservations may find this information useful. With the more detailed history of increased
reservations this paper contributes, researchers can replicate Iyer et al.’s use of staggered implementation times.

### Table 1. Information on Raising Reservation Floors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year Reservation Floor Was Raised</th>
<th>Current Floor (%)</th>
<th>Date of First Panchayat Elections with Raised Floor</th>
<th>Date of Subsequent Panchayat Elections</th>
<th>Panchayat Elections Between 2004 and 2013 Since Raising Floor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>2006(^1)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>May 2006(^2)</td>
<td>May 2011,(^3) May 2016(^4)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>2007(^5)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Jan 2010(^6)</td>
<td>Feb 2015(^7)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>2008(^8)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Nov 2012(^9)</td>
<td>Dec 2017</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>2008(^10)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>July-Sept 2008(^11)</td>
<td>June 2014(^12)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujrat</td>
<td>2009(^13)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Oct 2010(^14)</td>
<td>Feb and Oct 2015(^15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>2009(^16)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Oct 2010(^17)</td>
<td>Nov 2015(^18)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>2009(^19)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Jan 2010(^20)</td>
<td>Feb 2015(^21)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. UNDP, "From Reservation to Participation: Capacity Building of Elected Women Representatives and Functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institutions," 64.
3. Ibid.
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<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year Reservation Floor Was Raised</th>
<th>Current Floor (%)</th>
<th>Date of First Panchayat Elections with Raised Floor</th>
<th>Date of Subsequent Panchayat Elections</th>
<th>Panchayat Elections Between 2004 and 2013 Since Raising Floor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>2010&lt;sup&gt;22&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Dec 2010&lt;sup&gt;23&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dec 2015-Jan 2016&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>2010&lt;sup&gt;25&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>July 2013&lt;sup&gt;26&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>2011&lt;sup&gt;27&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>July 2013 (gram) &amp; April 2014 (block and district)&lt;sup&gt;28&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>2011&lt;sup&gt;29&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Feb 2012&lt;sup&gt;30&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Feb 2017&lt;sup&gt;31&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>2011&lt;sup&gt;32&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Feb 2012&lt;sup&gt;33&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Feb 2017&lt;sup&gt;34&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year Reservation Floor Was Raised</th>
<th>Current Floor (%)</th>
<th>Date of First Panchayat Elections with Raised Floor</th>
<th>Date of Subsequent Panchayat Elections</th>
<th>Panchayat Elections Between 2004 and 2013 Since Raising Floor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>2012&lt;sup&gt;35&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Feb 2013&lt;sup&gt;36&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Feb 2018&lt;sup&gt;37&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>2012&lt;sup&gt;38&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>July 2014&lt;sup&gt;39&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>2013&lt;sup&gt;40&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Dec 2015&lt;sup&gt;41&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telangana</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Feb 2018&lt;sup&gt;42&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>2016&lt;sup&gt;43&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Nov 2016&lt;sup&gt;44&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>2017&lt;sup&gt;45&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Dec 2017 (gram) &amp; May 2018 (block and district)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>2008*</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Dec 2010&lt;sup&gt;46&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dec 2015&lt;sup&gt;47&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>2009*</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Jan-Feb 2010</td>
<td>Jan-Feb 2015</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY

India’s Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) has conducted four rounds of its National Family Health Survey (NFHS) since 1992. These surveys interview representative samples of the population in every Indian state and union territory in order to a) provide essential data on health and family welfare needed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other agencies for policy and program purposes, and b) provide information on important emerging health and family welfare issues (IIPS 2018). This study utilizes state-level rates of change between four metrics of women’s empowerment and inclusion measured in the 3<sup>rd</sup> NFHS (NFHS-3) in 2004-2005 and the 4<sup>th</sup> NFHS (NFHS-4) in 2014-2015. These metrics include:

*Cannot find evidence of these dates, but the reservations were raised by these years.
• Currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (%)  
• Women who worked in the last 12 months who were paid in cash (%)  
• Ever-married women who have ever experienced spousal violence (%)  
• Women having a bank or savings account that they themselves use (%)  

Other metrics covered by both surveys NFHS-3 and NFHS-4 under the Women’s Empowerment section include:

• Currently working and married women who participate in control over their own earnings (%)  
• Currently married women who participate in control over men’s earnings (%)  
• Currently working and married women who earn similar amounts or more than their husbands (%)  
• Currently married men who hold egalitarian views toward a wife’s participation in decision making (%)  
• Women who have access to money that they themselves control (%)  
• Women who have taken a microcredit loan (%)  
• Women who have freedom of movement (%)  
• Women who agree with wife-beating for specified justifications (%)  
• Men who agree with wife-beating for specified justifications (%)  
• Men who support women refusing sex for specific reasons (%)  
• Women who support refusing sex for specific reasons (%)  

For many of these additional metrics the difference between the data in NFHS-3 and NFHS-4 was insignificant, there was little state-level variation in the differences between NFHS-3 and NFHS-4, or the variation was fully explained by other factors such as level of education or wealth. Even so, some of the metrics such as Women who have freedom of movement and others present areas for further analysis in future work.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

I calculated the rate of change between NFHS-3 and NFHS-4 for each state and union territory for which the four selected metrics were collected each year. These rates of change were then averaged for states and UTs which had raised reservations and conducted an election with the new floor by the end of 2013, the last year before data was again collected for NFHS-4. These states included Assam, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. Rates of change were also averaged for states and UTs which had not raised their reservations and conducted an election by 2013. These states and UTs included Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Punjab, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh. States and UTs for which data on the four selected metrics was not conducted in both NFHS-3 and NFHS-4 included Adaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, and Telangana.

After calculating the rate of change in each metric in each state and averaging them, I conducted a two-tailed t-test for statistical significance.

Table 2 and Table 3 group the data into the two groups of 14 states which have and have
not raised reservations and held an election prior to 2014 respectively. Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 offer a side-by-side comparison between rates of change in both groups of states for each metric and includes the p-value for each metric.

**Figure 1: Timeline of raising reservation floors.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Bihar Raises Reservations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bihar First Elections (May)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh Raises Reservations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand Raise Reservations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Uttarakhand First Elections (July)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Rajasthan Raise Reservations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Karnataka, West Bengal Raise Reservations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan First Elections (January)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Kerala First Elections (October)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka First Elections (December)</em></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha Raise Reservations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Assam, Tripura Raise Reservations</td>
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<td><em>Maharashtra, Odisha First Elections (February)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Sikkim First Elections (November)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jharkhand Raises Reservations</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Assam First Elections (February)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal First Elections (July)</em></td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Telangana Raises Reservations</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Tripura First Elections (July)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Jharkhand First Elections (December)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tamil Nadu Raises Reservations</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu First Elections (November)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Punjab Raises Reservations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td><em>Punjab First Elections (December)</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Table 2. NFHS-3 and SFHS-4 data and percent change for states with raised reservations and election by 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>Chhattisgarh</th>
<th>Gujarat</th>
<th>Himachal Pradesh</th>
<th>Karnataka</th>
<th>Kerala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (%)</td>
<td>2004-2005: 60.90, 32.70, 26.80, 36.60, 39.20, 35.20, 47.20</td>
<td>2014-2015: 71.00, 51.80, 65.90, 62.00, 66.70, 60.70, 67.60</td>
<td>Percent Change: 16.58, 58.41, 145.90, 69.40, 70.15, 72.44, 43.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women Who Worked in the Last 12 months Who were paid in cash (%)</td>
<td>2004-2005: 85.30, 49.80, 44.50, 60.70, 33.40, 72.00, 91.30</td>
<td>2014-2015: 90.70, 61.70, 81.90, 79.50, 54.60, 81.80, 97.40</td>
<td>Percent Change: 6.33, 23.90, 84.04, 30.97, 63.47, 13.61, 6.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ever-married women who have experienced spousal violence (%)</td>
<td>2004-2005: 42.10, 60.80, 32.30, 33.80, 6.90, 21.50, 19.80</td>
<td>2014-2015: 26.60, 45.20, 38.10, 23.00, 7.00, 24.40, 16.30</td>
<td>Percent Change: -36.82, -25.66, 17.96, -31.95, 1.45, 13.49, -17.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women having a bank or savings account that they themselves use (%)</td>
<td>2004-2005: 11.70, 8.20, 8.10, 19.90, 22.20, 22.10, 27.00</td>
<td>2014-2015: 45.40, 26.40, 51.20, 48.60, 68.80, 59.40, 70.60</td>
<td>Percent Change: 288.03, 221.95, 532.10, 144.22, 209.91, 168.78, 161.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metric</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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<td><strong>Currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (%)</strong></td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>29.40</td>
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<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>60.50</td>
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<td>Percent Change</td>
<td>105.78</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women Who Worked in the Last 12 months Who were paid in cash (%)</strong></td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>73.00</td>
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<td>Percent Change</td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
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<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
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<td><strong>Currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (%)</strong></td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>69.40</td>
<td>77.30</td>
<td>70.40</td>
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<td>30.20</td>
<td>33.70</td>
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<td>2014-2015</td>
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<td>Percent Change</td>
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<td>12.22</td>
<td>24.08</td>
<td>86.10</td>
<td>39.55</td>
<td>156.62</td>
<td>76.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women Who Worked in the Last 12 months Who were paid in cash (%)</strong></td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>48.80</td>
<td>61.70</td>
<td>41.50</td>
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<td>89.90</td>
<td>74.30</td>
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<td>2014-2015</td>
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<td>82.40</td>
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<td>21.55</td>
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<td>43.05</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ever-married women who have experienced spousal violence (%)</strong></td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>46.20</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>25.10</td>
<td>21.30</td>
<td>26.70</td>
<td>44.10</td>
<td>46.60</td>
<td>45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>54.70</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>17.50</td>
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<td>44.60</td>
<td>29.70</td>
<td>38.30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Percent Change</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>106.67</td>
<td>-30.28</td>
<td>-22.07</td>
<td>-20.60</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>-36.27</td>
<td>-14.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women having a bank or savings account that they themselves use (%)</strong></td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>16.90</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>14.60</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>13.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>34.80</td>
<td>54.40</td>
<td>57.10</td>
<td>38.80</td>
<td>58.80</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>59.20</td>
<td>54.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent Change</td>
<td>335.00</td>
<td>221.89</td>
<td>604.94</td>
<td>424.32</td>
<td>302.74</td>
<td>387.34</td>
<td>216.58</td>
<td>313.64</td>
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Table 4. Percent change for currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (%).

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<tr>
<th>States with at least one election since raising reservation floor</th>
<th>States with no elections with raised reservation floor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.58</td>
<td>43.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58.41</td>
<td>8.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Goa</td>
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<td>145.90</td>
<td>78.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.40</td>
<td>31.89</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
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<td>70.15</td>
<td>144.84</td>
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<td>Jharkhand</td>
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<td>Manipur</td>
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<td>6.00</td>
<td>10.95</td>
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<td>Meghalaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>105.78</td>
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<td>Mizoram</td>
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<tr>
<td>48.90</td>
<td>12.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.26</td>
<td>24.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
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<td>160.53</td>
<td>86.10</td>
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<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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<tr>
<td>52.30</td>
<td>39.55</td>
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<td>Tripura</td>
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<tr>
<td>100.83</td>
<td>156.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>196.23</td>
<td>76.85</td>
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<tr>
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Table 5. Percent change for women who worked in the last 12 months who were paid in cash (%).

<table>
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<td>6.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Odisha</td>
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<td>Rajasthan</td>
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<td>Sikkim</td>
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<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>13.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>t-test p-value</td>
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</table>
Table 6. Percent change for ever-married women who have experienced spousal violence (%)

<table>
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<th>States with no elections with raised reservation floor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assam -36.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bihar -25.66</td>
<td>Delhi 72.09</td>
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<td>Chhattisgarh 17.96</td>
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<td>Haryana 22.50</td>
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<td>Himachal Pradesh -1.45</td>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir -7.95</td>
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<td>Jharkhand -14.91</td>
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<td>Kerala -17.68</td>
<td>Manipur 18.40</td>
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<td>Madhya Pradesh -29.12</td>
<td>Meghalaya -106.67</td>
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<td>Maharashtra -30.84</td>
<td>Mizoram -30.28</td>
</tr>
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<td>Odisha -11.65</td>
<td>Nagaland -22.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajasthan -47.41</td>
<td>Punjab -20.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sikkim -81.38</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu 1.13</td>
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<td>Uttarakhand -51.68</td>
<td>Tripura -36.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal -16.27</td>
<td>Tripura -36.27</td>
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</table>
DISCUSSION

There is a large difference between the rates of change in states which did and did not raise reservations for the metric of currently married women who usually participate in household decisions (an average 81.98 percent increase vs. 56.09 percent increase). This difference is also reflected in the metric of ever-married women who have ever experienced spousal violence (average 24.83 percent decrease vs. 2.16 percent increase). Only the difference in the rate of change for the metric of women who have experienced spousal violence was statistically significant.

Both states which had raised reservations and held an election and states which had not, saw a roughly similar increase in the percentage of women who worked in the last 12 months and were paid in cash (about 32 percent average increase). The difference in changes for the metric of women having a bank or savings account that they themselves use (average 280.11 percent increase vs. 276.37 percent increase) was negligible.

CONCLUSION

Preliminary findings show that for at least one metric of women's empowerment as measured by NFHS-3 and NFHS-4, specifically married women who experienced spousal violence, there is a strong correlation between a state's decision to raise reservations and hold elections and its improvement on this metric. A large, but not statistically significant difference in the rate of change between states which have and have not raised reservations was also observed in the percentage of women who participate in household decision making. The other metrics evaluated did not show any significant correlation.

The data suggests that increased reservation of legislative seats at the local government level in India has a larger immediate effect on promoting women's inclusion in social metrics than economic ones. This correlates to Ghani et al.'s findings that reservations for women leaders led to increased business creation rates among women, but did not significantly affect women's employment.

Increased rates of improvement for states which had raised reservations were observed for all four metrics, even if only one increase was statistically significant. This supports the growing body of research which finds that reservations for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions do have positive impacts on women's inclusion. As such, reservations for women present an effective institutional tool to increase women's inclusion.

Given the mixed results from these four metrics, additional metrics from the NFHS and other data sets should be analyzed to better understand the impact of increased reservations on women's inclusion in the political, economic, and social realms of daily life. The more detailed documentation of state increases in Panchayati Raj reservations for women which this paper contributes should aid future researchers in this effort.
REFERENCES


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UNDP. “From Reservation to Participation : Capacity Building of Elected Women Representatives and Functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institutions,” 64.

INTRODUCTION

As the Islamic State continues to lose territory in Syria, participating members in the Syrian conflict must have a clear vision of Syria’s future and a plan for reestablishing security. Elevating the status of women may be key to establishing peace in Syria; research has shown that gender equality is a significant predictor for a state’s peacefulness. In this paper, I examine how Syrian women’s lives have changed since the beginning of the civil war in 2011. I find that widespread gender-based violence exacerbated existing inequalities between men and women, thus making Syrian women especially vulnerable during the conflict. However, Syrian women should not be viewed merely as victims but as agents for societal change. During the war, women took on historical roles as commandos in the Syrian army, international peace negotiators, and leaders of civil society organizations. It remains to be seen whether these changes during the conflict will lead to lasting advances in the social status of women after the war has ended.

Much of the literature about Syrian women during the conflict focuses on the experiences of Syrian refugees. This is likely because they are more accessible to international organizations than vulnerable populations who remain within Syria. Detailed information on the effects of the conflict on women within Syria’s borders is scarce due to unsafe security conditions on the ground and lack of cooperation on the part of the Syrian government. In my research, I attempted to fill this gap by drawing from a variety of news articles and reports issued by non-governmental organizations. These sources both have their limitations; Western journalism might lack the historical and cultural background necessary to present a complete narrative while regional non-governmental organizations might be so invested in the outcome of the conflict that their reports include exaggerated or false information. However, I hope that my analysis provides a clearer view of what Syrian women experienced during the civil war and what a post-conflict society might hold for them.

In terms of women’s rights, Syria is relatively more progressive than other countries in the Arab world. All Syrian women were given the right to vote and stand for office in 1953. The secular Ba’ath Party, which has been in power since 1963, has made efforts to advance the status of Syrian women. Article 45 of the 1973 Syrian constitution includes an article that compels the state to remove all barriers to “women’s development and participation” in society, and Article 23 of the 2012 Syrian constitution reaffirms this pledge. The Syrian government passed its first compulsory education policy in 1981 and current education policy includes nine years of free and compulsory schooling. As a result of these efforts, the gender gap in education and literacy has decreased significantly. In 1970, only 20 percent of women and 60 percent of men were literate; by 2013, the youth literacy rate had soared to 95 percent for girls and 97 percent for boys while the adult literacy rate had increased to 80 percent for women and 91 percent for men. In 2011, prior to the start of the civil war, Syria also boasted a 93 percent primary school enrollment rate for girls and a 99 percent primary school enrollment rate for boys.

Despite these advances, Syrian law still fails to put men and women on equal footing. Men and women have unequal rights under personal status law and nationality law. Syrian law also fails to sufficiently protect women from gender-based violence, as there are no laws prohibiting domestic violence or marital rape. Honor killings, which were estimated to have occurred at a rate of approximately 200 per year before the conflict, were made illegal in 2009 but carry a minimum sentence of only two years. Additionally, child marriage remains an issue as the legal age for marriage for girls is 17, although marriages as early as age 15 may be permitted if a judge deems both parties willing and “physically mature.”

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9. Personal status law governs issues like marriage, divorce, and child custody.
10. Syrian women cannot pass their nationality onto their children.
13. Defined as the marriage of individuals under the age of 18.
though the Syrian government ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2003, the regime filed several reservations to key provisions of the convention that would have made the aforementioned inequities illegal.\textsuperscript{15} As such, gender inequality continues to remain a prominent issue in Syria today.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGHOUT THE CONFLICT

While the violence of the Syrian civil war has disrupted nearly all aspects of civilian life, it has had a disproportionate impact on women and has exacerbated existing gender inequalities. According to a 2017 report by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), one of the most common types of gender-based violence (GBV) affecting Syrian women is an increase in domestic violence since the start of the war.\textsuperscript{16} The economic instability caused by the civil war has forced some women to find work or even become the primary earners in their families. Considering that Syrian women’s participation in the labor force was only 13 percent prior to the start of the war,\textsuperscript{17} this represents a shift in the traditional balance of power that men in the household might find threatening. Feelings of emasculation in addition to the general stress of the conflict has lowered the threshold at which many men resort to violence, leading to increased rates of domestic violence during the war.

Another form of GBV that has increased since the start of the civil war is sexual violence. Stigma surrounding sexual abuse and subsequent underreporting of sexual crimes make it difficult to gauge the scale of civil war-related sexual violence in Syria. However, numerous reports of rape perpetrated by pro-regime security forces at government detention centers and checkpoints suggest that sexual violence is being used by the regime as a tactic of war against those suspected of being associated with the opposition.\textsuperscript{18} Analysis of 162 reported sexual crimes found that women were the victims 80 percent of the time and that government forces and their militia allies perpetrated approximately 81 percent of sexualized violence against women between March 2011 and March 2013.\textsuperscript{19} Another major perpetrator of sexual violence during the conflict is the Islamic State (IS), which forces Syrian women and girls living in IS-controlled regions to marry its fighters.\textsuperscript{20} IS has also been known to kidnap women and girls of minority groups, such as Iraqi Yazidis or Assyrian Christians, and then sell them in human trafficking rings in Syria.\textsuperscript{21} Tragically,
even those tasked with protecting Syrian civilians have taken advantage of their vulnerability. The UNFPA found that some aid workers have exchanged humanitarian assistance for sexual favors.\footnote{22. UNFPA, \textit{Voices from Syria} 2018.}

This rampant sexual violence has had a major impact on the lives of Syrian women. Honor killings have reportedly become more common due to the increased incidence of rape.\footnote{23. Emma Batha, “Syrian war causing ‘honour killings’, child marriages – doctor,” Thomas Reuters Foundation, December 4, 2013, http://news.trust.org/item/20131204182854-8hegf/.} This persistent threat of rape and the general instability associated with the civil war has caused some families to fear that they will be unable to protect their daughters; as a result, some families have arranged for their daughters to be married at increasingly young ages as a coping mechanism in response to an uncertain future. Experts have noted a worrying trend of increased child marriages during the conflict, often arranged without taking into account the daughter’s wishes.\footnote{24. UNFPA, \textit{Voices from Syria} 2018.} Another consequence of the fear of sexual violence is limited mobility, as women and girls believe that significant movement outside their homes might subject them to sexual abuse.\footnote{25. Nick Raistick, “Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in the Syria Crisis,” UNFPA, 2014, https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA%20Journals%27s%20Handbook%20Small%5B6%5D.pdf.} Indeed, this fear of sexual violence is so strong that many female Syrian refugees have listed it as a major motivating factor in their decisions to leave home.\footnote{26. United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, A/HRC/27/60, August 13, 2014, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/ColSyria/A.HRC.27.60_Eng.pdf.}

Given the ability of widespread sexual violence to displace populations, the purposeful use of rape against certain ethnic or religious groups has been recognized by the UN in the past as an act of ethnic cleansing.\footnote{27. Ethnic cleansing has been defined by a UN Commission of Experts as “a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent and terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas.” See United Nations Security Council, \textit{Final Report of the Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780, S/1994/674}, May 27, 1994, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/1994/674.} In the Syrian conflict, the targeting of Sunni Muslim women by the Assad regime and of ethnoreligious minorities by IS suggests that actors in the conflict are using rape as a means of changing the demographics of the populations in the territories that they control. Violence against Syrian women has thus become a means to the political end of establishing a more homogeneous ethnic or religious state in the eyes of both the Assad regime and IS.

\section*{THE CHANGING ROLES OF SYRIAN WOMEN SINCE 2011}

Despite the many challenges that Syrian women have faced during the civil war, women have also found opportunities to access positions in society that were previously closed to them. Societal changes since the start of the conflict include increased female participation in armed forces loyal to the Assad regime, the growth of women-led civil society organizations (CSOs), and increased female participation in international peace negotiations. Whether or not these changes will have lasting impacts on post-conflict society remains to be seen.
Participation in Regime Combat Forces

Syrian women have fought alongside their male counterparts in both regime and opposition armed forces throughout the conflict.\(^{28}\) However, because the Assad regime appears poised to remain in power, it is women’s increased participation in pro-regime forces that is most likely to lead to greater gender equity in the long term. Syrian women had served in the Syrian Arab Army prior to the outbreak of violence in 2011, but their roles were largely confined to administrative duties or military logistics.\(^{29}\) As the civil war progressed, Syrian women joined regime forces in increasingly greater numbers. The first major indication of the regime’s female integration campaign came in January 2013, when videos surfaced of female soldiers loyal to the Assad regime marching through the city of Homs.\(^ {30}\) These women belonged to an all-female unit of the National Defense Forces (NDF), a network of pro-Assad militias comprised of civilian volunteers. This all-female unit referred to themselves as the “fedayat,” meaning “those who sacrifice themselves for a cause” in Arabic.\(^ {31}\) The fedayat’s ranks initially numbered at 450 but swelled to an estimated 3,000 by 2016.\(^ {32}\) In addition to their participation in pro-regime militias, Syrian women are also finding increasingly greater roles for themselves in the official Syrian army. The Syrian Republican Guard, a division of the Syrian Arab Army that is responsible for maintaining security throughout Damascus,\(^ {33}\) now includes an all-female unit known as the First Commando Battalion.\(^ {34}\) Members of this battalion are trained at a military academy before being dispatched to take on important combat roles, including as snipers and tank operators. As the name of the unit suggests, the members of the First Commando Battalion—who numbered at 800 soldiers in 2015\(^ {35}\)—are the first women to serve as commandos in the Syrian army.\(^ {36}\)

Opinions differ about why the regime has decided to expand women’s participation in its armed forces. Some have suggested that women’s integration was simply born out of necessity to compensate for extensive losses of male troops.\(^ {37}\) The inclusion of women in regime forces might also be for propaganda purposes, serving as a tool to elevate Assad’s policies in the eyes of the international community. The Syrian government has denied both of these possibilities, instead claiming that this decision was taken by Assad to “promote the role of Syrian women and show that they are capable of being successful in all fields.”\(^ {38}\)

Regardless of the true rationale behind the creation of the fedayat and the First Commando

\[^{29}\text{Ibid.}\]
\[^{32}\text{Hamlo, “Women on opposite sides of Syria war.”}\]
\[^{33}\text{“Syria’s Praetorian Guards: A Primer,” Middle East Intelligence Bulletin, August 5, 2000, http://www.meforum.org/meib/articles/0008_s2.htm.}\]
\[^{35}\text{Leduc, “Assad’s female fighters.”}\]
\[^{36}\text{Ketz, “Syrian army turns to women on Damascus front lines.”}\]
\[^{37}\text{Leduc, “Assad’s female fighters.”}\]
\[^{38}\text{Ketz, “Syrian army turns to women on Damascus front lines.”}\]
June 30: A meeting of the UN-backed Action Group for Syria in Geneva produces the Geneva Communiqué, a document calling for the establishment of a transitional government in Syria. Also known as Geneva I, this meeting did not include Syrian women.

October 30–November 1: 44 Syrian women from different CSOs across Syria meet in Cairo to launch the Syrian Women’s Peace Forum. The initiative is the first of its kind to unite women leaders in Syrian society and build networks between activists and CSOs.

2014


January 13-14: UN Women organizes a forum in Geneva for approximately fifty Syrian women, resulting in the creation of the Syrian Women’s Initiative for Peace and Democracy (SWIPD). The meeting produces the SWIPD Outcome Document, which sets forth a number of demands and priorities regarding the peace process.

January 22–February 15: Regime and opposition forces meet for the Geneva II peace negotiations, which soon collapse. Syrian women are not present during these negotiations.


June: SWIPD meets in Amman to discuss the resumption of peace negotiations.

December 18: The UN Security Council unanimously adopts UNSCR 2254, which includes articles emphasizing the participation of women in peace talks.9

February 1: The UN announces the beginning of the Geneva III peace talks. The talks are suspended soon afterward. Meanwhile, the High Negotiations Committee, an umbrella body representing the Syrian opposition, announces the creation of the Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) to advise and participate in the opposition's negotiation team.10

February 2: The UN announces the creation of a Syrian Women's Advisory Board (WAB). The WAB is comprised of 12 Syrian women representing different parts of civil society and advises the UN Special Envoy for Syria.11 Although the WAB can make recommendations to assist the Special Envoy in peace talks, the WAB are not peace negotiators themselves.

May 20-22: UN Women convenes the Syrian Women's Peacemakers conference in Beirut, which includes over 130 Syrian women. Participants include the SWIPD and the WAB.12

February 23-March 3: The UN convenes the Geneva IV peace talks.13

March 23-31: The UN convenes the Geneva V peace talks.14

May 16-19: The UN convenes the Geneva VI peace talks.15

July 10-14: The UN convenes the Geneva VII peace talks.16

October 22-24: The Syrian Women's Political Movement (WPM) convenes its founding conference in Paris.17 The conference produces the WPM Outcome Document, which includes demands for Bashar al-Assad to leave office.

November 29-December 14: The UN convenes the Geneva VIII peace talks.18


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.


Battalion, this expansion of female participation in the regime’s armed forces is likely to continue into the near future. Dwindling numbers of troops will make experienced fighters, regardless of gender, increasingly valuable. And while the fedayat is comprised of volunteer civilians who might quit their combat roles after the conflict ends, the commander of the First Commando Battalion has stated that all female commandos have enlisted for ten years.\(^{39}\)

It remains to be seen whether this expansion of female participation in pro-regime combat forces will constitute a meaningful step towards gender equity in post-conflict Syrian society. Historically, the inclusion of women in combat forces has occurred through two main routes. The first route is by necessity when the military opens combat positions to women due to a critical shortage of available male combatants. During World War II, women took on combat roles in Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union.\(^{40}\) However, women’s inclusion in combat positions was short-lived in each case; after the war ended, women were not permitted to continue in their combat roles. As such, inclusion of women in combat roles that occurs through this first route is unlikely to have any immediate impact on the structure of the armed forces. The second route by which women have been included in military combat forces is through the national legislature’s removal of legal barriers to female integration in the armed forces.\(^{41}\) The United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, and a number of European countries have removed some or all legal restrictions excluding women from combat roles in the military.\(^{42}\)

As the Syrian civil war has not yet ended, it is unclear which route the Syrian government will take with regards to female inclusion in military combat roles. If the regime is able to control territory without widespread military presence, it might decide that it no longer has a need for female troops, and the inclusion of Syrian women in combat forces might be as short-lived as the participation of women in combat roles during World War II. Conversely, the pioneering role of the First Commando Battalion might lead to lasting structural changes in the Syrian military. The most likely outcome of women’s participation in regime armed forces is that any gains towards gender equity will accrue to a small subset of Syrian women. The fedayat’s membership is largely Alawite, the same minority sect to which Assad himself belongs.\(^{43}\) The First Commando Battalion likely also recruits from pro-regime minority groups. As such, the creation of the fedayat and the First Commando Battalion might only benefit Alawite Syrian women and not Syrian women as a whole. Still, elevating Syrian women to more visible positions in the military may cause men to see women as equals by changing stereotypes of women as weak or fragile.

Increasing Participation in International Negotiations

Research has shown that the inclusion of women in peace processes leads to better outcomes in post-conflict societies. The Graduate Institute of Geneva found that when women were able to influence peace processes, peace agreements were reached 98 percent of the

\(^{39}\) Ibid.


\(^{41}\) Ibid, 353.

\(^{42}\) Ibid, 354.

time. This increased likelihood of reaching an agreement is due to the collaborative approach that women often take in peacemaking, an approach that makes it possible to build coalitions and organize across sectarian divides. The peace established by women is also likely to be longer-lasting; the International Peace Institute found that a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years if women were involved in creating the agreement.

Despite the benefits of including women in peace processes, the initial UN-backed peace talks in Geneva in 2012 and 2014 failed to include Syrian women in negotiations. Although they were sidelined from formal peace talks, Syrian women activists organized amongst themselves several times throughout the war to build networks and issue joint statements demanding greater inclusion in the peace process. Figure 1 provides a timeline of meetings organized by Syrian women activists and UN-backed peace talks.

Starting from total exclusion from the peace talks, Syrian women have had moderate success in achieving inclusion in the peace process. With the WAB advising the UN Special Envoy for Syria and the WAC advising the Syrian opposition, there is at least a formal attempt to include female voices in the peace process. Syrian women have also directly taken part in negotiations on both the regime’s and the opposition’s negotiating teams. The Geneva VIII talks in December 2017 included four women, comprising 15 percent of negotiators on both sides. This still falls short of the 30 percent quota that has been suggested by activists but is an improvement from the initial Geneva conferences that included no Syrian women at all. By participating in peace talks as both advisers and negotiators, Syrian women activists have the opportunity to push for gender-related language in the final peace agreement. Examples of gender-related language in other post-conflict peace agreements include quotas for women in legislative bodies and provisions to protect women from sexual violence. The inclusion of this kind of language in peace agreements imposes duties on the post-conflict government that could lead to lasting progress towards gender equity.

It is encouraging that the UN, the Syrian regime, and the opposition have all been at least partially responsive to Syrian women activists’ demands for greater inclusion in the peace process. However, inclusion in the peace process alone will not lead to peaceful outcomes; the quality of the inclusion matters as well.


48. The 30 percent quota has been suggested by the SWIPD and the WPM.


ticipate meaningfully and influence the agenda of peace talks. Unfortunately, the sporadic nature of the peace talks on Syria has made it difficult for the UN to set any agenda at all. Despite the frequency of the Geneva talks throughout 2017, each round was short and made no major breakthroughs with both opposition and regime delegates threatening to back out at various times. A major source of contention between the two factions is the question of leadership in post-conflict Syria. The regime has been adamant that Bashar al-Assad stays in power after the war’s resolution while the opposition has insisted on Assad’s removal. Some women’s groups, such as the WPM, have joined the opposition in calling for Assad to step down, further complicating the role of women in advising and participating in peace negotiations. Thus, while it is significant that Syrian women are able to participate in the peace process as advisers and negotiators, the volatile nature of the peace talks has made it difficult for female voices to be heard.

Proliferation of Women’s Civil Society Organizations

Since Hafez al-Assad’s rise to power in 1971, the Ba’ath Party has mandated that all CSOs be registered with the government and listed under the Ba’ath Party’s unions. To comply with these regulations, women’s organizations must be listed under the state-funded General Women’s Union (GWU). Critics of the GWU argue that its monopoly over women’s organizations stifles dissent and delays action due to the unwieldy bureaucracy of the Ba’ath Party. Even Bouthaina Shaaban, a prominent female adviser to the Assad regime who has written extensively about Arab feminism, has acknowledged that the GWU is not viewed by Syrian women as “either radical or feminist,” thus indicating the GWU’s limited ability to implement significant changes on behalf of women.

Although some women’s groups continued to operate without registering under the GWU, unregistered groups are not allowed to accept foreign funding and face difficulties in attracting members. Unregistered women’s CSOs have proliferated over the course of the civil war as the Syrian government lost control over various regions and became unable to deliver social and health services. A 2015 report by the Badael Foundation identified 60 CSOs, most of which were established after 2011 and were led by women. Although many of these CSOs were initially formed to administer emergency relief, they have since expanded the scope of their activities to include a multitude of peacebuilding activities including combating child recruitment, promoting women’s political empowerment, and advocating for legal and constitutional reforms.

The proliferation of women’s CSOs alone will not inevitably result in lasting change. In Lebanon, a number of CSOs were formed in the lead up to the 2005 Cedar Revolution, a peaceful movement that succeeded in pressuring Syrian troops to withdraw from Lebanon. However, sectarian divisions that deepened over time and failure to secure sufficient funding from foreign donors prevented Lebanese CSOs from becoming long-term agents of change.

52. Kelly and Breslin, “Women’s Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Syria.”
55. Ghazzawi, Mohammad, and Ramadan, “Peacebuilding defines our future now.”
56. Ibid.
As such, it is important for Syrian CSOs to seize their current momentum and maximize their impact. Perhaps the most effective way to achieve lasting societal change is by engendering the Syrian constitution. Throughout the conflict, international non-governmental organizations have been in contact with Syrian CSOs and female activists to research and prepare drafts of a Syrian constitution that is inclusive of women’s rights. Constitutional reform driven by female activists in post-conflict societies is not unprecedented. In the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the transitional government made sure to appoint women to high-level positions and established the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development, which ensures that women’s interests are represented at the national level. After extensive consultations with women of different social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds, Rwanda adopted a new constitution in 2003 that included a 30 percent quota for women in all governmental decision-making bodies. Rwanda is now a world leader in women’s political empowerment, with 61 percent of the seats in its national legislature held by women compared to the global average of 24 percent. Traditional attitudes towards gender have been slower to change, but some studies suggest that the high visibility of Rwandan women in positions of power has shifted the “collective cultural imagination” about what ambitions are considered legitimate for women. Engendering the constitution can thus not only lead to more inclusive political outcomes but can also change cultural attitudes towards the role of women in society.

Although constitutional reform might be the most effective way to elevate the status of Syrian women in the long term, it is unclear whether meaningful constitutional reform occurring in the aftermath of the Syrian conflict will occur. Constitutional reform might be expected after a conflict in which regime change has occurred, as was the case in Rwanda. However, in Syria, it appears that Bashar al-Assad will remain in power. This does not entirely preclude the possibility of significant constitutional reform; at the 2018 Russian-backed negotiations in Sochi, the UN and Russia agreed to create a constitutional committee to draft a new Syrian constitution. Still, any effort to create a new constitution should be inclusive of all concerned parties, and the Sochi talks were boycotted by the Syrian opposition. Additionally, it is unclear whether the negotiators at the Sochi talks had gender equality on the constitutional agenda. Going forward, participants in the peace process must make a more concerted effort to include all stakeholders in negotiations, including the Syrian women in civil society who have been working on the project of engendering the constitution throughout the duration of the war.

CONCLUSION

The lives of Syrian women have been profoundly affected by the ongoing civil war. The conflict has exacerbated existing gender inequities, leading to an alarming increase in gender-based violence. At the same time, the conflict has provided new opportunities for women to become leaders in society. Syrian women are now, for the first time, taking on combat roles in the Syrian military as members of the First Commando Battalion. They have also pushed effectively for their inclusion in international peace talks as both advisers and negotiators. Furthermore, Syrian women have taken on leadership roles in newly-formed civil society organizations and have worked on projects ranging from emergency aid to engendering the constitution. It remains to be seen whether this expansion in opportunities will lead to lasting societal change, especially in light of entrenched traditional norms regarding gender and the continued instability of the peace process. However, if actors in the conflict make a more concerted effort to include female voices, there remains significant potential for the elevation of the status of Syrian women in the military, politics, and civil society.
REFERENCES


ABSTRACT

The far-right Sweden Democrats are gaining traction ahead of the September 2018 elections in Sweden, as an increase in hate crimes has paralleled an increase in xenophobic rhetoric and politics. Sweden has accepted refugees and immigrants for several decades—a trajectory similar to what the United States is experiencing. This paper uses Iranian migrants, the second largest non-European migrant community in Sweden, as a case study of immigration and integration policies for the United States. As both liberal, multicultural countries with histories of immigration and similar political climates, I offer that the United States can learn from Sweden’s best practices so that xenophobia does not trump a humanitarian commitment. I contend that integration is a reciprocal process by both the migrant population and host society. Using a normative framework, I also evaluate the morality of Swedish immigration policy.

1. This work is dedicated to the shadows of society. I have tried hard to do justice to the stories of painful sacrifice, of Helen, a highly educated political refugee in Sweden, who put off her own dreams of theatre to work as a caretaker to help her son attain his music dreams; and to the stories of resilience, of Khazar, a former Kurdish political refugee who now tells the stories of other refugees in conflict zones as a successful, young female audio journalist. This is for the stories that remain untold—of migrants and refugees, in Sweden, in Iran, in the United States. I hope to remind us of our shared humanity, in hopes of a better future here in the United States, for everyone here and around the world.

To my advisor, Max Weiss, Barbara Buckinx, Beth English, Rick Barton and Kit Lunney. Amb. Ryan Crocker, Fereshteh Ahmadi, the “Prince,” Layla, Emily, Jaclyn, Azza, Ambika, Zaynab, Mohamed, Luke, Kabbas, Dahlia, Nick, Diego, Yousef, Nathan, Anita, Kassie, Adam, Akash, Sebastian, Sirad, Tucker, my parents: thank you for supporting me in every way imaginable.
I lay out a set of five markers of integration by which to evaluate migrants’ degree of integration: education, labor market, housing, culture and political life, and gender, to examine the role gender plays in migration and integration, particularly in the Iranian culture. Twenty-nine semi-structured interviews, coupled with quantitative data, news media, and academic literature, were used to inform an evaluation of integration and the policies and practices in place. Sweden shows the greatest success in terms of cultural integration, as opposed to economic through employment and housing, largely as a result of structural racism. Ultimately, policy recommendations for the United States in this paper center on fostering reciprocity in the integration process and more effectively addressing the needs of immigrants and refugees, namely economically and culturally, in a way that does not make integration compulsory, but also encourages a multilateral society. The United States has the avenues and resources necessary to make immigrants feel more welcome and supported, while attaining our own interests as well. This research presents an opportunity for the United States to learn from other societies facing similar challenges but utilizing different approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Sweden lies at a critical political juncture. As a country with a long humanitarian history, it is now facing the rising wave of the populist right. Over the last few months, far-right political groups have gained traction in Sweden. The anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats have grown in popular support ahead of elections in September 2018, and fears continue to grow around violent extremism and immigration in the aftermath of a terrorist attack in Stockholm in April 2017 by a rejected Uzbek asylum seeker. So much so, in fact, that one conservative political party is pushing to renegotiate the Geneva Convention, so that Sweden is no longer obligated to fulfill any quotas in regards to refugees, as currently a signatory of the UN Refugee Convention. Declining numbers of migrant admissions over the past two decades point to a political culture that has made it more difficult for non-Western immigrants to settle and integrate.

Sweden has a long history of welcoming immigrants, and the government prides itself on a humanitarian reputation. In fact, the country boasts a long history of accepting refugees, extending back to the 1960s. Sweden has been named the world’s best country to be an immigrant, and has accepted the highest number of asylum-seekers per capita among European countries.1 In 2014, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt asked of the Swedish people, “Open your hearts,” as the number of refugees had doubled over one year, notably from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.2 In 2015, Sweden accepted 163,000 asylum seekers.3 However, as Rouzbeh Parsi, a leading EU scholar and Iranian immigrant to Sweden himself, pointed out, Sweden is not ideologically a country of immigrants in the way that the United

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States is. Academic and researcher Hassan Hosseini-Kaladjahi, an Iranian refugee himself, echoed that sentiment, pointing to the United States’ history of different groups living with each other, while Sweden has no such history or experience; it is a much more homogeneous society. Unlike most other Western countries, Sweden came about its heterogeneity only with time, with few foreigners up until the late 1970s. Despite these differences, the U.S. can learn from Sweden’s immigration policies, specifically from its approaches to education, labor, housing, and cultural integration for refugees and migrants. Sweden is a successful model of bilateral integration and has appealed to migrants for decades, as a liberal welfare state that has accepted large numbers of refugees. As Swedish historian Carl Marklund contested, Sweden is seen as a “positive model for liberal Americans and progressives abroad.” These historical differences do not preclude the vast potential for one country to learn and draw from the policies and practices of another, particularly for one liberal democratic state from another. Further, this paper’s research methods help highlight and amplify immigrants’ voices in ways that U.S. public policy previously has neglected to do. Above all, Sweden’s political climate, particularly in urban areas, is uncannily analogous to that which we are seeing here in the United States; the immigration debate across the Atlantic mirrors the one here as well. The Swedish government has to make a critical decision, one which they have been grappling with since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2014: continue its humanitarian commitment – and keep their hearts open – or succumb to rising anti-immigration political pressures.

This paper aims to determine best practices and policies to integrate a migrant population, specifically Iranian migrants and refugees, and the areas from which the United States can learn from Sweden. I postulate that for liberal, multicultural countries like the United States and Sweden, xenophobia and fears of violent extremism do not have to lead to the cessation of immigration and humanitarianism. I also postulate that integration is a bilateral process, politically, economically, but above all, culturally, as well as a gendered experience.

In this next section, I will examine some of the challenges Sweden has faced in dealing with immigration, and how Sweden has responded to and addressed these enduring challenges, which also affect the United States. These challenges include, most saliently, the shifting political climate within Sweden ahead of the September election, as well as the political climate shaped by the growing politicization of crime in Europe and the globalization of the “Trump effect.”

7. See Chapter III for a framework around “integration.”
9. Dr. Susan Jackson, “Sweden Feels Force of Trump Effect: View,” *Euro News*, January 25, 2018, http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/25/sweden-feels-force-of-trump-effect-view; “The ‘Trump effect’ has been a phenomenon commonly used throughout the media to describe the aftermath of the Trump’s election victory in the U.S., and the implications of such in European countries, where political leaders have been emboldened to carve their own image—and policies—in the image of Trump and the precedent he has set.
Challenges

“For now, I want to stay [in Sweden]…”

Sweden now faces global challenges and threats, many of the same ones the United States faces. For instance, there is the pervasive concern and faulty narrative of immigrants taking jobs from native citizens, though in reality, immigrants face countless obstacles to entering the labor market. Even more notably, many Swedes believe there to be a growing association between crime and immigration. The terror attack in central Stockholm in April 2017, which rattled the entire country, only intensified fears, what with the perpetrator being an immigrant whose request for asylum had been rejected by the Swedish Migration Agency the year prior. A Pew Research Center study from 2016 shows that 46 percent of Swedes believe that “refugees in our country are more to blame for crime than other groups.” This association, in turn, stems from a surge in crime—gang violence, shootings, explosions and bombings, and sexual assault—in Sweden, primarily concentrated in “areas of social exclusion,” or neighborhoods consisting primarily of immigrants clashing with areas consisting primarily of native Swedes. Concern lies with an unassimilated, largely Muslim minority, which should raise questions concerning Sweden’s integration processes, rather than the failures of its immigration and assimilation policies and efforts. By failing to properly integrate newcomers, migrant populations are alienated and isolated, to an even greater degree than many living in majority-immigrant communities and towns already are. However, in reality, there only exists a tenuous connection between crime and immigration, and it is important to note the proliferation in baseless reports of refugee violence, as far-right and mainstream media outlets have fixated upon a fake migrant crime wave in Sweden. Furthermore, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs points to statistics from the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention: The majority of people suspected of committing crimes in Sweden had two Swedish-born parents and were born in Sweden. Nonetheless, people from foreign backgrounds are 2.5 times more likely to be accused of committing a crime than people born in Sweden.

Often the precursor to violent crime, migrant-instigated sexual violence has also been widely reported. Fear and hostility towards immigrants increased with the rise of “Sweden’s rape problem”—as popularly termed by many right-wing American media outlets. As Breitbart reported, from January to October 2017, there were 2875 reports of threats against the staff of the Swedish migration board, including sexual assault, rape, harassment, and

even threats to set fire to their offices.\textsuperscript{17} Though some refugees have committed sexual assault in Sweden in recent years, including the Facebook Live assault of a Swedish woman by two Afghans and a non-native Swedish citizen, the right-wing’s vilification of immigrants in regard to sexual violence is harmful. In reality, sexual assault has been a pressing issue for some years now, driving the Swedish government to announce stricter legislation around this issue.\textsuperscript{18} Granted, the government denies a direct correlation to the refugee crime or fostering any xenophobia.

Naturally, these reports of crime have engendered xenophobia and Islamophobia, contributing to anti-immigrant narratives and dangerously turning support towards the populist, neo-Nazi, far-right Sweden Democrats – a shift that is all too familiar for the United States. This party had only 3 percent support in 2010; ratings shot up to almost 20 percent in November 2015, after the surge in people granted asylum status. It stood at 18.4 percent in June, then at 14.8 percent in November 2017.\textsuperscript{19} Concurrently, the sharp increase in Islamophobic, xenophobic, and racist crimes has mirrored the increase in xenophobic rhetoric and politics. According to the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, drawing from only the crimes reported to the police with an identified xenophobic or racist motive, there has been more than a 20 percent increase in crime from 2011 to 2015. More specifically, there has been at least a 40 percent increase in “agitation against a population group”—assumedly a minority or immigrant community—from 2011 to 2015, with a 30 percent increase from just 2014 to 2015. These numbers are likely underestimates, since not all hate crimes are reported to the police or actually identified by the police as definitively having a racist or xenophobic motivation. From these trends, the question arises: Are the Swedish people only champions of refugees behind closed doors? Sweden remains committed to an open, inclusive society, and to a sustained effort to mitigate xenophobia. Still, immigrants remain wary and anxious ahead of the election; immigration often poses a threat to Swedes’ way of life, as some immigrants have perceived. Thus, migrants’ responses are integral to comprehensively evaluating immigration and integration policies, and in the next section, I will introduce the Iranian community in Sweden, the second largest non-Western immigrant communities and one particular community that has invited bilateral cultural integration.\textsuperscript{20}

The Iranian Community in Sweden

\textit{I stroll down Stortorget, the oldest public square in Stockholm, in Gamla Stan, the old town. It is alive with people, and interspersed among the loud English and Swedish


are bursts of Farsi. I am quick to recognize my mother tongue. I pass by large groups of people speaking loudly in Farsi and clad in a mixture of religious and Western clothing, half a world away from home in Stockholm.

Iranians constitute the second largest non-European community in Sweden after Iraqis, as one percent of the overall population, now numbering at more than 74,000 individuals. And in fact, Iranians feel more discriminated against than other immigrant groups in Sweden. It is important to note that approaches and behavior towards non-Western immigrants is observably different than those towards Western immigrants, specifically in Sweden. Immigrants from “developed countries” are discriminated against the least, as compared to “developing countries,” the latter category which includes Iran. Granted, many Iranians are fairer-skinned than many other non-Western ethnicities, leading to a notable difference in race relations as white-passing persons of color. Still, the Iranian community is ethnically heterogeneous, with Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, and Baluchs, of whom the Kurds have the most prominent presence.

Stockholm is home to the largest population of Iranian expatriates of other countries, pointing to the unique relationship between Iran and Sweden to this day, as contended by the Iranian ambassador to Sweden. Moreover, Iranians comprise one of the most successful—and most highly educated—immigrant groups. This, in turn, makes integration uniquely complicated for the Iranian population, since a higher level of education can make social adjustment and finding employment naturally more difficult, since foreign credentials are often disqualified and immigrants are often overqualified for the jobs that are offered to them. Furthermore, Iranian immigrants are important to study in order to get a closer look at immigrant communities who come from cultures dissimilar to that of the host society, in this case Sweden. And as a young Iranian-American who is fluent in Farsi, I have the unique ability to gain the trust of Iranian migrants and refugees due to a shared linguistic and cultural background. Thus, in order to gain perspective on Swedish immigration policies as a whole and for the purpose of this paper, I will focus on the Iranian-Swedish community, and hope to determine whether policies are particular to one group of migrants, or serve as a general rubric across all communities. As a part of my research, I explore what makes Sweden so attractive to Iranian migrants—whether this is simply a product of the nature of Sweden as a liberal society and welfare state, or the product of specific policy.

Besides ethnicity and national origin, gender is another identity salient to the migration and integration process. Integration turns out to be a vastly different experience for women and men. Using a framework of gender and power within the Iranian culture, I ex-

27. Anonymous, personal interview with political refugee and professor, June 22, 2017; for more, see Chapter IV: Education.
plore this arguably progressive trajectory of female migrants integrating into Swedish society, and how this ultimately shifts established power dynamics in both Iranian and Swedish cultures. After all, women are redefining gender roles in both a traditionally patriarchal, arguably misogynistic Iranian culture, and a racist Swedish sociopolitical context, in which racism and xenophobia can often manifest themselves in sexism as well.

Methodology

In order to arrive at policy conclusions and recommendations for US immigration and integration policies, I focus on ethnographic and qualitative research: a combination of other scholarly literature and my own interviews. I have conducted 29 semi-structured interviews with Iranian immigrants and refugees from diverse academic backgrounds, political ideologies, and careers, with various motivations for migration to Sweden and different conceptions of their place in Swedish society. These interviews provide a more current window into life in Sweden for migrants than what existing literature can often provide. Using a semi-structured interview guide, I conducted most interviews in person in Stockholm and Uppsala, urban areas where Iranians are concentrated, and with others via Skype or phone. These interviews were conducted in Farsi, English, or a mixture of both, based on the comfort level and preference of the subject, to allow individuals to most easily express themselves. Interviews were not recorded to encourage subjects to speak freely about their experiences, which often included sensitive information and traumatic, graphic details, as well as personally identifiable information; for those reasons, all subjects remain anonymous. While I recognize that not recording the audio of these interviews is an unconventional practice, at least in journalism, this was a deliberate choice on my part. Notes were taken by hand and later transcribed.

My ethnographic research, supplemented by a literature review and quantitative data, inform my study of the interaction of several independent variables. These include gender, class, power, socioeconomic status, and education level, with national origin being held constant. The interplay of these variables manifests important dynamics between and among assimilated immigrants, government authorities, and the host society, i.e., who excludes a group of people and who is included. The degree of integration serves as the dependent variable. From my research, I establish themes across the data, which inform my parameters for judging integration—in other words, being or becoming “Swedish.” In the next section, I elaborate on how I established markers for integration.

Literature Review

There is a large body of research on migration and integration, increasingly the debate around assimilation, from a sociological and anthropological approach. More specifically, many Swedish researchers, mainly through the well-known Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), have studied the integration of refugees and immigrants, though it is worth noting that those categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive in some of their research. This research specifically tackles the labor market, including wage, employer attitudes, employment prospects, and cultural assimilation, namely through language and

29. See Sakha, Senior Thesis, Chapter I: Literature Review.
30. See Appendix A for the interview guide to semi-structured interviews.
intermarriage. I have offered a normative framework to frame my evaluation of integration, one that is more compatible with current events and policies, which I elaborate upon in the next chapter. Moreover, the literature focuses more on Syrian refugees, among other Arab immigrants, due to the immediate relevance of the Syrian refugee crisis and immigration policies in the United States; much of the literature around the Iranian diasporic community, much less in Sweden, is largely sparse. One can speculate as to the reasons for less focus on this particular ethnic community, but just as most are unaware – or even ignorant of – Iran's critical role in accepting an estimated three million Afghani refugees since 1980, most remain disinterested in exploring the Iranian diasporic community, beyond a select few Iranian-born researchers, namely Hassan Hosseini-Kaladjahi, now working outside Iran. The most comprehensive, nuanced research that exists is from the later decades of the twentieth century, which do not reflect the current state of affairs or changes and trends over time. Hosseini-Kaladjahi’s study of Iranians in Sweden, as juxtaposed with Swedes, Chileans, and Poles, is limited in such a scope, and seemingly arbitrary in which immigrant groups he selects to research and why.

Furthermore, research that deals comprehensively and solely with one immigrant population, specifically in Sweden, is sparse, particularly research that focuses on specific aspects of integration and daily life. *The Iranian Community in Sweden*, as compiled and edited by various academics, mainly Iranian, is “a first step to countering this shortcoming.” I hope this thesis is a second, further and updated step in filling this gap, since most of the research dealing with the Iranian community in Sweden comes from research conducted in the 1990s or early 2000s, and it is thus inappropriate to draw from such outdated data or conclusions. There needs to be more of a concerted effort to not only evaluate the degree of integration of immigrant communities, but also focuses on the integration processes of different cultures, ethnicities, faiths, and gender identities.

On that same token, much of the literature can be from an exclusively Western perspective—often from the point of view of historically the colonizer or receiving society. After all, Westernization has been perceived an intrinsic part of integration of immigrants. While the scope of the “Western world” can be arbitrary and subjective, Sweden can fit such a definition, so that drove me to examine Swedish immigration policy not from the conventional American or Western perspective, but rather to use Iranians’ experiences as my vantage point, in order to apply Swedish policies to an American framework. What makes *The Iranian Community in Sweden* unique is that many of the authors and academics cited in the book are Iranian migrants and refugees resettled in Sweden. Further, much of the literature is from an exclusively male perspective, excluding not only the female voice, but also female experiences and thus disregarding the salience of gender issues.

Beyond the interviews I conducted, I collected qualitative and quantitative data from studies done by Iranian and Swedish academics, often directly under the auspices of the Swedish government, as well as other research and government documents. Population statistics were taken from Statistics Sweden, a government agency responsible for official statistics for immigration and emigration; Migrationsverket, the Swedish Migration Agency; and the Migration Policy Institute. While most research, both government and academic, is in English, or at the least provides summaries in English, the language barrier only proved

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salient with some Swedish news and media resources, most of which were generally translated. Some policy documents were exclusively in Swedish, but I was able to find synopses and analyses in English.

**NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK**

**Vulnerability**

“Parents/migrants create stories to survive, self-preserve….”

The fields of asylum and case law define vulnerability in a specific way; the European Convention on Human Rights proffers which individuals qualify as vulnerable, though the 1951 UN Refugee Convention does not. While asylum seekers as a whole are intrinsically vulnerable, certain groups present special needs, based on age, gender, sexuality, and faith. Other categorizations or factors can include pregnancy, mental or physical illness, and victims of torture, rape, trafficking, physical and sexual violence, or genital mutilation. The European Court of Human Rights reserves the ability to distinguish whether a person or group is particularly vulnerable; the Court ruled that asylum seekers are inherently vulnerable, due to their disadvantaged position in the face of the law. Still, there is ambiguity in defining and justifying “vulnerability,” as demonstrated by the variable scope of observance by countries in the Network of European Foundations. Sweden, specifically, has no legal definition of “vulnerability,” but the Migration Agency has set out specific standards for persons with “special reception needs.”

However, an assumed framework of vulnerability is precarious and can have harmful implications for the persons it is trying to help and protect. By broadly stereotyping asylum seekers and assuming intrinsic vulnerability, the Court can codify the “vulnerabilization” of asylum seekers. Ultimately, this plays into the more recognized narrative of victimization of vulnerable persons (women and children). This feeds into harmful preconceptions and often misconceptions about people seeking asylum or refuge, potentially stripping them of their agency and potential to attain self-sufficiency, which in turn, hurts their status in the resettlement process – both in politics and in the media. A balance must be struck between enacting safeguards and perpetuating a harmful narrative. This also impacts the construction of relationships between larger organizations or states and vulnerable populations, i.e., the relationships between the UN or UNHCR and refugees, as “helper” and “victim,” respectively. The rise of imbalanced power dynamics can impede assistance and attaining the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency and agency for the refugees. These narratives and dynamics often can enforce stereotypes particularly for women refugees, making integration a

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37. Ibid 15.
38. Ibid 10.
40. Ibid 12.
further gendered experience. In the next section, I expand upon what “integration” entails.

GENDER AND MIGRATION

“Women pursue education here more than men… [they] start anew. Men… [they] lose everything, go from something to nothing.”

Gender issues have for far too long been absent from discourse around migration, refugees, and asylum, and thus it would be remiss not to discuss gender as a variable in immigration and integration, and the unique challenges faced by women migrants. The 1951 Refugee Convention, the main document addressing the status and protection of refugees, neglects to address gender; after all, as Jane Freedman notes, the document was written from a primarily male perspective and thus ignores the experiences of women. Furthermore, as Mehrdad Darvishpour, an Iranian academic who researches the status of immigrant women in Sweden, points out, research on the situation of women in families and societies has often overlooked the influence of gender on power dynamics, as well as that of culture. After all, Iranian society—as an Islamic society—and Iranian culture is distinctly heteronormative and patriarchal, both in the personal and public or political sphere, due to antiquated notions of gender relations, and thus emigration from Iran can have a large effect on power relations. The pressure for men to conform to a prevailing masculinity leads to the notion of “hegemonic masculinity,” which only thrives in opposition to femininity. These gender relations manifest themselves even in the Persian language, with idiomatic language such as “mardanegi kardan” and “namardi,” which means manliness as a metaphor for honor and morality, and non-manliness as a metaphor for a loss of honor through immorality, respectively. And religion naturally plays a large role in the lives of people under a theocratic regime. Without a doubt, immigration—and integration—is a gendered experience, and Darvishpour’s ethnographic research, consisting of 30 interviews, confirms how Iranian men and women experience immigration differently, in terms of education, employment, psychology, and even inclination towards divorce.

Iranian women constitute one of the largest groups of female non-European immigrants in Sweden—a heterogeneous group, with diverse motivations for migration that go back to the 1970s. Many experienced severe trauma from torture, persecution, and political oppression, in addition to daily humiliation, often simply as a virtue of their gender. One female political refugee suffered extensive torture at the hands of the Iranian government, including electrocution, ultimately forcing her to flee. And the challenges and

42. Anonymous, personal interview with refugee and journalist, June 26, 2017.
43. Freedman, 590-591.
46. Alavi 18.
47. Alavi 8.
48. Ibid.
50. Ibid 156.
traumas often do not end when they finally leave Iran; in fleeing, some had to seek help from smugglers, riding on the backs of horses and donkeys through Turkey and Pakistan, as another political refugee did while pregnant, or by being separated from their families when placed in different refugee campus, as another refugee recounted. The traumas suffered from physical, sexual, and psychological violence—often unique to women—stay with Iranian female migrants, and thus can have disproportionate effects on their health. After all, the legal rights of women still lag far behind those of men, and domestic violence is not necessarily a crime in other countries. However, migration can, in fact, have a positive impact on women, specifically Iranian female immigrants, increasing their life expectancy by 15 years, according to Sharareh Akhavan’s research. As Mehrdad Darvishpour concludes, women’s positions often improve after immigration, as they adopt more open attitudes towards new cultural norms and encounter more opportunities to change their current situations. Women often gain greater independence and agency, while men often lose their higher status, both in families and societies, which has implications respectively for self-identity. This points to the salience of both national identity and gender to health.

Integration: Education and Employment

“Iranian women are successful in today’s Sweden,” as one lawyer and academic, and former refugee, pointed out. This runs counter to observations from Hosseini-Kaladjahi and Kelly, who comment on the general “retardation of women in entering the labor market [as] compared with men,” and “a lingering passivism in the way these women approach their future careers in the Swedish market,” in spite of their high level of education. Of course, cultural assumptions about women adopting positions in the home, as housewives, only exacerbate such perceptions. However, such is not the case. Women, on the whole, tend to integrate more actively than men, noticeably in Sweden; research has shown that Iranian immigrant women “have a more positive attitude towards the Swedish society than Iranian men” upon resettlement. The women pursue educations and careers while taking care of their families; they are more accepting of having to rebuild their lives in a new society. In fact, around one-third of Iranian women have a university degree, which is higher than Swedish women. However, for the men in their families—as affirmed by speaking with a few male Iranian migrants as well—a new start is inconceivable, and men will settle for a taxi driver or blue-collar position, when they used to be successful doctors and engineers in their home countries. One example is a male political refugee interviewed, who studied math and ethnography, but now owns taxis. His wife, in contrast, is a biochemist, and his daughter is studying economics in university in Sweden. She continued her education, while he, like many other male political refugees, drives taxis, which in turn gives him more time to continue political activities locally. Sitting in his taxi, he

52. Anonymous, personal interview with political refugee and professor, June 22, 2017.
54. Akhavan 154.
56. Alavi 8.
59. Alavi, Abstract.
60. Darvishpour, “Immigrant Women Challenge the Role of Men,” 278.
spoke fondly, though perhaps wistfully, about his daughters and wife pursuing educations.61
Another former political refugee—a young mother—resettled in Sweden with her son after
separating from her husband; however, she obligingly put her own dreams of education and
pursuing a career in theater on hold, so that she could financially support her son pursuing
his education.62

The Role of Psychology in Getting Ahead—or Holding Back

Men’s sense of pride holds them back from starting from the bottom in hopes of rising
to the top in an unfamiliar country. This pride can be toxic to themselves, their partners,
and their families, and is only exacerbated when they see and feel the women in their fami-
lies getting ahead and supporting the family—financially and emotionally—while they stay
behind and thus have a more difficult time adjusting to their new situation. Without em-
ployment, male immigrants often feel dissatisfied, without any sense of identity or belong-
ing, and powerless, shifting traditional power dynamics within the household.63 In turn, this
can often leave men much more dependent on their spouse and on the marriage itself.64 One
young Iranian-Kurdish female journalist I interviewed spoke to this personally.65 She ob-
served that migrant women pursue education at higher rates than men do. Education and
employment opportunities, in turn, shift power imbalances and empower women not only
in society, but also in their families.66 Immigrant women, specifically Iranians, have sought
out educational and employment opportunities often despite great challenges to integration
in the years following migration, facing social class degradation upon arriving and often
not being able to secure employment that accurately and fairly matched their qualifications.67
In Akhavan’s ethnographic research, one Iranian female immigrant was called a
“svartskalle,” a Swedish derogatory term for a dark-haired immigrant; many echoed being
treated as second-rate citizens, regardless of class or education.68 Of course, both Iranian
men and women face discrimination in Swedish society, but the discrimination impacts the
self-identity of men more markedly, since they can often feel subordinated when they are
compelled to take a lower-status job, despite their educational background of skills, and can
often feel more threatened by Swedish society.69 In spite of this “deskilling,” women still ex-
hibit a remarkably greater resilience and determination, as many of the interviews showed,
in addition to past research; after all, for many of them, their situation has already vastly
improved socially and politically in a new country.70

Another manifestation of such resilience is separation from their partners. Traditionally,
high rates of divorce connote a problem, and divorce is often a culturally taboo subject, as
it remains in Iranian culture. However, Darvishpour encourages an altogether different line
of thinking: women are often the ones instigating separation or divorce, as a means of seek-

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64. Ibid 285.
68. Ibid 162.
69. Alavi 22-23.
70. Ibid.
ing opportunity and expanding their agency, giving it a distinctively positive connotation. After all, seeking and attaining educational and employment opportunities incurs financial independence; consequently, when marriage often promotes economic dependency, women will then seek separation to begin new lives.

Women’s Rights in Sweden

The trends in gender dynamics seen among Iranians reflect Sweden’s larger, continuing struggle to promote equal rights, particularly for women. These efforts target many aspects of life, from education and schools, to parental leave and the workplace, and political imbalances, in both the public and private sector. In 2016, the OECD urged Sweden to provide more jobs for refugee women. Further, one of the greatest challenges facing Sweden, as a society and as a host society welcoming immigrants, is the recent wave of sexual violence in 2017, which was largely used to inculpate immigrants. Sexual violence contributes, in large part, to gender-based violence, and in this case, it is particularly harmful to victimize an already historically victimized community—immigrants, as well as specifically Iranian refugees—in conjunction with another similarly victimized and marginalized community—women. Swedish society must be careful in how it treats gender in addressing violence and the criminal justice standards used, both for native Swedes and immigrants.

And yet, the situation of women in Sweden is purportedly one of the best worldwide. Women in Sweden experience one of the most independent positions in their family among Western countries. Even for immigrant women, improved legislation has granted greater rights to women, far greater than those allotted to women in their home countries, such as Iran. For example, women in Sweden have equal rights to divorce their spouses, and even have a greater chance of being granted custody of their children than their male counterpart traditionally would in Iran. As a result, cultural and societal norms are far more progressive, manifesting in women’s personal and professional lives. Comparatively, Sweden ranked number four on the global gender gap index, while Iran ranked below number 130, according to the World Economic Forum. Further, Sweden was named the second best country to be a woman in 2018—after being the best country in 2017—according to the U.S. News and World Report. Sweden boasts one of the highest rates of female employment, at 61 percent, as well as one of the highest figures for female representation in parliament, at 44 percent (2017).

72. Ibid 278.
74. “Protection and Asylum in Sweden.”
75. See Sakha, Senior Thesis, Chapter I: Challenges.
77. Ibid 280.
78. Alavi 8.
on the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report, primarily due to mounting concerns over the stagnant gender pay gap.81

Challenges in the Field: Looking Ahead

Furthermore, it is important to recognize the danger of playing into and perpetuating gender essentialism, or the contentious (and arguably antiquated) idea that there are innate behavioral and physical differences between the two sexes, assuming a binary gender framework. While avoiding this prescriptive approach is a challenge for academia in general, it is particularly a challenge within Iranian society and culture, whose older generations can, unfortunately, often function based on antiquated conceptions of gender and power dynamics and the reinforcement of harmful gender role stereotypes.

All in all, we see immigrant women challenging the traditional role of men in Sweden. They are defying popular conceptions of women as victims or subordinates in their cultures and religions, as they seek out and exercise their agency and power more easily and freely. As Darvishpour candidly points out, “From the western perspective, it is the task of the majority society to save oppressed Muslim women.”82 Immigrant women are actively pushing against this ethnocentric and prejudiced view, one that has only been perpetuated by mass media, and exposing the gender divisions that manifest inequality and an imbalance power.

CONCLUSION

*It took 1.5 hours to get to Uppsala by train, and then the local bus. One former Iranian political refugee lived by herself in a small, sparse apartment, and two of her lifelong friends were visiting – both former Iranian refugees as well. After a few rounds of “ta’arof,” or the Iranian custom of excessive politeness, on my part, they treated me to Turkish coffee, Persian sweets, and watermelon. They gossiped, commiserated, and laughed, despite their different points of view; one lived in Uppsala, Sweden, and spoke exclusively in Farsi. She did not speak a word of Swedish. The other lived worlds away, in Glendale, California; she’d bleached her hair, and spoke English fluently. The third lived across the hall, but she could speak some Swedish. Despite their different levels of integration, they were all happy in their respective new homes.*

While rates of immigration to Sweden are projected to slow down, there will continue to be steady flows of people out of the Middle East into Sweden and other similar countries, especially as higher education becomes more commonly pursued and family reunification continues.83 In the bigger picture, too, migration will continue to be a potent force, both an undeniable agent and product of globalization. We see the flow of people, or ethnoscapes, and the flow of ideologies, or ideoscapes.84 We see the globalization of cultures, as processes of acculturation transcend borders, as Swedes celebrate Iranian cultural holidays and as Ira-

81. Radu.
nians get involved in Swedish politics, or as Americans acclaim Iranian films and Iranians get involved in American politics.

That is what makes this research critical; a liberal, multicultural country of immigrants, such as the United States, will continue to struggle with the challenges of integrating migrants, including legal and undocumented immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers. Evaluating the success of Sweden's integration of the Iranian community—a population markedly different from the native society in terms of culture, faith, ethnicity, and background—can inform how we approach not only the Iranian-American community, but largely our Arab and Middle-Eastern communities. These are some of the most heavily stigmatized communities in the current political climate.

Thus, what makes this integration research particularly relevant is the danger of social isolation of immigrants, as opposed to integration. Integration, as a constructive means of inclusion, can prevent radicalization, or even aid in de-radicalization. Scholar Tashina Alavi points out how successful, positive integration can lead to better well-being, shared unity and inclusivity, less crime, and even economic benefits; after all, the government would be spending less on immigration and integration policies. On the other hand, she points to a number of consequences from failed integration attempts: increased segregation, the social and economic marginalization of communities, and even violence. Admittedly, “successful” integration is not necessarily “positive” integration; in order for integration to be successful and positive, it must be a reciprocal process, with efforts on behalf of both parties, the host population and the immigrant population, to integrate.

That sort of reciprocity runs across most areas of integration: education, the labor market, housing, culture and political life in Sweden, in varying levels. To evaluate Swedish policy more specifically, in terms of education and employment, the Swedish government can do more to make fairer and equalize the playing field for immigrants and native Swedes alike. Higher education will likely attract fewer smart, motivated Iranians since it is no longer completely subsidized, and more steps can be taken to give credence to educational qualifications from the country of origin, an issue that is even more salient for refugees and asylum seekers who fled without their documents. However, the labor market is the poorest marker of integration for Iranian-Swedes; a number of challenges exist to not only accessing greater opportunities, promotions, and incomes in the market, but also simply entering the market in the first place. In the same vein, an important distinction must be made between non-discrimination policies and those that explicitly safeguard and promote anti-discrimination; a lack of such policies can make it incredibly dangerous for immigrants simply because of a surname, considering the modern political climate. In terms of housing, Sweden provides far more protections to vulnerable individuals, and has codified protections for these persons in terms of special accommodations. Above all, though, Sweden has been successful in fostering a bilateral and positive model of cultural integration, embracing Iranian film, music, food, media, language, and cultural traditions while giving Iranians the platform for political and civic activity.

Therefore, returning to a consequentialist framework in an evaluation of the morality of Sweden's policies, it is important to evaluate morality from the perspective of the marginalized community, not that of the host society, as is commonly done. Admittedly, it is important to measure benefit to the host society, but that does not impact the justice of immigration policy. From this perspective, Sweden's educational and cultural policies are not entirely right or ethically scrupulous. While both Iranian immigrants and native Swedes

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85. Alavi 3.
have had positive experiences as a result of cultural integration, a well-intentioned policy does not necessarily translate into positive consequences. For example, even if immigrants are not legally forced to integrate or learn the Swedish language, empirical and statistical evidence points to how a lack of language skills can decrease employment prospects. On one hand, this is a practical and logistical concern, and not an unreasonable expectation to expect a degree of proficiency of the native language; on the other hand, racism makes securing employment undeniably more difficult.

Taking into account differential experiences with racism and xenophobia, still, the Iranians who have actively tried to integrate refer to Sweden as “their” country, call themselves Swedish, and are much more attached to Sweden than Iran or any other European country they had before considered migrating to. This identification is not an arbitrary personal choice; it is the product of Swedish integration policies and a society that has welcomed them with open arms and open hearts, just as the Swedish Prime Minister advised in 2014. Still, although public opinion polls for the Sweden Democrats is not as high as it used to be earlier this year, the trends in public opinion largely seen in Sweden are alarming, and the effects tangible; as more than one Iranian immigrant expressed, they are worried about the rise of the Sweden Democrats, who deny the responsibility of protecting refugees.

Who exactly should benefit from special protections under the law, and who bears this responsibility? This question pervades a larger public debate, both political and ideological, that likely sees no resolution in the foreseeable future, in Sweden or in the United States. However, it is imperative that we reexamine the intent and efficacy of US immigration and integration policies to offer protections to vulnerable persons while promoting the inclusion, social mobility, and self-sufficiency of immigrants, because another global refugee crisis—this time, as a result of climate change—might be on the horizon.

But it is difficult to measure the efficacy of US policy when there is no one way – or rather, no ideal way – to measure integration. As this paper has shown, it is impossible to make a hard distinction between different types of integration; economic integration plays into cultural integration, and cultural integration into social integration. The Swedish government offers statistics on participation in the Swedish labor market to point out successful integration, at a rate of 68 percent; they highlight how the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) both indicate that Sweden comes out ahead in terms of integration policy. But, as aforementioned, the numbers don't tell the full story. Further, this research is heavily rooted in empirical evidence; however, it reaches no single consensus. When such is the case with the application of empirical evidence, one large weakness or area of vulnerability becomes salient: interpreting results and evidence in a way that makes it favorable—or unfavorable—to your view. But the personal experiences of Iranian migrants, as learned through interviews, broaden the question to one that affects all of Europe; these patterns within Sweden are the same across other European countries.

Hassan Hosseini-Kaladjahi raises the important question of whether this discrimination threatens only the Iranian community in Sweden, or affects all non-European minori-

86. Anonymous, personal interview with political refugee and professor, June 22, 2017.
ties in Sweden.\textsuperscript{90} Without a doubt, many of the challenges to integration enumerated here are non-unique to Iranians, as affirmed by many of the interviews, but having an understanding of how one non-Western immigrant group—one of the largest, in fact—is affected and integrates into the host society allows for more responsible policymaking that actively meets the needs of the community(ies) in question. That awareness can unfortunately be lacking, more so in the United States than in Sweden.

Perhaps such little awareness accounts, at least in part, for Americans’ historically low approval ratings for accepting refugees. In October 2016, 54 percent of registered US voters said that the United States does not have a responsibility to accept refugees from Syria, though more voters do support accepting Syrian refugees if Christian.\textsuperscript{91} Historically, since the late 1960s, anywhere from 55 to 71 percent of Americans have disapproved of welcoming refugees fleeing countries riddled with conflict and oppression.\textsuperscript{92} Nevertheless, polls are deceiving. Recent immigration polls show the majority of Americans to not support the Trump administration’s policies regarding DACA and the U.S.-Mexico border.\textsuperscript{93} As such, the trajectory of immigration remains unclear.

So where do we go from here? We have to answer a few fundamental questions around what integration means here in the United States for both immigrants and the host society, what the future of US-Iran relations looks like and thus the future of Iranian Americans, and what the role of a group like the National Iranian American Council (NIAC) should be in ensuring the interests of this community are represented, when the US government has made its stance tangible. These answers require further research, specifically from and about other countries that face the exact same challenges and share similar interests but might offer different approaches. I hope that the United States can learn from Sweden’s approaches, to integrate our immigrant communities more successfully and positively.

\textsuperscript{90} Hosseini-Kaladjahi, \textit{Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration}, 73.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
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APPENDIX
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. When did you move to Sweden? How old were you then? Were you by yourself, or did you migrate with your family? Why?

2. What was the process like to be accepted to enter Sweden? Under what status, i.e. immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker? How long did it take to receive legal status?

3. Was the process easily navigable? Did you experience xenophobia, or simply difficulty based on your race, religion, culture?

4. What was life like initially when you first arrived in Stockholm?

5. How did you come to be integrated into Swedish society?

6. Did you study in Sweden? What was/is your occupation?

7. To what extent have Swedish government, organizations helped?

8. Do you have children? A significant other? What language do you speak with them? At work? With friends? What do they speak?

9. Are you part of any förening?

10. Do you go to Swedish cultural events, concerts, movies regularly? Iranian cultural events?

11. Do you listen to the news in English, Swedish, or Farsi?

12. What is life like here versus Iran? Do you want to return ever? Have you been back since you came here?
PART III

Reproductive Rights
She seemed to be swallowed up by the mechanical scale. The tool being used to clip her umbilical cord appeared to be half the length of her entire body. The photograph of the baby was black and white, her eyes were closed and her facial features relaxed—a calm image, belying the media frenzy gathering just outside the hospital walls.¹

This photograph was of Louise Brown, a baby born in late July of 1978 in Oldham General Hospital in England, unaware of the celebrity she had become even before birth. Brown's fame came from her status as the first baby conceived with the assisted reproductive technology of in vitro fertilization (IVF), a means of fertilizing human sex cells in a laboratory and implanting them in a woman's uterus to aid people unable to conceive a child themselves. The technique began to skyrocket into popular medicine and politics.

However, despite the wide use of the technique, it was not uncontroversial. Over the years, a number of ethical debates worldwide have centered around IVF. England and the United States—two of the countries whose physicians first used the technique—both had extensive ethical review processes before the technology could officially be marketed to the public. In the Catholic world, critiques of IVF were especially harsh, as the technique was credited with the sinful acts of destroying unused human embryos and foregoing the divinely-sanctioned marital act key to conceiving a child. In one such Catholic country, Poland, a new technology emerged and began to redress the gap in infertility treatment left by the Catholic stigmatization of IVF.

In 2012, Polish MP Izabela Kloc spoke about a bit of “extraordinary news” that was shaking up the Polish political discourse on IVF.² She described a method of infertility treatment developed in the United States that was “both ethical and effective,” unlike IVF, “which by its nature involves destroying conceived human beings and thus brings about death rather than life.”³ Another MP, Czeslaw Hoc asked: “Why don’t we develop NaPro-Technology, an effective system of treatment which is cheaper, more respectful of natu-

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³ Ibid.
ral laws and rules, and offers a chance for conceiving new babies naturally?" MP Tadeusz Wita echoed these sentiments: “With certainty, in vitro is not an actual infertility treatment method. NaProTechnology is. Only NaProTechnology.” So what was this NaProTechnology and why did mainstream Polish politics concern itself with it?

NaProTechnology (NPT) was a fertility treatment developed in Omaha, Nebraska by Dr. Thomas Hilgers of the Pope Paul VI Institute as a Catholic Church-approved reproductive health and infertility care option. It was based on a fertility tracking method developed at Creighton University called the Creighton Model System (CrMS) which, Hilgers wrote, allowed couples to more effectively plan sexual intercourse for the specific purpose of overcoming infertility and conceiving a child. NPT has also employed traditional and less-traditional pharmaceutical, surgical, and dietary methods for the direct treatment of the underlying causes of infertility. Yet, most of the world still hasn’t heard of NPT as it is not broadly practiced outside of Poland and some Catholic enclaves in the United States largely because much of the global medical community has continually questioned its legitimacy and efficacy due to a substantial lack of studies reproducing Hilgers’ work.

So, why has NPT gained such popularity in Poland despite the medical community’s pointing out that there isn’t enough evidence to confirm its legitimacy? This paper will address this incongruity by examining the way NPT was marketed to its target Catholic audience, often bolstering its authority in juxtaposition with negative framings of IVF, and it will then examine how the unique religious, political, and health infrastructure landscape of modern Poland evolved after the fall of state socialism to make it particularly amenable to NPT’s marketing.

To understand this marketing, I examined press coverage of IVF, Catholic press coverage of NPT, NPT clinic websites, NPT instructional and informational literature, and NPT patient testimonials. I then placed Poland’s particular amenability to NPT in historical perspective by considering the roles of three forces in shaping it: the place in Polish politics the Catholic Church took after the fall of state socialism, a return to a medicalized notion of womanhood that had dissipated under communism, the deleterious effects of neoliberal health policy on Poles’ trust in mainstream biomedicine, and the growth of Polish Euroscepticism and its effects on Poles’ perceived agency. I approached the first force by comparatively considering this topic that hasn’t been extensively historically analyzed—Polish IVF politics—with one that has—Polish abortion politics. I thus considered the way abortion was framed in Polish political discourse during and after state socialism along with the role the partnership between the Church and the Solidarity Trade Union played in this shift. I considered the second force with reference to how Poland’s socialist and post-socialist gender politics shaped the country’s modern reproductive health framework. I approached the third force by examining how access to IVF and abortion fit into a trend of limited health service access in postsocialist Poland and how NPT, in turn, has branded itself as “humanized” biomedicine. Finally, I examined the fourth force through the lens of nation-building and reproduction as a symbol for Poles’ ability to control the makeup of their population.

Historians and sociologists of medicine have yet to examine assisted reproductive technologies in Poland from this targeted branding lens, much less written about NPT at all. An extensive literature does, however, exist about American direct to consumer (DTC) advertising of pharmaceuticals along with limited recent work about Polish marketing of private abortion services before and after the fall of communism, such as University of Warsaw anthropologist Agata Chelstowska’s “Stigmatisation and commercialisation of abortion services in Poland: turning sin into gold.” This paper seeks to place itself in conversation with other bodies of work by examining the cultural situatedness of medicine and medical marketing through the case study of how NPT advertising played into the postwar Polish zeitgeist and effectively medicalized Catholic parenthood.

THE ORIGINS OF IVF AND NPT

IVF was developed by researchers Robert “Bob” Edwards and Patrick Steptoe. Edwards, at the time, was a biologist and physiologist whose key interest in IVF lay in studying stem cell lines using human embryos for the purpose of developing ways to avoid and cure hereditary diseases. Steptoe, on the other hand, was a gynecologist and obstetrician who had developed an innovative and less invasive surgical approach for accessing a woman’s reproductive organs which was crucial to IVF: laparoscopy. In its original iteration, IVF consisted of an intricate multi-step process that included the laparoscopic collection of matured oocytes (eggs) from a woman’s ovary through a small incision in the abdomen, fertilization of that oocyte outside of the body in the lab with a collected sperm specimen, and then the transfer of the resulting embryo back into the woman’s body, where it would ideally develop into a viable pregnancy and lead to a live birth.

Louise Brown’s was the first birth, but the IVF technique quickly spread to fertility clinics worldwide. Steptoe had, by the time the IVF excitement was just coming to a boil, retired from the National Health Service (NHS) and he and Edwards quickly realized the need for a proper clinic to continue their work—thus, in 1980, Bourn Hall was born in Cambridge. By 1982, Bourn Hall had achieved its first 100 IVF pregnancies and began used noninvasive ultrasound imaging as its main method of monitoring treatment cycles. By 1984, the clinic welcomed into the world the first IVF babies conceived from cryopreserved embryos.

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8. Particularly influential to my perspective have been the following works: David Herzberg, Happy Pills in America: From Miltown to Prozac (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Jonathan Metzl, Prozac on the Couch: Prescribing Gender in the Era of Wonder Drugs (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2003); Andrea Tone, “FROM NAUGHTY GOODS TO NICOLE MILLER: MEDICINE AND THE MARKETING OF AMERICAN CONTRACEPTIVES,” Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry 30, no. 2 (June 1, 2006): 249–67.
10. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
1988, Steptoe passed away as the clinic celebrated the 1,000th IVF birth. As IVF thus proliferated—both at Bourn Hall and worldwide—its standard operating procedures changed to accommodate the new demands that came with its metamorphosis from a single clinical experimental procedure to a range of widely marketed and practiced medical services with the end goal of a live birth.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic from the birthplace of IVF, Hilgers was developing a purported alternative. In the first section of his book, *The NaProTECHNOLOGY Revolution: Unleashing the Power in a Woman's Cycle*—the shorter, more patient-friendly younger sister of his medical and surgical textbook—Hilgers wrote personally about his Catholic faith and reading the 1968 encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* by Pope Paul VI. This report revealed the Church’s continual rejection of contraception in spite of birth control's rising worldwide popularity and acceptedness. He elaborated on his personal interpretation of the encyclical and how the the text’s emphasis on the power of conjugal love moved him to begin his first research project on natural family planning a few months later in December 1968.

Thus, NPT was developed at the Pope Paul VI Institute based on the simple monitoring technique of the Creighton Model System (CrMS), a cervical mucus tracking system where a woman would mark the characteristics of her daily self-observed cervical excretions. According to *The NaProTECHNOLOGY Revolution*, the observable events in a typical woman's cycle should be as follows: a three to seven day menstrual period; a “dry” period of a few days; a presence of a characteristic cloudy “tacky” discharge, which, after one or two days becomes clear and lubricative for three to four days; more dry days until the next period. The last day of the clear, lubricative step are identified by the CrMS as the “Peak Day,” when a woman is at her most fertile and when marital intercourse would be most strategic for the purpose of conceiving a child.

The first NPT clinic in Poland was opened in 2009 in Białystok by physician Tadeusz Wasilewski, a former colleague of physician Marian Szamatowicz, who had performed Poland’s first IVF procedure in the same city years before. Wasilewski would write the next year of his taking up Hilgers’ teachings: “No, I will not do in vitro. I will respect life and I will try to find other solutions.”

Wasilewski’s NaProMedica clinic became the first of many that would appear in major cities and provinces throughout the country in years to come, as several Polish physicians began to travel to Nebraska every year to train in NPT under Hilgers. Polish physicians

14. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 7.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 77.
came to always make up a significant portion of his trainee classes, Hilgers noted during his visit to the country. Two years after Wasilewski’s NaProMedica clinic opened in Poland, University of Warsaw sociologist Barbara Dolinska did a side-by-side comparison of NPT’s and IVF’s references on search engine PubMed. IVF turned up 30,286 times and NPT turned up two. In her paper, Dolinska wondered how this could be the case when NPT proponents claimed that NPT was “more effective than the recently Nobel Prize-awarded in vitro method.”

During an official 2010 Parliamentary debate about government health funding, Polish MP Maria Nowak similarly wondered, albeit unironically, about why more funding wasn’t allocated to NPT, which, she wrote, “truly stands the test, as confirmed in real life examples and evidence?” However, much of the medical and academic community begged to differ. In 2012, the Polish Gynecological Society and the Polish Society for Reproductive Medicine put out a joint report detailing their official stances on reproductive medicine offered in Poland. The last section of the report covered NaProTechnology, to which only two short paragraphs were delegated. The last paragraph was written as follows: “The course of action proposed by NaProTechnology hasn’t been confirmed anywhere by randomized controlled clinical trials. For these reasons, NaProTechnology cannot be a recommended course of action for the treatment of infertility.”

This official recommendation was thus made on the grounds of NPT lacking evidence to back it. It did not question its methods or explain it in depth. It simply stated that a method not confirmed through thorough clinical trials should not be promoted as a sound medical intervention to be used broadly, as NPT has been in Poland for the past decade. University of Warsaw medical anthropologist Magdalena Radkowska-Walkowicz extended this line of reasoning by pointing out that NPT encouraged administering unregistered medication, off-label prescriptions, and long dosage periods directly in conflict with the recommendations of the Polish Gynaecological Society. The opioid receptor antagonist naltrexone, for instance, was a commonly administered substance in pharmaceutical approaches to NPT despite its reputation as an unconventional medication and its official registration in Poland as a treatment for alcohol dependence.

IVF pioneer Szamatowicz, outlined his position on the legitimacy of NPT in a debate with Hilgers by contrasting two “EBMs”: evidence-based medicine and what he called “experience-based medicine,” NPT being the latter. Szamatowicz underscored that the reason...
Hilgers wasn’t being invited to prominent gynecological conferences was because he was basing his scientific claims on personal experience instead of rigorous randomized control trials. He said at the very end of the debate: “It’s the organizers who invite people who do real science and who can propagate their work. Now, Professor Hilgers is a fantastic propagator of his own work, which is, unfortunately, plagued with a fatal flaw …”31 Yet, despite such indictments, NPT still garnered a large following in Poland due to Hilgers’ and the technology’s proponents’ very targeted marketing strategies.

MARKETING NPT

Mainstream representations of IVF, from its inception to the past decade, have framed it as a miracle and a highly demanded service. Journalists sensationalized it. At the very beginning, press interest was so great that the logistics of Louise Brown’s delivery were specifically arranged so as to avoid the hoards of reporters trying to get an early scoop.32 Then, as IVF grew more and more publicly accessible in the West, an economic mentality was threaded throughout the coverage. A 1986 New York Times article by Sandra Blakeslee described the IVF business as “booming” with a burgeoning “market” in which experts were advising couples to “shop” carefully.33

Later media coverage looked back on IVF’s beginnings after it had globally proliferated, helping hopeful parents worldwide, and extolled its virtues as a miracle. A 1999 article in Time by journalist Frederic Golden reflecting on Steptoe and Roberts’ achievements in medicine illustrated the popular notion of IVF as a technological miracle that “freed women from the tyranny of their biological clock.”34 Golden mentions the Catholic uproar in response to IVF, but follows up with how the debate supposedly subsided “as it became clear that the brave new world of babymaking that Steptoe had ushered in was providing a desperately sought service.”35 The piece, titled “Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards: Brave New Baby Doctors,” suggested a new oxymoronic marriage between a dystopian futuristic technological landscape—akin to Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World, as alluded to in the title—and the timeless concept of religious miracle, which, he suggested to his readers, appeased the Church.

Szamatowicz himself framed IVF as a miracle in his 2011 debate with Hilgers. He quoted Genesis and Deuteronomy, explaining how infertility was not sanctioned by God and that childbirth in the Bible, in many instances, was aided by angels.36 He then flipped to a slide of an older white man with big framed glasses, saying, “Our modern-day angel is Professor Edwards,” after which he displayed a newsclip about Louise Brown’s birth.37 He then went on to underscore the inefficacy of NPT with reference to the time it eats

31. Ibid.
32. Zdzisława Piątek, o śmierci seksie i metodzie in vitro (Cracow: Universitas, 2011), 44
35. Ibid.
36. He specifically referred to the case of Sara giving birth to Isaac at age 95.
37. Ibid.
up. Szamatowicz referred specifically to how NPT often focuses on treating male infertility—pharmaceutically—which he asserted had never been proven to work—and then stated that if physicians spend time on ineffectively treating male infertility, they are “robbing the woman of fertile time … medicine cannot reverse oocyte aging.”

This defense of IVF, however, could easily be framed as the physician and hopeful parents trying to play God and attaching materialism to childbearing. That's exactly what NPT proponents bank on. An article for The Catholic World Report by Sister Renée Mirkes, a colleague of Hilgers', and Chuck Weber quoted Edwards as saying, “This is the first time we've solved all the problems at once.” For Mirkes’ Catholic audience, that wasn't a good thing.

The first two most prominent lenses through which NPT advocates and advertisements critiqued IVF were those of materialism and individualism, the latter of which was also often framed in the sources I analyzed as ‘playing God.’ Mirkes’ writing in particular really leaned on these; I’ll first examine the materialist angle.

A materialistic framing of IVF wasn’t reserved for NPT proponents, regular opponents of IVF seized on it as well. A 2011 television special of the Polish Panorama program titled “Unwanted children from in vitro,” discussed the orphans produced by the commodified lens through which IVF allowed parents to see their children: as items that could just be given away, as a whim purchase the rich could afford. In her Catholic World Report article, Mirkes took on a similar tone to that of the Polish TV writers in writing about the IVF narrative with its “Octomom” dramas and smiling families “satiating the public's appetite” for good storytelling, also using the word miracle to refer to it—in quotations, of course.

She refers to oocyte donation as “the human egg trade” and then explains how the IVF “industry” formed an insidious alliance with the secular media, becoming a “formidable and profitable presence” across the globe. Other keywords of hers include “seductive marketing,” “deep-pocketed,” “burgeoning demand,” and “aggressive assault”—specifically in reference to embryonic life.

Mirkes also referred to the scientific reductionism of IVF in its turning human beings into subjects of technological manipulations. She wrote disparagingly of IVF-seeking couples impatience and feeling they have a right to a child and the depersonalization resulting from the utilitarian “tradeoff for expedient babymaking” that IVF provides. Radkowska-Walkowicz quoted former Polish Minister of Health Boleslaw Piecha in echoing those sentiments: “Naprotechnology has only one fatal flaw—it takes a long time, and the modern world is impatient.”

Mirkes, obeying her Catholic teaching, also did not fool around with the false idolatry that came with participants in IVF—both doctors and hopeful parents—playing God. In

38. Ibid.
42. Ibid., 13-14.
43. Ibid., 15-16.
her article “NaProTECHNOLOGY: A Remedy for the Injustice of IVF,” Mirkes explicated how future parents must recognize that “it was not they who 'made' or 'created' their baby; rather, a Power beyond theirs—God—did it.” She then pointed out how partaking in parenthood through IVF is doing exactly the opposite and playing God by creating the child in their own image according to “their own eugenic and developmental criteria,” referring to the ability of hopeful IVF parents to select for embryos with a more favorable genetic makeup. Additionally, she points to the importance of the conjugal act to conception—which IVF, in its voiding sexual intercourse for fertilization, bypasses—with its being a primary act of love towards the child that IVF children have the injustice of missing out on.

The John Paul II Institute for the Treatment of Infertility in Marriage, an NPT clinic in Lublin, Poland has a passage on its website about IVF being based on methods “developed by animal science … methods which treat nothing but only bypass underlying problems needing to be addressed.” This quote gets at two other techniques NPT proponents used to undermine IVF’s legitimacy: “monsterization” and claims of inefficacy.

A comment came up from an audience member during the Hilgers-Szamatowicz debate that wondered about the majority of American children in therapy purportedly being former IVF babies. This wasn’t a surprising comment to hear given how claims of mental impairment and physical deformation were side effects NPT proponents often indicted IVF with having a high risk of.

In a 2012 article in Reproductive Health Matters, medical anthropologist Radkowska-Walkowicz described the medicalized stigmatization and purported traumatization of IVF children in Poland as a “monsterization” calling forth imagery of Frankenstein’s monster. She quoted Catholic bishop Tadeusz Pieronek who, in 2004, initially made that analogy, asking: “What is the literary representation of Frankenstein, a creature brought to life against nature, if not a prototype of in vitro?” She also quoted a purported scientific expert, Catholic psychologist Beata Rusiecka, who described the psychological horrors inflicted upon traumatized IVF children who would “suffer terrible guilt, [asking] themselves questions: why am I alive? Persons whose siblings have been aborted go through analogous experiences.” Along with this testimony, Radkowska-Walkowicz provided a 2010 quote

47. Ibid., 34.
48. Ibid., 29.
from popular daily *Rzeczpospolita* warning potential parents of the dangers awaiting their future children if they chose to undergo IVF: “IVF is an especially risky and flawed method. In the United States, doctors who use this method are required to inform potential parents about the enormous danger to the normal development of the fetus that it may cause, and how much more exposed to retardation are children conceived in this way.”

In such accounts, physical or mental deformity acted as an implied punishment for sin, despite reports of the risks of those deformities not being factually sound, with Radkowska-Walkowicz there being no strong evidence in 2012 that IVF children were more prone to congenital disorders or diseases. Radkowska-Walkowicz thus painted a picture of a subversive use of disturbing imagery and twisted scientific accounts to convince the public that IVF causes dangerous and physically horrifying side effects. In fact, she wrote, monsterization was so effective in thoroughly stigmatizing the child at the center of the procedure, that the stigma “spills over” to everyone involved in the act—the unhinged and immoral physicians, the selfish and careless parents. This group culpability and stigmatization was reminiscent of the literary conflation of Dr. Frankenstein and his monster. Radkowska-Walkowicz included a quote from a mother with a young daughter conceived through IVF which suggested that monsterization itself would eventually have ill effects on children's mental health: “I asked my daughter what she thinks about her conception, she says she doesn't remember … Thankfully there is the Church to remind her that she was born without dignity, that her prototype was Frankenstein and that she was brought back from the dead.”

This became a marketing tactic for NPT proponents. By juxtaposing NPT with monsterized narratives of IVF, NPT would appeal to its audience as a more morally and scientifically sound alternative. Mirkes, who called IVF an “overt evil” in “NaProTECHNOLOGY: A Remedy for the Injustice of IVF,” wrote in another article about the physical deformities that IVF purportedly makes future children at risk of before noting how 60% of Canadian couples asking for assisted reproductive technology were reportedly same-sex couples, tying this monsterization to homosexuality as well.

As evidenced, much of NPT’s advocates’ writing has been directed at undermining the legitimacy of IVF in an effort to elevate NPT’s, in the face of claims—like those of the Polish Gynecological Society—that NPT itself was illegitimate medicine due to little extant evidence beyond Hilgers’ own published work to back it up.

Of course, Hilgers and company have countered this, asserting that the work they’ve done over the past few decades is plenty evidence. During a lecture at the University of Medicine in Poznan, Poland in 2011—a video of which is available online in Polish NPT advocacy organization Naprotechnologia Wroclaw’s website with English dubbing—NPT

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57. Ibid., 32.
creator Thomas Hilgers flipped through a slideshow introducing the crowd of academics, physicians, and press to the basics of NPT.\textsuperscript{60} His first slides were high-resolution pictures of the Pope Paul VI Institute and of Creighton University Medical Center, showing where NPT physically came from. His next slide suggested where it came from philosophically; it was a simple black slide with plain text: “We have become a profession of pill pushers (BCPs) often not looking for the root causes.”\textsuperscript{61} As Hilgers went on to explain how NPT worked, he continued to underscore how the purpose of NPT was to cure disease, unlike the superficial quick fix of IVF.\textsuperscript{62} Another key theme Hilgers emphasized were the key words “standardized, prospective, and reproducible,” which were included several times as bolded text at the bottom of slides explaining specific procedures inherent to NPT.\textsuperscript{63} He consequently went on to display a picture and physical copy of his hefty textbook \textit{The Medical and Surgical Practice of NaProTECHNOLOGY}, which, in multiple internet references I found, was emphasized to be 1244 pages long.\textsuperscript{64} All of these acted as small assertions to support the assertion that NPT has been rigorously researched and documented, no matter what PubMed may have shown.

In \textit{The NaProTECHNOLOGY Revolution}, the other hefty Hilgers book, he noted: “It is true that a (sic) cervical mucus discharge is not a ‘high tech’ idea. But it is an incredibly good bioassay and it is virtually free!”\textsuperscript{65} Thus Hilgers hits upon key elements of NPT advocates’ marketing strategy in positioning itself as superior to the sinful IVF which were also alluded to in his presentation: promoting NPT’s simplicity, technological reliability, and accessibility. Throughout NPT literature, Hilgers references the “Triangle of Support”\textsuperscript{66} for NPT, in that it was built on the three pillars of research, education, and service. In \textit{The NaProTECHNOLOGY Revolution}’s explanation of how NPT is taught to its patients through a group introductory session with a slideshow\textsuperscript{67} and an individual follow-up, allowing “the system to be ‘tailor-made’ to the individual couple.”\textsuperscript{68} Hilgers even gave a name to this educational system—NaProEducation TECHNOLOGY—which he calls “an advanced educational technology, the principles of which have not been previously used in either medical or patient education.”\textsuperscript{69} When explaining the six pillars of NaProEducation TECHNOLOGY in seven sentences, Hilgers proceeded to use a form of the words “objective” or “standard,”\textsuperscript{70}
a total of eight times, relying on assertions of truth often applied to evidence-based medicine to bolster the scientific authenticity of his service in the eyes of the readers—potential future clients. This acted to dispel any doubts these potential patients may have had if, for example, they had heard Szamatowicz’ public assertions that NPT could not be classified as evidence-based medicine.

Another way NPT proponents and practitioners have bolstered their authority has been building trust through the extensive publishing of effusive and detailed personal stories from both patients and practitioners, making the NPT world a relatable one to potential patients. Wasilewski’s NPT clinic website, www.napromedica.pl has been up since the clinic’s establishment in 2009, according to a search using the Internet Archive “Wayback Machine.” Interestingly, both versions of the homepage feature an image of Wasilewski twice: the original having a solo shot and a group shot with his staff and the second having two solo portraits. On both versions, a portrait was presented alongside a large-font welcome message with a direct quote from Wasilewski about how he ties in his personal values with his practice. Immediately, potential NaProMedica patients become closely acquainted with the people on the other side of the examination room table and lab bench.

A Mirkes article from Review for Religious used a similar approach to familiarize NPT. Mirkes told the story of how she began using the Creighton Model System to track her own cycle, noting how it helped her recognize “human nature’s inherent capacity for God,” which she believes all women could benefit from. She makes this more personal by underscoring how tracking her fertility and gynecological health became an “integral component of a daily ‘living witness’ to [her] decision to become a bride of Christ forever.” Doing so, she conflated religiousness with biomedicine and asserted her authority on the subject while also humanizing herself and making the reasons to opt into NPT relatable.

In Hilgers’ Poznan lecture, another unique feature of NPT that he presented comparatively to IVF was NPT “working cooperatively (as opposed to suppressively or destructively) with a woman’s menstrual and fertility cycle.” Mirkes used similar language in her article in the FCS Quarterly by presenting IVF and NPT as a dichotomy of suppressive versus optimizing forces. This motif of patient-physician partnership in NPT as opposed to the more formal expert-customer relationship of IVF comes up again and again in NPT promotional material.

In The NaProTECHNOLOGY Revolution: Unleashing the Power in a Woman’s Cycle, Hilgers included a short section titled “Tips On How to Use This Book” that serves as a lovely welcome mat for the reader, addressing them directly about how easy using this book should be. Hilgers details how reading the Introduction section will give the reader a sense

"standardized." Ibid.
71. Ibid.
75. Ibid., 279.
of “the feel, emotion and capability” of NPT and how the back of the book includes, “for your individual use,” a Glossary so that even the few more technically complex chapters will be accessible to the non-medically-trained eye. Later, in the Introduction, he began the first several paragraphs with questions either starting with “Are you a woman who …” or addressing other specific interest groups. Then, turning the page to the title of the first section, the reader is hit with a large image of three women, dressed in white, running along a beach looking wholesome and laughing, overlaid with a picture of a physician in scrubs, and a Creighton Model System fertility tracking chart. Clearly, this medically complex technology was meant to be associated with happiness, friendliness, nature, accessibility.

Even the medical chart used in the Creighton Model System is accessible, with its logical use of coloring, baby stamps, and letters to signify key milestones in a woman’s cycle, such as specific mucus consistency or occurrence of intercourse (marked by the letter “I”).

Mirkes, in turn, went so far as to call NPT the only “humanistic” reproductive technology, producing “the ‘good fruit’ of a truly human culture” due to its partnership between married couples with Christian values, the physician-educator, and God. In her 2011 Nauka article, Dolinska observed that this kind of NPT support would conflate ethical superiority with medical authority, such that, in NPT promotional material and support testimonials, these two values became “interchangeable.”

Yet, does this kind of marketing actually appeal to hopeful parents? To confront that question, Hilgers and the Pope Paul VI Institute published a promotional book in 2004 titled In Their Own Words: Women Healed containing 50 positive testimonials from women treated at the Institute with NPT. One such woman cited her misled previous dependence on birth control pills for fertility control to have been her “following the social norm,” whereas, with NPT, she was finally making “an educated decision” about her health and using a method based on “so much scientific research.” Another wrote about how she particularly appreciated the detail with which Dr. Hilgers and his colleagues would explain everything about NPT so that she thoroughly understood each procedure and test she was undergoing, contrasting that experience her visits to a regular infertility clinic, where she “felt like all the decisions were being made with my consent of course, but we didn’t have any clue as to why these procedures were the best.” A sense of very individualized consideration was highly valued by another woman, who wrote that she looked for and chose Hilgers as her doctor in a search for someone who took “into account the clues that my body seemed to be providing, and put the pieces together in an effort to facilitate health, not just pregnancy.” Wasilewski’s NaProMedica website includes a similar annals of testimonies called “Patients’ Stories,” filled with testimonies to the joys of having a child thanks to the ethical and kind

79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid. This image also repeats for all subsequent sections of the book.
83. Dolinska, “Naprotechnology — falsehood or misapprehension?” 115.
help of Wasilewski’s medical group.87

POLAND AS THE PERFECT BATTLEGROUND: A HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK

In her *Catholic World Report* article, Mirkes made a quick reference to Poland, calling it a “battleground” and mentioning that recent Polish trainees at the Pope Paul VI Institute had constituted one of the largest training classes of new NPT professionals ever.88 In his 2011 lecture and debate with Szamatowicz in Poznan, Hilgers89 said of Poland: “There is no other place in the world where there would be this many gynecologists interested in naprotechnology.”90 Yet, why was Poland the specific Catholic state singled out? Why was NPT so easily absorbed into the tapestry of the political and medical mainstream in this specific European country?

Since IVF only came to Poland right before the fall of the Berlin wall, a good alternative indicator of political climate about reproductive health from earlier Polish history was a closely related and often politically conflated issue: abortion. Before 1989, Poland traditionally had liberal abortion legislation. By the 1818 Penal Code, abortion was only a crime if it was done without a woman’s consent—otherwise, it was a misdemeanor.91 The 1932 Penal Code liberalized this law further: women were guaranteed the right to an abortion if they provided medical and legal reasons.92 After Stalin’s death in 1955, post-Stalinist liberalisation of social and political life in the USSR led to further liberalisation of abortion across Soviet bloc countries, Poland included.93 The 1969 Penal Code then reaffirmed this policy. The Communist government’s rising pronatalist social policies at the time increased maternal benefits, but didn’t touch abortion.94 It wasn’t until 1989 that the first anti-abortion bill was introduced in the Polish Sejm. As University of Warsaw law professor Eleonora Zielinska wrote in her article “Between Ideology, Politics, and Common Sense: The Discourse of Reproductive Rights in Poland,” Poland’s anti-abortion movement then rose as communism fell when it “emerged from inside church walls and mounted a public campaign.”95

The 1989 difference was Solidarity. With the August 31, 1980 Gdansk Agreement, Poland became the first communist state with a legally recognized trade union. Over the next nine years, this trade union, which came to be known under the name “Solidarnosc”—or Solidarity—would undermine and ultimately do away with the communist government by bringing together, in the words of Maryjane Osa, “islands of opposition” in the form of workers, Catholics, and secular intellectuals.96 As it grew in number and popularity, Sol-
idarity sold the nation on its goals, making them national values. Stanley described this new Solidarity-spurned nationalism as spreading “a sense of euphoria where the nation appeared totally united.” The Church rode that wave and added to it, all the way to the top.

To understand how the Church could grow to such power in the 20th Century, it is essential to trace the relationship between Poles and the Church through the prior centuries. During the Partition Period after 1795, when the Polish state itself ceased to exist, a Catholic identity was a unifier for the stateless Polish people. Once the Polish state returned, the 1925 Concordat established an initial formal agreement laying out official rights and duties of the Church in that specific state, creating an officially recognized anchor for the Catholic identity that Poles could turn to. Twenty years later, in September of 1945, the communist government terminated this Concordat, eliminating an officially acknowledged relationship while, by University of Toronto political science professor Mirella W. Eberts’ analysis, seeking to “coexist” because of the identified significance of the Church to the Polish people.

Joseph Stalin himself famously called Polish communism “fitting a cow with a saddle” because of the infallibility of Poles’ religious identity, even when faced with a fiercely secular political system. In his 1984 book on Polish history Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland's Present, Oxford historian Norman Davies described the “ethnic and cultural remodelling of Polish society” that led the postwar Church’s presence to be stronger than ever before. According to Davies, the Polish Catholic populations grew from below 50 percent, to 66 percent, to no less than 96 percent through three versions of Poland, respectively: 1773 First Partition, the 1921 Interwar Republic, and 1946 Poland, which had been largely rid of its Jewish, German, and Ukrainian populations.

In that postwar period between 1945 through the 1980s, the Church underwent waves of suppression by the state. Before Stalin’s death in 1953, according to Davies, Stalinism had remained less severe in Poland than in neighboring countries—the Church was thus bullied, but not totally suppressed. The early 1950s saw attacks on the Church through censorship, the elimination of popular Catholic radio programs, and the arrests of around 900 Catholic priests—including the beloved Warsaw Archbishop Stefan Wyszynski. These difficulties lessening during the Destalinization “Thaw” of the late 50s, when the communist government hung onto power largely by making many concessions with the Church, which remained revered. Stanley identified the turning point as the celebrations after the freeing of Wyszynski during the Thaw, when a “modus vivendi” between the Church and state seemed to have been reached. Furthermore, wrote Davies, the 1978 election of Cardinal Archbishop of Cracow Karol Wojtyla, who became Pope John Paul II, became the “ultimate accolade” for the Polish Catholic Church, causing a “psychological uplift” among

97. Ibid., 132.
99. Ibid., 819.
100. Ibid.
101. Stalin in Ibid., 818.
103. Ibid., 10.
106. Davies, Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland's Present, 15.
Poles and made the Polish plight globally relevant as “one of the most accomplished and charismatic successors that St. Peter has ever had” notably visited countries throughout the entire world. It was also noteworthy that John Paul II was very friendly to Solidarity, receiving Wałęsa “like a son,” by Davies’ account.

Thus, throughout the postwar communist period, Poland was split between two competing powers, juxtaposed with the monolithic power structures present in Poland’s socialist neighbor states at the time. This structured political split, wrote Stanley, was beneficial for dissidents, thus beneficial for Solidarity. The Church, in turn, used the instability Solidarity’s demonstrations stirred up to press for even more concessions from the communist government. The Church thus notably enjoyed a construction boom while the rest of the country was in a housing crisis.

Solidarity and the Church needed each other as allies against a common foe, but Solidarity members were also overwhelmingly Catholic, including leader Lech Wałęsa. In fact, the Gdansk shipyard workers’ attendance at Sunday mass was a peaceful public form of resistance to the government and the cross became a strike symbol. Yet, that Catholic identity was not enough to make Solidarity staunchly pro-life and aligned with the Church’s other moral politics. In a 1980 article in the publication Słowo Powszechne, Solidarity leaders Bogdan Lis and Lech Badkowski wrote that the trade union “didn’t want to change the system.” Stanley explained that “system” as a euphemism obscuring the social status quo, including the liberalized Thaw sexual politics, legal abortion, and contraception. Moreso, secular intellectuals in Solidarity respected the Church while also openly supporting the “sexual regime” maintained by the Polish People’s Republic (PPR). Yet, Stanley keenly pointed out that the majority of Solidarity did not see sexual liberation movement as an allied cause, but were rather passive towards it; Stanley illuminated the significance of this stance through a juxtaposition with the South African anti-apartheid movement’s allyship with the gay liberation movement abroad. This passivity was a survivor’s instinct. Solidarity could only afford to rally around issues that united their factions, a big one of which were Church members—sexual politics divided them, so they could not afford to take a stance.

That survivor’s instinct shifted after December 13, 1981, when General Wojciech Jaruzelski led a military coup against the government, martial law was instituted, and Solidarity was deemed illegal. Suddenly, Solidarity was in full survival mode, the stakes for maintaining unity were even higher, and, at least initially, neutrality towards sexual politics remained. However, now, the Church was not just a key faction Solidarity needed to keep happy—it became its main patron. During the trade union’s legal period, the Church of-
ferred the dissidents a network of parishes, monasteries, and convents as both sources of employment and refuge—which became crucial to riding out the illegal period.121 Solidarity leader Wałęsa wrote in his *Droga do Wolności*: “Without the Church there would be no Solidarity.”122 Towards the end of this illegal period in 1989, when the government agreed to Round Table negotiations with Solidarity, Solidarity’s representatives proposed an abortion ban as a part of the final deal.123 This dramatic switch from passivity to vocal opposition was not a reflection of popular opinion—Stanley reported 70% of the polled Polish population in 1989 was in favor of legal abortion—and the ban didn’t make it into the final agreement in April; yet, a staunch alignment with the Church’s sexual politics thus became an official Solidarity position.124 Then, on April 4, 1989, as a result of these Round Table talks and Solidarity’s election victory, Poland’s became the first noncommunist government in a Soviet bloc country.125 Then, not only had Solidarity won a historic vote to politically represent Poland, but it had also won the right to be deemed the people’s moral authority due to its success with nonviolent demonstration and its representing in membership “almost every single family in the land,” according to Davies.126 Thus, as Solidarity’s positions became the political mainstream, so did the Church’s sexual politics, and abortion was recriminalized.

Post-Solidarity politicians bent to the will of the church on the topic of IVF as well, making it appear as if they were doing so to properly represent their Catholic constituents. Yet, they were not acting in the public’s will. Data from Polish opinion polling research center CBOS revealed that 70 to 80 percent of Poles approved of the use of IVF by infertile married couples in polls done between 1995 and 2012.127 Adam Mickiewicz University sociologist Józef Baniak interpreted this data as an indicator that Poles generally favor couples’ right to possess offspring over the Church’s teachings, examining this theory further through a 2016 study published in the *Polish Sociological Review* in which he surveyed 882 Polish secondary school and university students on their opinions about whether couples should have access to IVF.128 His results followed the CBOS polls’ trend: 70.4 percent of the 882 young people surveyed answered “yes” or “rather yes” when asked if married Polish couples should have access to IVF.129 Adam Mickiewicz University gender philosophy professors Elzbieta Pakszys and Dorota Mazurczak referred to this as a “paradox of democracy” in their 1994 *Journal of Women’s History* article on gender politics in postsocialist Poland.130 The paradox lay in the Catholic Church helping Poland achieve democracy and then

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121. Ibid., 135.
124. Ibid.
126. Davies, *Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland’s Present*, 16-17.
129. Ibid.
130. Pakszys and Mazurczak, “From Totalitarianism to Democracy in Poland: Women’s Issues in
using Parliament to impose Catholic ethics on all of society, in Pakszys and Mazurczak’s interpretation.131

What the Polish Church’s sexual politics in fact were could be traced to Hilgers’ initial inspiration for the research that resulted in NPT: Pope Paul VI pro-life teachings and the encyclical Humanae Vitae. Poland’s own Pope John Paul II was a devoted follower of Pope Paul VI and published his own encyclical, Evangelium Vitae, which built off of Humanae Vitae to explain the Church’s position on when human life begins and how assisted reproductive technologies like IVF “actually open the door to new threats against life” and were thus “morally unacceptable, since they separate procreation from the fully human context of the conjugal act.”132 Thus, when Solidarity rose and the communist government left a power vacuum in its wake that the Church swooped in to help fill, the view that IVF and abortion were unacceptably sinful became part of the mainstream political tapestry of postsocialist Poland.

The postsocialist abortion ban133 and conscience clause,134 which restricted access to contraceptives and prenatal testing on the grounds of a physician’s personal religious and moral beliefs, marked that switch from the liberalized sexual health policies of Destalization.135 By 2002, there was a total elimination of state contraceptive coverage.136 Yet, the proliferation of Catholic sexual politics was not the only force thus pushing abortion, birth control, IVF, and other sexual health matters into the unreachable shadows of stigma and sin. Democracy and Poland’s 2004 entrance into the European Union (EU) brought with them new neoliberal economic policies that meant big cutbacks in social services.137 This particularly affected women, as education and childcare became privatized along with maternal benefits.138 According to Mishtal, Poland experienced the “harshest” reductions of family and maternity benefits of all EU member states and, by 2009, ranked near the bottom of EU member state health expenditures.139 As of Mishtal’s 2010 publication, then–Minister of Health—and to-be 2014 Prime Minister—Ewa Kopacz had confirmed that epidurals and

the Sociopolitical Transition of 1989-1993,” 147.

131. Ibid., 144-50.


134. This “conscience clause” was included in the 1996 Doctor and Dentist Professions Act and is listed on the official Ministry of Health website as such: “A physician may refer to the Conscience Clause, i.e. refrain from providing medical services which are inconsistent with their conscience (unless the delay in providing such medical assistance could cause the risk of death and heavy bodily injuries or severe health disorders), provided that they indicate the possibility of obtaining the same service from a different doctor or a medicinal entity, as well as justify and register this fact in the patient’s medical history.”


136. Ibid.

137. Ibid.


anesthesia during childbirth would remain excluded from state coverage “alongside aroma-therapy” as extras, luxuries.\textsuperscript{140}

Before the fall of state socialism, the health system was starkly different. Poland followed the Soviet Semashko Model—named after Soviet Commissar of Public Health Nikolai Semashko—which was a state-funded centralized healthcare system.\textsuperscript{141} The Semashko system openly endorsed family planning and, during destalinization, subsidized legal abortions.\textsuperscript{142} After 1989, at least theoretically, the National Health Fund continued providing free public health care to those who needed it, which in Poland was 59\% of the population as of 2010.\textsuperscript{143} In practice, however, NHF hospitals and clinics grew to be overcrowded with a shortage of providers as fresh medical school graduates sought higher pay and more favorable work conditions in other EU countries and beyond.\textsuperscript{144} In Mishtal’s ethnographic account of Gdansk in 2007, excessive lines and wait times for an appointment with a practitioner were cited as the main reason for unmet health needs in Poland, which was then three times the amount that this reason was cited by the average EU citizen.\textsuperscript{145} For the 41\% of the population that didn’t have to rely on the NHF, high private practice costs proliferated and, even in the NHF system, wealthier patients were privileged in care, especially by the vast portion of doctors who grew to expect bribes and gifts for a job well done.\textsuperscript{146} When it came to sexual health, abortion became a primary contraceptive method in the postwar era and remained so in postsocialist times due to the unavailability or lack of reliability of affordable birth control in Poland.\textsuperscript{147} Pakszys and Mazurczak attribute the relatively high 20\% voluntary termination rate of 1994 to this quagmire. Thus, expensive, unregulated, private clandestine abortions and abortion tourism became the way out for women who could afford it. Postsocialist biomedicine in Poland thus reduced citizens in need to numbers in a seemingly never-ending waitlist for care, where, in general, the seemingly only way to secure quality service was to pay a private doctor, bribe a public one, or travel abroad. Mistrust proliferated.

IVF was no exception. The procedure was only available as an unregulated treatment through the private health sphere until July 2013, when the state health care plan began offering partial reimbursements, something that had been promised by the Ministry of Health since 2007.\textsuperscript{148} Radkowska-Walkowicz pointed out that part of NPT’s appeal was thus its humanization of modern biomedicine, which, in postsocialist Poland, had been nothing but reductionistic.\textsuperscript{149}

In addition to this generalized mistrust of the medical landscape in Poland, a growing economic anxiety attached to Poland’s contribution to the EU budget also became politically attached to IVF. Economist and historian Sergiusz Prokurat published a paper in \textit{Studia}
Europejskie in 2008 illustrating the evolution of eurosceptic thought through the lens of the Polish Catholic daily Nasz Dziennik, which had been established in 1998 as a voice for Poland’s then-growing nationalist Catholic right-wing. A key trope Prokurat pointed out was Nasz Dziennik’s long-standing critique of the EU budget indirectly contributing to IVF coverage in EU member states who fully or partially fund the procedure. The daily’s writers wanted to know why Poland and other Catholic EU countries that largely condemn IVF—the singled-out states were Ireland and Malta, the one EU state where IVF is fully banned—had to help indirectly fund this medical procedure.

Both of these anxieties—that for the inefficient medical system and for the lack of the state’s control over how its funds were being spent in this new EU economy—didn’t just weave into the condemnation of IVF, but also spoke to a greater overarching desire of post-socialist Poles: agency. Davies wrote in Heart of Europe: “It was the experience of this alien tyranny, so familiar to Poles in earlier periods of their history, which moulded the attitudes of the post-war generation.” As a people whose borders, economy, government, and population makeup had been under the control of a foreign power for the greater part of the previous century, Poland was hungry to start making its own decisions about how it would look as a nation.

cs and Abel Polese noted that the reason nation-building was a key to understanding people's desires was that "people are not only the target of nation-building measures, but also their ultimate judges."\(^{158}\) Thus, for the new democratic Poland to continue on as a nation, the people's desire for agency and identity construction had to be adequately addressed.

However, all of this Polish nationalistic anxiety in the face of a supranational overseer EU and ineffective domestic economic realities obscured the simpler desire to construct a Polish society in an ideal Catholic image. Thus, when NPT came in, it not only answered to the dearth of a fertility treatment morally acceptable to devout Catholic couples, but also tied together a pronatalist answer to imagined community construction with friendly but cutting-edge medicine. This accounts for why NPT also appeared in other Catholic countries like Ireland, Italy, and Malta, while not on the same large scale as in Poland.

As Radkowska-Walkowicz put it, NPT was portrayed as an emancipation from the bounds of infertility through a Church-sanctioned and means.\(^{159}\) It newly allowed a morally concerned couple to harness what was purportedly cutting edge, yet user-friendly technology to treat the medicalized notion of their uniquely Catholic desire to procreate without moral guilt.

**FINAL WORDS**

To effectively build trust in potential patients, NPT needed to present itself in contrast with the Catholic-scorned IVF to effectively promote its moral and scientific authority. It was almost a direct precondition to NPT advertising for IVF to have been highly popularized and lauded in the media, so that NPT had plenty of examples to turn to for how IVF exploited all of society’s ills: materialism, worshipping false deities, a disregard for God. Then, due to the particular political climate in Poland, in which the Catholic Church became crucial to political life and the people were particularly amenable to embracing that line of advertising and a technology that defied the norm of alienating modern biomedicine and promoted individual agency. The cultural situatedness of postsocialist Poland, as in Herzberg’s, Metzl’s, and Tone’s 20th century America, yielded an ideal environment for NPT to flourish while IVF struggled.

Additional considerations for NPT’s inroads in Poland may include the significant population of generations of Polish immigrants living in the United States, whose churches may more directly support NPT as practiced in Hilgers’ American FertilityCare clinics. I am conducting an ethnographic study of such a community in the San Francisco Bay Area starting in August 2018. Growing Euroscepticism in Poland and the connected rebellion against EU funding of countries that permit IVF and abortion must also be further considered, particularly as President Andrzej Duda’s government jockeys to take further control of the Polish courts over the coming months and years.

Noteworthy geographic areas where NPT has also taken root and may or may not come to follow Poland’s path have been Ireland and Malta. Ireland’s recent vote in favor of repealing its eight amendment, which protects an unborn fetus’ right to life, suggests against the Catholic Church’s ability to promote its reproductive health politics. However, Ireland was one of the few early adaptors of NPT, with an Irish NPT clinic being one of the few sourc-


\(^{159}\) Radkowska-Walkowicz, “Between Advanced Medical Technology and Prayer: Infertility Treatment in Post-Socialist Poland,” 944.
es of published studies about the treatment.\textsuperscript{160} Malta has had one of the most restrictive policies on IVF in Europe and NPT has slowly grown in prominence. However, a recent move to include single and gay individuals in the Embryo Protection Act’s IVF permissions suggests that Malta’s Catholic politics may not indeed be the tinder NPT needs to further spread through Eastern Europe. Additionally, a small 2012 delegation of Latin American physicians taking part in NPT training in Nebraska suggests that particularly Mexico, Venezuela, and Brazil may be fertile ground for the further worldwide spread of NPT.\textsuperscript{161}

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Why Governments Should Not Ban Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Labor

It seems intuitively true that there is a deeply and perhaps morally significant difference between certain kinds of labor: between, say, mowing a neighbor’s grass and gestating a stranger’s baby. Debra Satz calls this intuition the “asymmetry thesis”: “[M]arkets in reproduction and sex are asymmetric to other labor markets. … [T]here is something wrong with commercial surrogacy and prostitution that is not wrong with teaching and professional sports.”1 Writing about commercial surrogacy, Elizabeth Anderson concurs with Satz that treating women’s reproductive labor as a mere commodity, as we might treat the labor of a teacher or a professional athlete, is morally problematic. Anderson argues that “[c]ommercial surrogacy substitutes market norms for some of the norms of parental love”2 and thus degrades both surrogate mothers and children.

For her part, Satz ultimately concludes that despite the asymmetry thesis, legal prohibitions on prostitution are inadvisable because they fail to eliminate the practice or promote gender equality. In other words, Satz uses consequentialist logic to justify both her opposition to prostitution (on the grounds that it exacerbates gender inequality) and her argument that it should not, in the end, be legally banned. Anderson, meanwhile, makes a deontological, essentialist case against commercial surrogacy, a practice that, like prostitution, treats women’s labor as a commodity. Anderson believes that commercial surrogacy is so inherently immoral that it should be prohibited, or at least so highly regulated so as to render it effectively inaccessible.

In this paper, I explain why I find both Satz’s and Anderson’s objections to prostitution and commercial surrogacy, respectively, unconvincing. While I accept the persuasiveness of the asymmetry thesis on an intuitive level, I argue that the morally optimal way to approach women’s sexual and reproductive labor is with regulation, not criminalization. I believe that the legal prohibition of these forms of female labor would constitute impermissible paternalism on the part of lawmakers. Furthermore, such prohibitions would likely lead to consequences contrary to the interests of women and children by forcing the market for women’s sexual and reproductive labor underground, out of the realm of state protection. Thus, on both deontological and consequentialist grounds, I argue for the legalization and

government regulation of prostitution and commercial surrogacy.

The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* defines paternalism as “the interference of a state or an individual with another person, against their will, and defended or motivated by a claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm.” Depending on one’s philosophy, some forms of paternalism may be permissible: for example, preventing a non-English-speaking person from crossing a damaged bridge out of concern that the person did not understand the posted “DANGER” signs and thus is ignorant of the potential consequences of his or her actions. This type of paternalism, which interferes with a person who is not acting knowledgeably and voluntarily, is known as “soft paternalism.” It can be contrasted with “hard paternalism,” which holds that a state is entitled to interfere with voluntary acts, such as intentional suicide attempts.

A soft paternalist might justify interfering with the practice of commercial surrogacy on the grounds that it often involves illiterate and impoverished women “signing” contracts agreeing to become commercial surrogates without understanding the consequences of entering into those contracts. If we are concerned about women agreeing to become surrogate mothers without full information, as I believe we should be, then we might require that surrogacy agencies address this problem by, for example, providing every potential surrogate mother with an advocate who can explain the details of the contract. Incomplete information is a problem, but it is solvable; it does not necessitate banning commercial surrogacy altogether.

Anderson, however, is not a soft paternalist; she believes that there is something so essentially wrong about commercial surrogacy that it justifies hard paternalism in the form of a criminal ban on the practice. She elaborates:

> The fundamental problem with commercial surrogacy is that commercial norms are inherently manipulative when they are applied to the sphere of parental love. … A surrogate contract is inherently manipulative, since the very form of the contract invokes commercial norms which, whether upheld by the law or by social custom only, imply that the mother should feel guilty and irresponsible for loving her own child.

In order to uphold the norm of maternal love, Anderson believes that the state is entitled—indeed, is obligated—to interfere with a woman’s voluntary decision to become a surrogate parent. However, it seems to me that such interference is in fact an impermissible infringement of women’s autonomy over their own bodies and labor. A hard paternalist stance on commercial surrogacy actually demeans women’s dignity by telling women that the state knows their best interests better than they themselves do. It also smacks of the kind of gendered moral condescension that for centuries told women that their moral worth as mothers had to be shielded from corrupting influences, such as entering the workforce. In this way, Anderson’s well-meaning moralizing about the sanctity of the bond between mother and child is actually retrogressive and contrary to the goals of advancing gender equality.

We might draw similarities between the issue of women’s sexual and reproductive labor and, perhaps unexpectedly, the practice of dwarf tossing, in which contestants compete to

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3. Dworkin, “Paternalism.”
see who can toss “a willing and suitably protected dwarf” the furthest. Many people are understandably outraged by this practice, which seems to demean dwarfs’ human dignity, and the United Nations upheld dwarf-tossing bans in France and the United States (against the objections of a dwarf who was previously employed as a human projectile). However, many ethicists have argued that while states should be entitled to regulate such contests, they should not be entitled to criminalize dwarf tossing on the clearly paternalistic grounds that such bans protect dwarfs from some kind of harm. For example, Julia Davis points out that these bans essentially say: “Because dwarfs are not equal to persons of full stature, they must be protected from autonomously choosing, as others of full stature do, to engage in these (possibly) demeaning kinds of activities and employment.” In this way, the bans themselves do more to undermine dwarfs’ dignity as autonomous individuals entitled to full rights over their bodies and labor than does the practice of dwarf tossing itself.

Likewise, criminal bans on both commercial surrogacy and prostitution essentially tell women: “You are not capable of making decisions about the use of your bodies and labor to advance your own interests.” Satz seems to miss this inherently demeaning message of anti-prostitution legislation in her arguments about the wrongness of prostitution. In her “egalitarian” approach to the asymmetry thesis, Satz asserts that prostitution is wrong because it perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing a negative stereotype of women as subordinate to men. Unlike Anderson, Satz does not make an essentialist argument about women’s sexual labor; she says that she “can imagine hypothetical circumstances in which prostitution would not have a negative image effect, where it could mark a reclaiming of women’s sexuality.” Still, though, Satz thinks that prostitution’s consequences for gender relations make the practice immoral.

But our culture and media are saturated with sexist images and messages. It is not at all clear that prostitution is a significant causal factor in societal inequality, not when we must contend with millennia of ingrained, systemic misogyny, not to mention plenty of contemporary expressions of gender inequality, from sexual harassment to the gender pay gap. I agree with Satz that the central problem with prostitution has to do with its consequences; however, I am more concerned about the narrower consequences for individual women who choose (or are compelled) to engage in sex work, rather than the broader consequences for gender equality on a societal level. And while the consequences of sex work on individual women are concerning, they can be addressed through regulations that protect women from exploitation while granting them autonomy over their own bodies and labor.

So far, I have made a deontological argument for legalizing and regulating commercial surrogacy and prostitution. To summarize, I believe that criminalizing these practices would constitute impermissible and demeaning paternalism on the part of the state. But the argument for legalization and regulation can and should also be made on consequentialist grounds. Satz ultimately comes to the same conclusion, noting that criminal bans on prostitution throughout most of the United States have not seemed to promote gender equality and have instead had negative consequences for women. Satz writes that “criminalized prostitution thrives as a black market activity in which pimps substitute for law as the mechanism for enforcing contracts. It thereby makes the lives of prostitutes worse than they might otherwise be and without clearly counteracting prostitution’s largely negative

5. Davis, “Forbidding Dwarf Tossing,” 239.
7. Davis, 256.
image of women.” Likewise, although Anderson largely neglects to examine the potential consequences of criminalizing commercial surrogacy, it seems all but inevitable that forcing commercial surrogacy into the black market would not end the practice, and would instead leave surrogate mothers even more vulnerable to harm and exploitation than they already are.

Satz proposes a draft legislative step toward making the market for women’s sexual and reproductive labor as safe and dignity-affirming as possible. She elaborates on a five-part Bill of Rights for Women: 10

1. No woman should be forced to have sex against her will.
2. No woman should be denied contraception, abortion, or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.
3. Women should have adequate information before agreeing to sex.
4. Laws pertaining to the minimum age of consent must be strictly enforced.
5. Brokerage (i.e. pimps) should be banned.

This Bill of Rights could be expanded to include protections for surrogate mothers and other women who engage in sexual and reproductive labor. Policymakers should conduct thorough investigations of these practices and markets in order to formulate evidence-based regulations that protect women from harm and exploitation. The upshot is that women should not be deprived of the option to engage in sexual and reproductive labor. Many women may conduct a cost-benefit analysis and conclude that these forms of labor provide the greatest benefits for themselves and their families. The stigmatization of this labor as inherently degrading or traumatic is a value judgment imposed by society and reinforced by government policies that seek to “protect” women from making their own choices as autonomous individuals. In sum, criminalizing prostitution and commercial surrogacy is both demeaning to women’s autonomy and dangerous to their physical and emotional welfare.

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10. Satz, 84-85.
Contributors

JACK AIELLO, a sophomore at Princeton became increasingly interested in development studies while participating in Princeton's Bridge Year India Program. Specifically, Jack is interested in how governmental and societal institutions determine economic development, how strong or weak institutions form and how institutions reform or deteriorate. As a LISD student fellow, Jack chose to focus on the relationship between representative local governance institutions in India and women’s inclusion in society. He hopes his work will help researchers better understand how the reservation of representative seats for women at the local level affects the degree to which other women in the community are empowered and included.

MAYA ARONOFF is a senior in the Woodrow Wilson School, pursuing a certificate in the History and Practice of Diplomacy. Her studies have focused on human rights, conflict resolution, and recovery after war, particularly in the contexts of the Middle East and East Asia. She studied the relationship between religion and politics in Israel and Turkey through two Michigan State University study abroad courses, and again during the 2016-17 academic year with Amb. Daniel Kurtzer at Princeton. Her research interests for the GGC program lay at the intersection of gender, politics, and human rights.

BARBARA BUCKINX is Associate Research Scholar at the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University. She received her PhD in Politics from Princeton University in 2010. Dr. Buckinx also holds MA and MSc degrees in Psychology and Social and Political Theory, both from the University of Edinburgh. Prior to returning to Princeton, she was a pre-doctoral fellow with the Political Theory Project at Brown University, a Justitia Amplificata and Kassel Foundation post-doctoral fellow at Goethe University Frankfurt, and a Fellow with the Center on Global Justice at the University of California, San Diego. Her research interests lie in global governance, migration, refugees, citizenship, and borders. Her teaching interests also include the environment and gender. Her work has appeared in Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, Migration Studies, Ethics & International Affairs, and Global Justice: Theory Practice Rhetoric. Her article on “The case against removal: Jus noci and harm in deportation practice” (co-authored, A. Filindra) was the Winner of the 2015 Migration Studies Prize for Best Article. She is co-editor of Domination and Global Political Justice: Conceptual, Historical, and Institutional Perspectives (Routledge, 2015) and is writing a manuscript that investigates the problem of the un-restrained and potential exercise of power in global politics. Buckinx recently taught Junior Research Seminars on immigration policy (WWS 403, WWS 404) and guest lectured for seminars on sustainability and climate engineering. She is Reviews Editor for the journal Global Justice: Theory Practice Rhetoric and co-convenor of the international Normative Theory of Immigration Working Group. She also chairs the selection committee for the annual Jonathan Trejo-Mathys Essay Prize, which is co-sponsored by The Global Justice Network and the Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy at Boston College. At LISD, she coordinates the Project on Self-Determination and Emerging Issues.
DINA CHOTRANI ’18 *22, of Secaucus, New Jersey, graduated with honors from the Woodrow Wilson School in 2018 with certificates in Global Health and Health Policy, History and the Practice of Diplomacy, and Entrepreneurship. Previously, Chotrani interned at an immigration law firm, conducted research on human rights and forced migration for A New Global Agenda, and worked on affordable housing policy at the Manhattan Borough President’s Office. She has also worked in gender equality advocacy efforts in Mexico City and on the United Nations Ivy STEM Connect pilot programs in Tanzania and Rwanda for the U.N. Girls’ Education Initiative. Chotrani was named the 2018 Terrence A. Elkes Graduate Scholar in the Nation’s Service and is an MPA candidate at the Woodrow Wilson School.

ISABEL DOCAMPO is an MPA student at the Woodrow Wilson School focusing on international development and public health. Previously, she produced policy research and communications on global food security, agricultural development, and maternal/child health for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and fundraised for a local sexual assault advocacy organization. Isabel has also worked in Cochabamba, Bolivia, researching HIV testing behaviors among local youth. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in international relations and a minor in public health from the College of William & Mary in 2015.

BETH ENGLISH is director of the Project on Gender in the Global Community at the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University. She is on the faculty of the Princeton Writing Program, and is also an instructor with Princeton University’s Prison Teaching Initiative. She received her Ph.D. from the College of William and Mary, where she was a Glucksman Fellow and Visiting Assistant Professor, and has taught at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. English’s research and teaching focus on gender, historical and contemporary labor and working class issues, global economy, and the U.S. and Global Souths. She is the co-editor of Global Women’s Work: Perspectives on Gender and Work in the Global Economy (with Mary E. Frederickson and Olga Sanmiguel-Valderrama, forthcoming, Routledge); author of A Common Thread: Labor, Politics, and Capital Mobility in the Textile Industry; and a contributing author to several edited volumes focusing on gender and on the U.S. South. Her recent articles include, “Global Women’s Work: Historical Perspectives on the Textile and Garment Industries” (Journal of International Affairs), and “La mort de Dixie? (The Death of Dixie?)” (Politique Américaine, with co-author Bryant Simon). Her article, “I . . . Have a Lot of Work to Do: Cotton Mill Work and Women’s Culture in Matoaca, Virginia, 1888-1895” was awarded as one of the Organization of American Historians’ Best American History Essays of 2008 (David Roediger, ed.). As director of LISD’s Project on Gender in the Global Community, English oversees the Institute’s initiatives on Women, Peace and Security; Women’s Economic Security; Children and Armed Conflict; and Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. Around these issues, English has organized and chaired several policy workshops, and frequently presents at symposia and conferences.

KASIA KALINOWSKA is a senior in the History Department, concentrating in History of Science, with certificates in Ethnographic Studies and Global Health and Health Policy. Her junior independent work focused on the history of in vitro fertilization in Poland and her research interests lie generally in the intersection of gender, bioethics, and Eastern European culture. On campus, Kasia sings in the women’s a cappella group The Wildcats, performs
in student-run and departmental theatre productions, is a volunteer with the CONTACT crisis hotline, and is an ethnographic research assistant with the New Jersey Families Study.

REBEKAH NINAN is a senior from Nashville, Tennessee. She is in the Politics department focusing on International Relations and pursuing certificates in South Asian Studies and the History and Practice of Diplomacy. Her academic interests include civil and ethnic conflicts, responses to mass atrocities, refugee movements, proxy terrorist organizations, and power dynamics in South Asia. In terms of gender issues, she is interested in how sexual violence is used in conflict and the protections that international law provides for victims of sexual and gender-based conflict. Outside the classroom, Rebekah serves as the President of the Whig-Cliosophic Society, a Residential College Advisor, and is involved with the Princeton Debate Panel and Naacho South Asian Dance Company. She also advocates for refugee and migrant issues through the Princeton Clay Project, Princeton Advocates for Justice, and Princeton Students for the Rohingya.

SARAH ARIYAN SAKHA graduated in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts from the Woodrow Wilson School, with certificates in Values and Public Life, and Near Eastern Studies. On campus, she served as Editor-in-Chief of the Daily Princetonian and a Fellow with the Carl A. Fields Center for Diversity and Cultural Understanding. Previously, she has participated in advocacy for immigrants and refugees’ rights in the Middle East, including co-leading a Breakout trip through the Pace Center to Detroit/Dearborn, MI, to learn about refugee resettlement. Her research has focused on refugee and migrant issues, specifically around Syria and the U.S.-Mexico border. Her senior thesis looked at the integration of Iranian refugees and migrants in Sweden to make policy recommendations for the U.S. She is currently pursuing a Projects 55 Fellowship at the Rockefeller Foundation, on the Data & Technology/Innovation Team.

CAITLIN QUINN is a 2018 graduate of Princeton University, where she concentrated in the Woodrow Wilson School and earned certificates in Latin American Studies and Portuguese. An alumna of Princeton's Bridge Year Program in Salvador, Brazil, she also studied and interned abroad in Spain, Brazil, and Northern Ireland. As of fall 2018, Caitlin is pursuing a Master in Public Affairs at the Wilson School through the Scholars in the Nation’s Service Initiative (SINSI).

ANGELA WU of Denville, New Jersey, is a senior in the Woodrow Wilson School focusing on conflict and cooperation. She is also pursuing a certificate in American Studies. On campus, she is involved in advocacy regarding prison education, reproductive rights, and LGBTQ+ rights via the Petey Greene Program, Princeton Students for Reproductive Justice, and Princeton Pride Alliance respectively.