2023

Damsels in Defense: Exploring the Relationship Between Women and Violence Against Civilians During Armed Conflict

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Digital Object Identifier: https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2023.305

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DAMSELS IN DEFENSE: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

DAMSELS IN DEFENSE: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

Conventional wisdom dictates that women are mostly victims of violence in armed conflict, but recent studies reveal women are often active participants and perpetrators of violence as well. Meanwhile, research shows armed group composition is a frequent determinant of violence against civilians, but many unconventional, yet influential, actors have received little attention regarding this outcome. Furthermore, few studies provide quantitative and cross-national evidence of how women's shifting roles from victim to perpetrator affects violence against civilians. In this dissertation I examine the relationship between armed group composition, women, and violence against civilians in civil war by evaluating women's roles as both victims and active participants.

The first study mirrors the conventional wisdom that women are victims of conflict. I examine this victimization stance in relation to an unconventional actor- private military contractors (PMCs). Using the Private Military Contractors and the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict datasets I examine how states' employment of PMCs influences state-perpetrated sexual violence - a form of violence largely targeting girls and women. I argue that the increasing professionalism, reliance, and monitoring of PMCs contributes to their ability to help lessen sexual violence. The findings show that states employing PMCs commit less sexual violence than those not employing PMCs. This is especially true during the Global War on Terror period and for countries reliant on American PMCs.

The second and third studies use the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion dataset and the Georeferenced Events Dataset to depart from the view of women as victims of violence to explore women's active participation in rebel groups. The second study examines how women's participation as frontline combatants and noncombat outreach personnel in rebel groups influences one-sided violence (OSV). I contend that women's impact on rebel group behavior is contingent upon their role in the group. Women are stereotyped as pacifistic and nonviolent. This stereotype requires women on the frontline to be socialized to behave violently towards civilians to be taken seriously as combatants. At the same time, this stereotype allows women to go unsuspected as perpetrators of violence, increasing the lethality of their OSV attacks. Meanwhile, women in outreach positions legitimize the group, help them gain domestic and international support, and decrease their reliance on OSV to coerce support. I find support for both hypotheses.

The last chapter examines the relationship between women as military leaders in rebel groups and OSV. I argue that women who rise to the rank of military leader have demonstrated excessive violence against civilians in order to prove their capabilities as combatants. At the same time, groups with higher levels of female combatants are associated with greater OSV, and this is often the result of subjection to violent socialization. Because women in military

leadership roles likely underwent the same process to later rise in rank, they should see this process as justified in producing effective fighters and will, thus, tolerate these acts of violence. Therefore, groups with both women in military leadership positions and higher number of women combatants should be associated with even larger levels of OSV. I find support for both hypotheses. However, the results indicate that relationship between women military leaders and OSV is largely contingent upon the presence of female combatants.

This dissertation provides evidence that even unconventional actors are highly influential in shaping violence against civilians. Additionally, it illustrates that women experience conflict in multiple ways, and their shifting roles can contribute to rebel groups' behavior towards civilians in war.

KEYWORDS: Violence Against Civilians, One-sided Violence, Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict, Women in Conflict, Private Military Contractors, Rebel Groups

Baylee Harrell

07/11/2023

DAMSELS IN DEFENSE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STRUCTURES AND OUTCOMES

By
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07/11/2023
Date

To my Lilly.

May you always know you are special, you are loved, and you are the Lilly in my darkest of valleys.
I hope you find this piece as an inspiration that you can do anything,
but you always remember that you must do good in everything.
I love you all the way to Kentucky.

And to all the victims of war's fate—
the civilians that had never the chance to choose their own.
And to those who will inevitably succumb to the consequences of man's fallen nature in future wars.
May God rest your souls.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to a great many people (and pets) for getting me here. But first, I thank God for the life I was given and the fortune it has given me. I have done nothing to warrant the blessings I have received, but I hope to use them for good. Looking back now, I have no doubt God led me here for some reasons I can see and for others beyond my understanding. My God, How Great Thou Art.

I want to thank my momma and daddy for helping me get here and never letting me fall. Thank you for believing in me, for seeing my worth, and for helping me pay for the last 5 years because the stipends were not livable. These last few years have been filled with a lot of heartache and loss, and I thank you for helping me make it through from so many miles apart. I hope I have made you proud. Thank you for the DoorDash and Amazons orders you never asked to pay for, but later found out you did. I want to thank my momma because I know she is also vain enough to believe she warrants her own separate acknowledgement here. Thank you for always pushing me to strive for more, to see beyond the county line, and for instilling in me the importance of independence and to not depend on anyone else. I see the wistfulness in your eyes for the life you have given me and a fulfillment you receive in every little milestone along the way. I see the admiration you seem to have for me for a reason I'll never understand, but I thank you, nonetheless. The love and belief you have in me has pushed me through some very dark times in these last few years. Thank you for always making sure I looked good and for reassuring me of my worth when others minimized me for wanting to look good and be smart at the same time. Thank you for being a friend. And thank you Dolly Parton for always reminding me that even Backwoods Barbies deserve a chance. Thank you Iris for always making sure I was taken care of and looked good, for being someone who truly cared about

me, and for being not just a hair stylist, but a real friend. I want to thank my Lilly for the joy you bring to my life and for looking up to me. I am far from the best role model, but you do not need to know that, and I would never tell you. Thank you for understanding why I couldn't always be right there and for not resenting me for when I wasn't. Thank you for always being who you are and for taking care of Iris for me. All that I do is for you, and I pray one day these sacrifices will reap you great joy and happiness. Thank you for Ninnie for the random happies of cookware, kitchen towels, and Starbucks gift cards, and thank you Paw-Paw for finally admitting I am a good cook and that you are proud of me. I've come a long way from Murfreesboro Road. To Maw-Maw and Paw-Paw, I only wish you could be here to see me finish. Even though y'all had no idea what I was doing, it never stopped you from bragging and telling everyone how proud you were. I haven't forgotten what truly matters in life.

I am thankful to be American by birth and Southern by the grace of God. To my friends and everyone back home thank you for believing in me. Leaving home is one of the hardest things I've ever had to do, but I will always cherish my roots and carry home with me wherever I go. I want to thank Anna-Claire for always staying so close, for the Saturday morning phone calls from Colorado, for the visits to Kentucky, for giving Cheddar's a chance, for listening to me ramble about my mistakes in men, and for having an equal hatred for them, for always keeping up with pop culture and Bravo, and for always being as equally shallow as me. I want to thank Esther for her faith in me, for being there for me during some of the most painful times, for always being honest and thoughtful, and for being one of the very few pure, good souls out there. You are an admirable person, and you will always have a special place in my heart. I want to thank Mrs. Thorne for helping me see the world, and people, in a different way, and for always showing me it is okay to take pride in where you are from. I want to thank my undergraduate professors Dr. Graham, Dr. Collins, Dr. Bates, and Dr. Carrasco for helping

me look for schools, for helping me get into them, and for offering to help me in my first year when I didn't think I would make it through. I want to especially thank Carrasto for being a great mentor and friend and for going above and beyond what anyone could ever ask for from their professor, even after I graduated. If it weren't for you, I never would have even visited Kentucky. You saw potential in me and believed in me, and it has impacted me more than you can ever imagine. Thank you for being willing to listen to me about anything and everything and thank you for loving my Lilly. You are the one person that I can honestly look back on and say none of this would have ever been possible without you. You have been a blessing in my life in so many ways.

I want to thank my friends I made at UK. Y'all have been my family the last 5 years, and I pray those bonds never weaken. First, I want to thank everyone in my cohort for not putting up any resistance when I forced us all to be friends. These friendships have been invaluable. Thank you to Jacob for being kind and always spacing out 30 minutes before the end of Clayton's class so we never went over. Thank you to Tasnia for being the sweetest, most genuine person and for teaching me so much. It has been a privilege to know you and learn from you and to see little Moazz grow. Thank you Madison for your dry and painful humor, for all the help in methods, for being a shoulder to cry on even though you didn't know what to do, and for always answering the questions in classes when I made the professors turn their attention to you. It saved me a lot of embarrassment for not knowing what was going on. Thank you Rachael for being just as nerdy about North Carolina congressional maps as I am about political violence, for being there for me during everything in the last 5 years and listening to every drawn-out detail, and for your research on "rural folk." Our walks to and from class, coffee breaks, our culinary tour of Lexington, rocking out to Hannah Montana, and our last conference in grad school where you were equally as set on making sure the hotel had a really

nice tub, are some of my sweetest memories. Thank you to Sherelle for being so, so wonderful to me, for taking me under your wing, teaching me so much about life and faith, for showing me what a professional woman looks like, and for going out with me because I had nothing else to do and just wanted a friend. The strength in your faith has been so inspirational and has made me want to grow stronger in mine. You have been so patient with me in helping me succeed and do well, and I firmly believe your prayers helped me get through. Won't He do it? You are like a sister to me, and I will make sure we are never far apart because I cannot imagine not being close to you now.

Lastly to Kati (without the "e"), I've never felt a soul so close to mine, and I've never met someone with as free a spirit as yours. I have found love in you that I never thought was possible in a friendship. You are the best friend I will ever have. I cannot express just how much you mean to me and how detrimental you have been in the last five years of my life. You've helped me get through so many hard times and horrible men, and you have somehow felt every emotion as deeply as I have. You've given me so much comedic relief and happiness just by being who you are with your love for trees, outer space, smooth-coated otters, cheese, wine, foreign films, culture and learning new things, and for the repulsive sound of your voice. It is a friendship I never would have suspected largely because you are a witch. You are my family. You are my home away from home. I look forward to growing old with you in a cottage, washing our hair in streams, cooking, loving all the furry woodland creatures, and finding a compromise on our differences in home décor. To Roger, thank you for being my family and caring for me when you never had to. It was a blessing to know you and to have you as a friend, and I promise to take care of Kati. I miss you so much.

I want to thank Abbie for being so dear to me these last couple of years. For being someone that I can enjoy life's simplicities with, for being someone whose faith I admire, for

being a semblance of home, for being someone with those Southern Christian values, for picking berries with me, for appreciating a good fence, and for caring so deeply about me and my family. I want to thank Trey for all your help with methods because I still don't actually know them. I would say I owed you a lot for this, but since I helped you get together with your soon-to-be wife, I'm going to call it even. I want to thank Helen for being someone I can look up to and steering me in the right direction in grad school, for being so sweet to Lilly, for your love of my research and helping me on it, and for always staying in touch. You were always someone I looked up to for your intelligence, work ethic, and kindness in the department. Maybe now we will actually collaborate on something like we've talked about for so long.

I want to thank UK Healthcare for healing all my ailments and being so kind to me. I've come to know several of you well, and I know it is unlikely I will find such a wonderful team of physicians again. I especially want to thank Dr. Dale who is, hands down, my favorite doctor. Your stories are incredible, and you care dearly about your patients. I learned so much from you, not only about medicine, but about world events. I'll miss you back on the mountain. Thank you to the Office for Policy Studies on Violence Against Women for awarding me a fellowship. It was an honor to receive the Georgia Davis Power fellowship, and I hope my work will honor her legacy and help reduce violence against women in war.

To Jill, thank you for letting me be your first student. I hope I have made you proud. Thank you for having faith in me and my decisions, for the freedom you've given me in my research as well as the flexibility in deadlines I set for myself and inevitably would not meet, for editing all the grammatical errors I have because of my Mississippi education or because I loathe proofreading, for steering my research in the direction of female combatants and ultimately helping me create a full dissertation out of it, for reading so many revised versions of the same papers, for your patience in every single thing I've done, and for being a wonderful

advisor. Thank you to Clayton for your patience in seeing out what I was capable of and not dismissing me, for taking a chance on me and believing in me, for seeing the value in my work and bearing the pain of giving me compliments on it, for investing time in me and pushing me because you saw promise in me, for helping me with all my data problems, for allowing me to be a co-author with you and essentially just do whatever I wanted with the project, for actually caring, and for the jovial banter but still giving me constructive criticism. Thank you to Mark for pursuing me as a recruit and seeing my potential, for the initial meeting with you over the phone that lasted over an hour, always taking an interest in my work, for introducing me to so many wonderful scholars, for always knowing about really awesome research and sending it my way, for helping me view things from different perspectives and probe deeper, for all the additional helps on comps, for just good conversation, and for all the writing and data tips. That writing course has been of much more help than you would imagine. Thank you Janet for your kindness, offering insightful and constrictive feedback on my work, and for sending me resources for grad school and for my career afterwards. I couldn't have asked for a better outside committee member. Thank you to Steve for being someone to talk to, for being understanding, honest, and not dismissive, for being there when things got really hard, for truly caring about my well-being and future, and for the help with methods that I will never be able to understand to the level you can. Thank you to Tiffany for your genuine excitement in wanting to see me succeed, for listening to me, and for all the hours of help you put in helping me when you had nothing to gain from it. Thank you to Eva for your kindness and care, for helping me with anything I needed, for your humor and bright demeanor, and for always making me feel at home. Thank you to all the professors in the department who played a role in getting me where I am today and wanting to help me succeed. You have made my time here

a wonderful experience and a transformative chapter of my life. I owe a debt to each and every one of you.

Lastly, but most importantly, I want to thank Sheriff Callie and Rasputin for being the very best friends I could ask for. You are both absolutely perfect angels. Thank you for not tearing up (mostly) anything in my apartment, for getting better at riding in the car, for all your cuddles and love and laying on my arms while I needed to type, for always being so happy just to see me, for loving on me through tears and dark times, and for being all that I had so many nights. I hope I can repay you soon with bigger cat towers and more room to lay and play outside with the birds and squirrels. You mean more to me than you can ever realize in your little kitty minds, and I love you both from the deepest depths of my heart.

I'll end this section by sharing a quote that inspired me throughout the writing of this dissertation:

"One of the great things about books is sometimes there are some fantastic pictures." - George W. Bush

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

"He who wishes to fight must first count the cost."

-Sun Tzu

1.1 Known Knowns

1.1.1 Women in Conflict

Men are warriors, and women are spectators: this is the conventional wisdom on warfare. War is a gendered phenomenon in which men do the fighting while women do the watching (Goldstein, 2001). Not only is the fighting gendered, but so is the suffering. Men are typically victims of lethal violence while women are targeted for sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1993; Carpenter, 2003; Plümper and Neumayer, 2006). Scholarly attention has largely reflected these gendered notions of conflict, often focusing on women's experience in war as victims of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). This focus is not without merit. For example, in 2021 the United Nations reported that of the 3,293 verified cases of CRSV, women and girls were the targets 97% of the time (United Nations, 2022a). Furthermore, sexual violence continues in post-conflict environments as well through sex trafficking, intimate partner abuse, forced marriages, being forced to deliver and raise "war babies", and continued perpetration of sexual violence by armed groups (Cohen and Nordås, 2014; Beber et al., 2016; Atim, Mazurana, and Marshak, 2018; Bell, Flynn, and Machain, 2018; Østby, Leiby, and Nordås,

2019). CRSV may take many forms during and after war, but one constant remains— women and girls are the predominant victims (United Nations, 2022a).[1]

Although strides have been made in drawing awareness to the crime of CRSV through scholarly research and legal progressions like codifying the crime into law and punishing transgressors, this form of abuse is still ever-present. Many of most egregious recent cases of CRSV come from Islamic State's (IS) treatment of Yazidi women and girls during their years-long quest to establish a caliphate. The Yazidi population were explicitly targeted and were considered devil worshippers all the while IS qualified raping these women and girls as an act of worship (Graham-Harrison, 2017). In the midst of their pillaging of the Middle East North Africa region, in 2014 IS held captive thousands of Yazidis populated around Mount Sinjar. In a one-week span IS managed to kill 5,000 men and boys while taking captive 7,000 women and girls to become sex slaves. These women and girls endured being repeatedly sold in sex slavery, sexual assaults, gang rapes, forced marriages, forced pregnancies and abortions, beatings, some were murdered, and others committed suicide as a way to escape their living hell (Global Justice Center, 2016). Not only have these acts covered every aspect of sexual violence, but the international community now recognizes IS's commission of CRSV as genocide (United Nations Security Council, 2021). IS is considered one of most atrocious perpetrators of CRSV in modern history, and they are accompanied by numerous armed groups that continue to commit CRSV to this day. While the crime remains unchanged, the nature of warfare has evolved, bringing with it, new and unconventional actors. These unfamiliar faces of conflict now threaten women and girls with an all too familiar crime.

[1] I do not discount male victimization of sexual violence during war. But for the purpose of this dissertation, I am primarily focusing on females as I am interested in their varying roles and experiences in conflict.

Contrary to being the majority victims of CRSV, females are the minority participants in war. Even so, women can, and do, actively engage in various roles such as medics, cooks, spies, honeytraps, couriers, recruiters, caregivers, fundraisers, and more (Coulter, 2008, 2009; Viterna, 2013; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Schlesinger, 2022; Loken, 2022; Loken and Matfess, 2023). In fact, one example comes from prior victims of sexual violence by IS. After escaping captivity, several of these women went on to form a unit within the Peshmerga. Driven by vengeance to defeat their captors and fight for their people, these survivors referred to themselves as the "Sun Ladies" (McKay, 2020, 99-106). The Sun Ladies proved effective intelligence gatherers and combatants, participating in combat and being among the fiercest fighters (Bellow, Stephen, and Tricart, 2018; McKay, 2020, 101).

Aside from the example of the Sun Ladies, women's active participation in conflict is not a newfound phenomenon. Estimates indicate women have participated in upwards of 60% of civil wars in the last four decades (Henshaw, 2016; Wood and Thomas 2017; Loken and Matfess, 2023). Their motivation stems from a variety of circumstances like improved representation and rights, revenge, belief in the cause, defending their families, and feelings of necessity (Wood, 2003; Henshaw, 2016; Thomas and Wood, 2017; Wood, 2019). Research reveals that women make optimal recruits for rebel groups by increasing the legitimacy of the group, providing a unique set of skills, building ties with locals, and attracting local and international support to name a few (Viterna, 2013; Henshaw, 2016; Thomas and Wood, 2017; Wood, 2019; Manekin and Wood, 2020). The reasons for women joining and groups recruiting them are numerous and well understood. However, women's behavior and influence in armed groups is less clear with some arguing women are associated with increased group violence while others argue they are associated with decreased, or no change in, violence at all (Cohen,

2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2016; Mehrl, 2020, 2022). This uncertainty remains a pressing matter that scholars of gender and conflict must navigate.

This dissertation initially uses the lens of women as victims and then moves to view women as active participants in conflict. In doing so, this dissertation not only contributes to understanding women's varying involvement in war, but it draws attention to armed group dynamics that may affect civilian victimization in civil war. First, I take a closer look at "unfamiliar" faces in conflict—private military contractors—and examine how they influence CRSV. I then assess the ambiguities of women's active participation in conflict by analyzing the different roles women play in rebel groups and how they impact lethal civilian targeting. It is to these points that I now turn.

1.1.2 Gender and Violence Against Civilians

Violence against civilians encompasses both lethal and non-lethal forms of victimization. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will focus on two distinct forms: sexual violence and one-sided violence. Before diving into sexual violence in armed conflict, it is important to clearly define what constitutes this act. The most commonly used definition is derived from the International Criminal Court and defines sexual violence as the "direct force or physical violence and/or the threat of force or coercion" (Cohen and Nordås, 2014). This covers seven forms of violence: rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture (Cohen and Nordås, 2014).[2] The international community has only recently codified acts of CRSV as war crimes, crimes

[2] Each form of sexual violence comprises its own distinct definition as well. Rape is considered the "coerced (under physical force or threat of physical force against the victim or a third person) penetration of the anus or vagina by the penis or another object, or of the mouth by the penis." (Wood 2006). Sexual violence encompasses rape and other such as non-penetrating sexual assault and coerced undressing.

against humanity, and even genocide. Yet is often considered war's oldest, but least condemned crime (United Nations, 2022a).

Conventional wisdom has long held that sexual violence is an unfortunate, but inevitable byproduct of war. Indeed, all actors of conflict have committed or have been complicit in CRSV including peacekeepers, rebels, states, and pro-government militias (Cohen and Nordås, 2014; Nordas and Cohen, 2021). The United Nations estimates that for every case of rape that is reported, there are 10-20 that go unreported or unaddressed (United Nations, 2021). However, over the years researchers have chipped away at the notion of CRSV as unavoidable, drawing attention to its fluctuating levels. The findings reveal armed groups perpetrate CRSV for many reasons: private and individual motivations, as a strategy used to gain an advantage over the adversary, to acquire the "spoils of war", as a practice carried out from below and tolerated by those at the top, as a tool used to increase ties and unit cohesion, or as a policy adopted towards certain groups (Skjelsbæk, 2001; Butler, Gluch, and Mitchell, 2007; Bloom, 2011; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Wood, 2009, 2014, 2018; Hoover Green, 2018; Nordås and Cohen, 2021; Revkin and Wood, 2021).

Although CRSV and one-sided violence (OSV) are both forms of civilian victimization, they are distinct and warrant their own evaluations. CRSV encompasses nonlethal acts of violence while OSV encompasses "the deliberate use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians which results in at least 25 deaths a year" (Pettersson, 2022, 3).[3] Similar to CRSV, the long-held consensus on OSV was that it was "war by other means" (Valentino 2000). Civilian killings were classified as collateral damage, the result of ancient, tribal hatreds, terroristic sadism, or cleansing of

[3] CRSV is not always nonlethal, but it may sometimes result in death. In this case, the act would constitute as both an act of CRSV and OSV.

conquered lands (Valentino, 2014). However, the 20th century soon became known as the most murderous century in history and the "age of genocide" (Power, 2002). Political violence resulted in over 100 million dead with the majority of this number owed to civilian fatalities (Valentino, 2014). Scholars recognized the need to reevaluate age old perceptions and simple explanations of political violence against civilians.

This newly devoted line of research led to several revelations of the logic behind why armed groups commit OSV, and it dismissed preconceived notions that dominated the 1990s (Valentino, 2014). Studies revealed that OSV can be used as a strategy in war to "drain the sea" of suspected insurgents and their supporters, coerce civilians into supporting an armed group, as a way to extract concessions from the government, to demobilize opponents, engage in tit-for-tat violence, signal to the population that the government is unwilling or incapable of protecting them and ultimately gain locals' compliance (Azam and Hoeffler, 2002; Gagnon, 2004; Valentino et al., 2004; Kalyvas, 2006; Downes, 2006; Woodm 2010; Raleigh and Choi, 2016; Hultman, 2012; Fjelde and Hultman, 2013). Other times OSV is the result of organizational attributes. Some groups lack the ability or initiative to effectively discipline rogue combatants that engage in opportunistic violence while others carry out OSV in attempt to dissuade defection and create loyalty to the group. Additionally, groups may receive support and funding through natural resources or outside supporters, and thus do not feel the need to restrain from OSV to gain what they already have. Alternatively, some groups refrain from OSV in attempts to attract external donors (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007; Beber and Blattman, 2013; Fujii, 2013; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood, 2014; Manekin, 2020).

Armed groups' perpetration of OSV is dependent upon a number of factors, and there are many reasons they choose to kill civilians. Nonetheless, armed groups are made up of individuals with their own unique preferences and behavior. These individuals interact with

one another within the social context of the group, and these interactions can be drastically altered when they violate the traditional gendered framework of war. It is these interactions that shape the group dynamics and overall behavior towards civilians. And it is these groups dynamics and behavior that motivate the focus of this dissertation. How do armed group dynamics influence violence against civilians?

1.2 Known Unknowns

Moving from traditional roles as victims to non-traditional roles as participants, women alter armed group dynamics, interactions, and, ultimately, engagement with civilians. Therefore, the intersection of women's involvement in conflict and the perpetration of violence against civilians raises many unanswered questions: the things we know that we do not know. These "known unknowns" about women's involvement in conflict are the foundation of this dissertation.

Research findings on the general patterns in conflict, such as those on CRSV, cannot be understated or undervalued. But they do not necessarily generalize to shifts in warfare. Scholars focus on conventional actors like state militaries and rebel groups, and some even focus on nonconventional actors like pro-government militias. However, these are not the only actors involved in modern warfare, nor are they necessarily the most common. The use of private military contractors in civil conflict has increased exponentially in the last 20-30 years (Singer, 2003; Casendino, 2017; McFate, 2017). This introduces another actor that has and can target women and girls for sexual violence, but this is a facet of civilian victimization we know little about. This is the first question I seek to answer in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, "How does the presence of PMCs influence the perpetration of CRSV?"

But women do not always lack agency and become victims of conflict. Many women decide to join armed groups and actively engage. Much of the research on women's involvement as participants focuses on why they join and examines their role as combatants even though we know their role is not static (Coulter, 2008, 2009; Viterna, 2013; Wood, 2019; Loken and Matfess, 2022, 2023). However, beyond this acknowledgement, we know very little about how their multifaceted involvement influences the group- specifically, the group's perpetration of OSV. This is the next question I seek to answer in chapters 3 and 4, "How does women's presence in rebel groups influence the perpetration of violence against civilians?". In the next section I provide a more detailed description of the procession of this dissertation and how I proceed in answering my questions of interest.

1.2.1 Outline of Dissertation

In chapter 2, I approach women's involvement in war through their traditional roles- as victims. At the same time, I examine a potential determinant of their victimization of sexual violence that has yet to be evaluated- the role of PMCs. In providing the first empirical assessment of PMCs' impact on CRSV, I argue that, contrary to popular belief, PMC presence is negatively associated with the level of CRSV during armed conflict. Both states and PMCs have incentives to respect human rights. States prefer to avoid international condemnation while PMCs aim to be rehired. Association with human rights abuses damages both parties, leading each party to monitor the other to ensure good behavior. Furthermore, the global conflicts of the last 20 years have changed the face of warfare, producing professionalized warfighters and contractors. This raises the standards for PMCs, and results in more professionalism, especially in American contractors. Using the Private Military Contractors and Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict datasets from 1990-2008, I find PMC employment by

state militaries is negatively associated with state-perpetrated CRSV. Additionally, both American contractors and contractors in general, employed in the post-Global War on Terror period are associated with lower levels of CRSV. However, the absence of PMCs is associated with more CRSV abuse by the state in the post-Global War on Terror period.

In chapters 3 and 4, I shift my focus from women as victims in conflict to examine their role as participants and perpetrators. In focusing on women as agents, I am interested not in how females are victimized but instead how females influence civilian victimization. Both chapters rely on the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion dataset and the Georeferenced Events Dataset to evaluate how female rebels influence rebel groups' perpetration of OSV. Chapter 3 examines women's involvement in rebel groups as frontline fighters and noncombat outreach personnel. This chapter provides the first cross-national analysis of women rebels' influence on OSV arguing that women's impact is conditional upon their role within the group. Because war is a masculine phenomenon where violence is plauded, women combatants are socialized to behave violently. Gendered perceptions of women as peaceful push women on the frontline to defy stereotypes and be exceptionally violent to be taken seriously as combatants. Meanwhile, these same stereotypes allow women to be especially lethal in their attacks because society does not expect it. Alternatively, women in outreach roles are tasked with acquiring support through nonviolent means. Perceptions of women as legitimate, trustworthy, and peaceful make women in outreach roles effective in garnering support for the group, reducing the group's need to kill civilians to coerce support. Stereotypes of women are responsible for women killing both more and less civilians. Consequently, rebel groups composed of larger shares of frontline women fighters commit higher levels of OSV while groups using women in outreach roles commit less OSV. The results lend support to both hypotheses.

Finally, in chapter 3 I focus on women's agency in conflict as leaders. I argue that rebel groups that have women in military leadership positions should commit more OSV than those without women in these positions. Women that select into military leadership roles already exhibit more masculinity. Even so, women are typically viewed as inept and incapable in conflict which compels them to demonstrate their fighting capabilities. Women do so by behaving and tolerating more violence than males in similar positions, cementing their competence and seriousness. This should manifest into higher rates of OSV by the rebel group. I subsequently posit that groups with both women military leaders and those with high levels of women frontline fighters should be especially prone to committing OSV over groups with few women frontline fighters or without women military leaders. As combatants, women often undergo a violent socialization process to demonstrate their masculinity and capacity for violence in order to prove themselves to the rest of the group. The more women combatants are introduced to the group, the more women undergo this socialization process, and the more OSV is carried out. Women in military leadership roles should see this process as justified in producing effective fighters and will tolerate these acts of violence. The combination of women leaders and a higher prevalence of female combatants should result in the greatest level of OSV perpetration. The results lend support to both hypotheses, but I find the relationship between women rebel military leaders and higher perpetration of OSV to be largely contingent on the prevalence of women combatants. The presence of both women military leaders and higher numbers of female combatants are associated with more OSV than groups with few female combatants.

CHAPTER 2. SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE SHADOWS: PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS AND THE PERPETRATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

2.1 Introduction

"I'm here for the money. I'm a mercenary, and I'm fine with that."
Morgan Lerette, former Blackwater contractor (The War Horse, 2020)

Blackwater was one of the most notorious private military companies- "a professional, corporate entity that delivers military services for monetary compensation" (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2012). The use of private military contractors (PMCs), sometimes referred to as "shadow soldiers" or "guns for hire," has drastically increased over the last thirty years, and now outnumbers conventional forces in defense settings, with a decline nowhere in sight (Casendino, 2017). Additionally, Russian and Chinese PMCs are expanding their presence throughout Africa (Cragin and MacKenzie, 2020; Ersozoglu, 2021).

There is substantial controversy over the nature of PMCs and their growing reliance in war. Contractors are often referred to as "war profiteers"- a reflection of their financial incentives and emotional dissociation from conflicts. For example, the most notable "war profiteer" is former Navy SEAL and Blackwater founder Erik Prince who allegedly helped carry out coups, charged $6,500 per airline seat to people trying to escape during the fall of Afghanistan, and sought to privatize the war in Afghanistan and portions of Ukraine's military in its war against Russia (Copp, 2018; Nissenbaum, 2021; Shuster, 2021). Much less noticed, are the good scenarios involving contractors. Blackwater conducted rescue operations to save stranded missionaries in Kenya free of charge (Brooks, 2007). Meanwhile, Military Professional Resources Inc. was awarded a contract to train African militaries for peacekeeping

and humanitarian efforts as part of the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (Aning, Jaye, and Atuobi, 2008).

Well-known anecdotes lead people to assume that PMCs are nefarious, and there has been little systematic evidence to counterclaim this perception. This study provides that evidence. I argue that the employment of PMCs can *decrease* conflict related sexual violence (CRSV) perpetrated by state militaries. PMCs can have a restraining effect and thus reduce civilian victimization- specifically, CRSV, through three mechanisms: monitoring, professionalism, and experience. First, the nature of private military contracting has evolved resulting in increased reliance, legislation, stricter standards, and inspections, making it more costly to commit CRSV. Contractors may serve as a monitoring mechanism of the state militaries employing them, while states reciprocally monitor contractors to ensure compliance and avoid affiliation with human rights abuses. Second, PMCs are often considered professionalized war fighters. They frequently serve as force multipliers to train armies to use the same tactics and behavior they have mastered themselves. These extend to the client state, where the PMC is reflected through the state's behavior. Third, the Global War on Terror (GWOT) generated protracted conflicts and renewed possibility for combat experience, especially for Americans. This new wave of warfare produced numerous combat veterans who later worked as contractors with their extensive experience and training accompanying them (Singer, 2003; McFate, 2017,). Cumulatively, these three factors lead to states employing professional warfighters that can dissuade CRSV.

Much scholarly work on PMCs focuses on conflict processes like duration, severity, recurrence, and outcomes (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2012; Petersohn, 2014, 2017; Avant and Neu, 2019; Faulkner, Lambert, and Powell, 2019; Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu, 2020). Only recently has focus shifted to PMCs impact on civilian victimization, and to date, only

one such quantitative assessment exists (Penel and Petersohn, 2022). While the importance of this piece cannot be understated, it is limited to lethal violence against civilians. But there are many ways violence can manifest in conflict- one being CRSV, a distinct form of civilian victimization (Wood, 2009; Benson and Gizelis, 2020; Nordås and Cohen, 2021). Dead bodies are easier to observe and count than the invisible wounds of CRSV that often go underreported. Moreover, not all conflicts that experience one-sided violence experience CRSV. Recent studies identify circumstances in which governments, rebels, and peacekeepers perpetrate sexual abuse, but they have yet to do so for PMCs (see Butler, Gluch, and Mitchell, 2007; Bloom, 2011; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Johansson and Hultman, 2019; Wood, 2006; 2009). The limited ability to oversee and punish PMCs coupled with the underreporting of CRSV makes the perpetration and consequences of this crime by PMCs more difficult to observe and assess. But this also makes it all the more crucial to investigate. Therefore, this study tasks itself with being the first to empirically evaluate the relationship between PMCs and CRSV.

Using data on Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict (Cohen and Nordås, 2014) and the employment of PMCs by state militaries from 1990-2008 (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2020), I examine the impact of PMCs on state-perpetrated CRSV. My results show, in general, states that use PMCs commit less CRSV. Furthermore, states employing contractors post-GWOT, and states relying on American contractors also perpetrate less CRSV.

This study makes several contributions. First, it is normatively important in advancing our knowledge of CRSV. Understanding the relationship between PMCs and CRSV can help policymakers realize the necessity of adequate oversight and training to mitigate risks associated with PMCs. Second, this study provides a foundation for scholarly expansion on the topic by highlighting its importance for future research. Given the frequency of both contractors and CRSV, the importance of these findings should not be understated. Finally,

the evidence provided can put to rest some of the preconceived notions of contractors as greedy, bloodthirsty, and without regard for the casualties of conflict.

2.2 Private Military Contractors

The post-Cold War period saw an influx of PMC reliance and their "corporatization" soon legitimized PMCs (Singer, 2003). Western states decreased their support and intervention in failing states, creating a security vacuum that was filled by PMCs (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005). For example, from 1990-2007 nearly 85% of failed and failing states sought PMC services (Branovic, 2011). But PMCs intervene in conflicts all over for various actors with governments being the biggest consumer and Africa seeing the most intervention (Avant and Neu, 2019; Petersohn et al., 2022). However, there seems to be no apparent pattern to where and which conflicts PMCs are most likely to intervene (Avant and Neu, 2019; Tkach, 2020; Petersohn, 2017; Petersohn et al., 2022).

The logic of defense forces' preference to use PMCs is straightforward: efficiency, reduced costs, and lower detection. Beginning with efficiency, the purpose of PMCs is to supplement or replace ill-equipped armies (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005). For weaker states lacking strong military capabilities, PMCs act as force multipliers to train and build inept militaries into self-sufficient fighting entities, strengthening their security apparatus. For example, after the Liberian civil war, DynCorp International successfully rebuilt the Liberian army to be one of the strongest in the region (McFate 2010). In dire situations, PMCs have been deployed to prevent regime collapse and have successfully averted coups d'état (Uessler, 2008; McFate, 2017).

PMCs' military efficiency can alter the trajectory of war. Intervention on behalf of weak states increases their effectiveness and capabilities to fight their adversary. This levels the

playing field between the warring parties and increases conflict severity (Petersohn, 2017). Severity also increases when multiple companies are used either through collaborative efforts or competition against other companies. PMCs fulfill their obligations to help defeat the opposition, improve military effectiveness, and kill enemy combatants. The result is a stronger military that can shorten conflict duration and defeat the opponent (Petersohn, 2017; Faulkner, Lambert, and Powell, 2019; Avant and Neu, 2019; Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu, 2020). These benefits are amplified when the company is publicly traded as opposed to private. Because public PMCs are subject to greater transparency and accountability to stakeholders, their consequences for failure are worse than for private companies (Tkach, 2020; Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu, 2020).

In terms of costs, PMCs can reduce the monetary and political price of war. Conventional armies are paid annual salaries and are provided with long-term benefits like healthcare, retirement, and financial assistance even after exiting the service. Meanwhile PMCs are paid for their contract term and receive no additional benefits, saving the government money in the long-run, (Singer, 2003; Cancian, 2008; Kelty, Schnak, and Langkamp, 2012), and their mobilization is quicker than peacekeeping forces (Shearer, 1998). Politically speaking, opting for contractors is less costly. Because PMCs are contracted out, there is less oversight on government spending on contractors, whereas spending on conventional forces is more public. As the public grows war weary and is critical of military spending, the ambiguity surrounding contracting costs can be beneficial in a prolonged military operation because the costs are less observable by the public (Avant, 2016). This is especially advantageous for Western and other democracies whose domestic audiences expect greater transparency and input.

Finally, contractors are less likely to be detected. For governments looking to evade accountability and retain plausibly deniability, contracting out forces is appealing (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005; Leander, 2010). Private contractors provide the professional experience and effectiveness of conventional militaries, circumvent official numbers of boots on the ground, and their lack of transparency in funding helps to evade public scrutiny for their price (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005; Avant and Sieglman, 2010). Within the U.S., contractors are not subject to the Freedom of Information Act or to the same level of transparency as government employees (Singer, 2003; Cohen and Arieli, 2011). Moreover, legislation regulating contractor behavior lags that of state militaries (Stanton and Frank, 2020).

Arguably, the biggest criticism of PMCs is their relationship with human rights. Contractors' deployment to foreign conflict zones means they can be detached from the conflict's purpose. Coupled with financial incentives, this can lead contractors to join both legitimate and illegitimate forces that have little regard for human rights (Leander, 2005; Uessler, 2008; Batka, Dunigan, and Burns, 2020). Anecdotal evidence suggests contractors have engaged in significant human rights violations, but the extent to which is difficult to ascertain due to their limited oversight (Leander, 2005; 2010; Fitzsimmons, 2013). They have been scrutinized not only by human rights monitors, but military personnel have criticized their "cowboy" behavior and the inability to punish it (Fitzsimmons, 2013; Petersohn, 2013).

Evidence does exist to counter damaging assertions of PMC motivations and conduct. Surveys of PMCs show they are driven by the same motives as conventional military personnel (Franke and von Boemcken, 2011). Contractors consider themselves respective of human rights and wanting simply to serve their country and while making good money doing so (Franke and von Boemcken, 2011; Batka, Dunigan, and Burns, 2020). PMCs incentives are not always nefarious, but instead, they are motivated by the financial prospects of contracting

which requires maintaining a good reputation to be rehired. And while some military leaders criticize contractors, others report they aid in combatting insurgency and reducing violence (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter, 2011; Special Investigator General for Iraq Reconstruction ,2012; Petersohn, 2013, 2017). Their assertion is not unsupported as recent studies show PMCs are not necessarily associated with abuses but can, at times, actually lower abuses (Avant and Neu ,2019; Tkach, 2020; Petersohn, 2013; Penel and Petersohn, 2022).

Contractors are becoming more prominent in conflict environments for numerous reasons. They are used because they have the ability to alter conflict. Their influence extends to armed group behavior and civilian victimization. However, CRSV is a distinct form of abuse (Benson and Gizelis, 2020), and because PMCs can lessen other human rights abuses, it does not mean this translates to CRSV. As such, there is still a need to understand whether, and how, PMCs impact CRSV.

2.3 Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

Conflict related sexual violence has received increased attention in recent years (see, for example, Wood, 2006; 2009; Cohen, 2015; 2016; Erikkson and Baaz, 2013; Loken, 2016; Cohen and Nordås, 2021). Prior to this rise, conventional wisdom suggested CRSV was an unfortunate byproduct, or "weapon of war" (Brownmiller, 1993; Card, 1996; Erikkson and Baaz, 2013; Nordås and Cohen, 2021). CRSV was equated to killing civilians and repression, in general, overlooking its unique occurrence (Meger, 2016). However, recent scholarship reveals that CRSV is a distinct form of civilian victimization that may arise from opportunity, personal motivations, strategic incentives, socialization efforts, or as a tolerated practice (Butler, Gluch, and Mitchell, 2007; Wood, 2009; 2014; 2018; Bloom ,2011; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; 2016; Cohen and Nordås, 2021).

Early work viewed CRSV as a result of opportunism. Individual rather than group motivation was the primary driver. War disrupts society, weakens institutions, and leaves women and girls vulnerable. Men serve as the primary fighters away from their homes, wives, and societal constraints. This provides the opportunity to rape without the repercussions they would face in peacetime from the law and society (Wood, 2009). Furthermore, commanders may be unable to enforce behaviors and discipline their troops. The opportunity to commit CRSV once again presents itself because consequences cannot be delivered (Butler, Gluch, and Mitchell, 2007; Wood, 2009; Hoover Green, 2011; 2016). Other times, CRSV occurs not because of the inability to stop it, but because there is no desire to do so. Here, the act is not ordered, but it is also not punished by choice. Because some combatants want to commit CRSV, it is tolerated and becomes a practice (Wood, 2018). Some groups are more intentional in their perpetration of CRSV and see it as strategically valuable (Bloom, 2011; Erikkson Baaz and Stern, 2013; Wood, 2014). Here, "vae victis" dictates that women are a prize for the victors- the "spoils of war." But CRSV can be used strategically in a number of ways: to intimidate, coerce support and compliance, humiliate, "cleanse" the grounds through force, and ultimately break the will of the opposition. On the other hand, some groups intentionally refrain from perpetrating CRSV because they find more value in a "hearts and minds" approach (Wood, 2006, 2014; Leiby, 2009; Bloom, 2011; Erikkson Baaz and Stern, 2013). Finally, recent studies find that gang rape may have unintentional strategic value through socializing combatants and increasing unit cohesion (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2016).

All parties, including rebels, government actors, and even peacekeepers, have been complicit in committing CRSV, but states commit considerably more CRSV (Cohen and Nordås, 2014). But CRSV does not necessarily manifest itself just because war breaks out. Gendered inequalities and violence in peacetime often extend to conflict scenarios (Skjelsbæk,

2001; Davies and True, 2015). This emphasizes the importance of institutions in regulating CRSV and instilling norms (Butler and Jones, 2016; Willis, 2021). Similarly, groups' organizational structure matters. Those relying on forced recruitment often lack pre-existing social ties between combatants, and CRSV is used to augment these ties (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b). Even if individuals are not predispositioned to be sexually violent, the group needs supersede that of the individual (Hover Green, 2016; Loken, 2016). For example, even though women are the majority victims of CRSV, the presence of women combatants in a group does not lessen CRSV. Instead, women often give way to group norms and become perpetrators themselves (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2016).

Third-party intervention in conflict also influences CRSV. Biased interventions alter power dynamics between rebels and states leading to strategic shifts in behavior. Rebels receiving third-party support can increase their capabilities relative to the government, leading the state to resort to drastic recruitment measures and CRSV to combat the enemy. Meanwhile increased external support for the state lessens reliance on CRSV (Johansson and Sarwari, 2019). Peacekeeping, especially, can alter CRSV. Peacekeepers boost monitoring of behavior thereby increasing detection and raising the costs of CRSV. However, not all missions are equal. Larger missions, those with security forces and observers, and those with mandates to protect are best at curtailing state-perpetrated CRSV (Kirschner and Miller, 2019; Johansson and Hultman, 2019).

Recent exploration into pro-government militias (PGMs) is invaluable for understanding the relationship between government affiliated groups and wartime behavior. Similar to PMCs, states use PGMs to supplement or outsource violence. States may receive international condemnation for human rights abuses, and as a result, shift operations to PGMs while maintaining plausible deniability and avoiding accountability (Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe,

2012; Mitchell, Carey, and Butler, 2014; Stanton, 2015; Carey and Mitchell, 2017). PGMs provide a route for governments to conduct operations covertly, deny them overtly, and still achieve their political goals. A recent study on CRSV and PGMs' illustrates when PGMs are trained by government forces, norms are transferred and extended from the state to the PGM forces. PGMs mirror the states' perpetration of CRSV as an acceptable practice rather than a direct order (Cohen and Nordås, 2015). PMCs operate similarly here when working with states and diffusing practices. Moreover, PMCs are frequently comprised of former special operations forces, furnishing a shadow force of the best fighters- something even PGMs cannot claim. This makes state reliance on PMCs all the more tempting (McFate, 2017; Batka, Dunigan, and Burns, 2020).

Despite the growing understanding of CRSV, there are still important unanswered questions. Research has focused on the motivations and actions of armed groups like state militaries, rebels, and PGMs. However, their presence in conflict is now often surmounted by PMCs, and yet, we know nothing of how these contractors influence CRSV (Casendino, 2017). The purpose of this study is to remedy this absence.

2.4 Private Military Contractors and Sexual Violence

Broadly speaking, I argue states employing PMCs during civil war are less likely to commit CRSV than states not employing PMCs. As force multipliers, PMCs have the ability to shape armed group behavior. I subsequently argue that the backgrounds and reputational concerns of PMCs and the states employing them influence CRSV. There are three main mechanisms by which PMCs can alter the behavior of state militaries: monitoring, professionalism, and experience.

Although this argument may seem counterintuitive given anecdotal evidence of bad contractor behavior, it substantiates evidence of good contractor behavior. PMCs in Africa are pivotal in the fight against Boko Haram having conducted successful operations, retaken territory, and safeguarded civilians (Manson and Wallas, 2015). Additionally, during the 2012 Benghazi terrorist attacks several contractors were killed while protecting U.S. government sites and personnel (Zuckoff et al., 2014). Evidence of good behavior is supported beyond just anecdotes. In several instances, PMCs are accredited for ending wars and saving lives. Studies show Iraqi forces' performance improved when they worked alongside US contractors but degenerated once Iraq took over their own forces. PMCs even outperformed conventional US forces at times in the Iraq war (Petersohn, 2013). I aim to understand what factors drive such behavior.

The post-WWII era sparked a focus on human rights. Human rights norms developed and became institutionalized, increasing the costs of violations (Risse-Kappen et al., 1999). The Geneva Conventions defined what constituted war crimes, but until the end of the 20th century, CRSV was largely ignored. The Bosnian War in the early 1990s shifted attention to CRSV (Crawford, 2017). Rape first constituted a crime against humanity with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and it was reinforced as an act of genocide in the Rwandan criminal tribunals. The Rome Statute in the International Criminal Court (ICC) officially named CRSV a war crime in 1998. In 2000, the United Nations (UN) Security Council passed Resolution 1325 aimed at preventing CRSV, and since, numerous resolutions and laws have been created to address and punish CRSV. There is more focus on CRSV now than ever before. Armed groups are more closely monitored and increasingly likely to face repercussions for CRSV.

Regarding monitoring and state behavior, research shows the presence of third parties can lead to improvements in human rights practices, especially CRSV. Monitoring by peacekeepers has been attributed to longer lasting peace and reductions in civilian violence by states (Johansson and Hultman, 2019; Kirschner and Miller, 2019). Furthermore, pressure from third parties and military personnel can improve state human rights practices (Murdie and Davis, 2012; Bell, Clay, and Martinez Machain, 2016). Growing priority on appropriate human rights practices and CRSV means states face both internal and external pressure to abide by international law and norms (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005; 2007; Cohen, Hoover Green, and Wood, 2013). States risk sanctions and public naming and shaming by the international audience and nongovernmental associations (Murdie and Davis, 2012). When states develop a bad reputation it signals they are likely to violate norms again and jeopardizes their future interactions with other states (Guzman, 2008). Therefore, states face reputational, political, and economic consequences for bad behavior and human rights abuses (Simmons, 2000; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005; 2007; Franklin, 2008). The monitoring mechanisms taking place may be more complex in the case of PMCs. Contractors may be perceived as monitors of state behavior, but states may also monitor contractors. This mutual monitoring should reinforce good behavior of both parties.

"Reputation is the primary currency in the mercenary world" (McFate, 2019). States are not alone is their reputational concerns, but rather, PMCs hold these concerns, too. Private military companies are businesses whose main goal is securing profits (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005; Leander, 2005). Companies must bid against one another to win contracts (Singer, 2003; Tkach, 2020). Competition means companies are incentivized to do the job well to be hired in the future. Moreover, PMCs are employed by a variety of clientele including human rights organizations- the very ones who monitor and shame abusers (Petersohn et al., 2022). Not

only do human rights abuses risk future state contracts, but PMCs risk contracts with other clients. Lastly, the corporate structure of many companies requires transparency and reviews from stakeholders, opening the door for repercussions from within on top of competition between companies (Tkach, 2020; Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2020). Taken together these monitoring mechanisms incentivize professionalism, meeting contractual obligations, and respect for human rights (Singer, 2003; Avant, 2005; McFate, 2017).

States employ PMCs to replace or improve their armed forces with professional ones. Here, as force multipliers, contractors have the ability, and responsibility, to diffuse behavioral norms to the forces they train (Avant, 2005; Uessler, 2008). When states hire PMCs, what they do and teach their clients is considered a reflection of the PMCs capabilities (Avant, 2005; McFate, 2017). Thus, PMCs closely monitor the state's forces to ensure they are performing as trained because this shows the company does what they were hired to do. This illustrates to potential clients that the company is effective, and it increases their likelihood of securing future contracts. As a result, PMCs and states' interests in maintaining a good reputation align. The degree of collaboration between state militaries and PMCs makes mutual monitoring plausible. It can also make the blame for misbehavior between state military personnel and contractors hard to distinguish (Tkach, 2020). In cases of especially weak governments PMC abuses are often linked back to the state, and this can undermine the government's fight against insurgents (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2020). Attempts to legislate and oversee PMCs support this notion.

Beginning in 2001, the International Peace Operations Association was created to oversee private sector involvement in conflict zones and establish a code of conduct (International Stability Operations Association, 2022). Work on the Montreux Document began in 2005 to recommend appropriate practices, monitoring, and accountability of PMCs

in conflict zones (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2008). To date, 58 states with have participated in the Montreux Document (Montreux Document Forum, 2022). The Working Group on Mercenaries was also created to provide guidance on appropriate practices of PMCs and increase their accountability for all forms of human rights abuses, especially CRSV (UN, 2022). The creation of such documents and groups is evidence of states' concern for the behavior of the PMCs they employ and their need to monitor PMCs. Partaking in oversight and accountability efforts signals the legitimacy of contracting companies, and because many of these standards are now written into contracts, they can be legally enforced (Avant, 2016). Above all, reputational concerns lead to contractors not only behaving as monitors of the state, but states monitoring contractors as well. Mutual monitoring ensues. This leads to my first hypothesis:

H1: State militaries perpetrate lower levels of CRSV when they employ PMCs than when they do not employ PMCs.

Aside from monitoring, PMC-related factors influence CRSV: experience and professionalism. Private military companies are largely professional entities, and the contractors often possess extensive military and special operations backgrounds. Indeed, states frequently employ PMCs because of their military experience, and companies seek to hire people for positions they have experience in (Singer, 2003; Avant and Nevers, 2011; McFate, 2017; Batka, Dunigan, and Burns, 2020; Swed et al., 2018). As the adage goes, 9/11 changed everything; and with it came an onslaught of conflicts that gave rise to, and required, seasoned fighters.

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) introduced a new wave of warfare spanning multiple countries over two decades. While PMCs were utilized in some of these conflicts before GWOT, they were not as heavily relied on. However, the attacks on September 11,

2001, were perceived as a threat to the Western world and demanded a response from various countries. Therefore, the duration and severity of the GWOT required more direct combat from states and drew demand for PMCs. Contracting companies cracked down on the screening of applicants, and the applicant pool changed from that of the 1990s. Combat veterans began pursuing careers in military contracting to make more money while continuing to pursue a career of their expertise. Applicants now had extensive backgrounds in military and combat that were not available to them before the GWOT. A large pool of combat veterans, stricter standards of behavior, extensive screening, and training requirements transformed and professionalized the PMC industry (Avant, 2007).

As the GWOT became more lethal and prolonged, people became less supportive of boots on the ground (Mueller, 2005; Hartig and Doherty, 2021). However, the need to combat terrorism did not decline. This led to increased reliance on PMCs who are not counted as boots on the ground and whose casualty rates are not reported with official state military statistics. Thus, PMCs could effectively fight terrorism while simultaneously pacifying the public and allowing politicians to take credit for fewer war casualties. PMCs soon outnumbered conventional military personnel in conflict zones and became necessary to combat terrorism with contractor fatalities surpassing that of official U.S. forces (Schwartz, 2010; Casendino, 2017; McFate, 2017).[4]

While the GWOT increased reliance on PMCs, it also drew more attention to them. This newfound attention is evident by documents and organizations designed to enhance monitoring, legislate, and increase accountability of PMCs. As mentioned above, the most extensive attempt to regulate and oversee PMC behavior is the Montreux document. In

[4] Since the onset of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, one fourth of US fatalities were contractor deaths, but these number are not reflected in official troop statistics (Schooner and Swan 2010).

addition, the UN Mercenary Convention was established to restrict the use of conventional mercenaries and mold a more professional and ethical military company (United Nations, 2022b). The ICoC has sought to specifically address CRSV explicitly through formation of the Guidelines for Private Security Providers on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ICoC, 2022). These efforts, beginning post-GWOT, are largely responsible for regulating and transforming the private military industry into a legitimate sector (Avant, 2016).

The GWOT produced an environment reliant on battle-hardened PMCs along with increased oversight. Coupled with its growing attention around the turn of the century, CRSV is considered more unacceptable than ever before. The combat experience and higher standards of behavior for contractors likely passes on to those they are working with and training (Singer, 2003). Once again, this produces mutual monitoring. State militaries may then view PMCs as unofficial monitors of behavior willing to expose bad state behavior. PMCs affiliated with the state can monitor the government's behavior, and such monitoring creates incentives for state actors to refrain from committing CRSV. This leads to my second set of hypotheses:

H2a: States employing PMCs post-GWOT commit less CRSV than states employing PMCs pre-GWOT.

H2b: States employing PMCs post-GWOT commit less CRSV than states not employing PMCs pre-GWOT.

H2c: States employing PMCs post-GWOT commit less CRSV than states not employing PMCs post-GWOT.

The United States military is undoubtedly the world's dominant military power and is now the largest consumer of PMC forces (Singer, 2003). Research reveals US PMCs operate more efficiently than weak armies and can improve their performance (Petersohn, 2013).

However, most of this research examines effectiveness between US companies but does not compare across companies globally. We should expect US military dominance to not only be apparent in conventional its forces but also reflected in US contracting companies.

The GWOT renewed America's consistent involvement in warfare and generated the need for expertise in warfare that could only be filled with the help of PMCs. The US government became increasingly reliant on PMCs to help wage war (Petersohn et al., 2022). As a result, new contracting companies were formed by prior US military leaders and GWOT veterans (Singer, 2003; McFate, 2017; 2019). The framework for PMC structure and functionality is based on the US military, and contractors are trained based on these standards (Isendberg, 2009; McFate, 2017). In Iraq, the US military established coordination procedures with PMCs leading to improvements in both military and PMC performance (Petersohn, 2013). With the US being the largest consumer of PMC services, this allows American contractors to shape missions and behavior.[5]

Along with efforts from the international community, several attempts in the US have been made to increase monitoring and accountability of American contracting companies specifically. In 2005, the National Defense Authorization Act called on the Secretary of Defense to ensure US contractors comply with US laws, report contractor activities to Congress, and institute policies for contractor operations. (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year, 2005). The US government now sends contracting officers' technical representatives to oversee interests of the US government and audit the work of PMCs to ensure compliance (McFate, 2017). In addition, calls for more oversight led to the US Department of Defense to intensify its monitoring of these companies (US Government

[5] Companies often hire third-party nationals but for non-military roles (Schwartz 2010). However, those who do work in the security sector are trained under the umbrella of the most professional contractors in the company.

Accountability Office, 2021). A major step came with the move to place American contractors under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, p. 120). Finally, the US has a comparatively open contracting system requiring greater transparency and responsibility to stakeholders. Bad behavior risks exposure and consequences (Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu, 2020).

U.S. contracting companies now often require their personnel to conform to international standards of training, conduct, and recruiting through various organizations. Since cracking down on these obligations, no recent incidents of American PMC abuses have arisen.[6] The prolonged involvement in the GWOT, the formation of contracting companies to mirror American forces, and heightened efforts to monitor contractors leads to my next set of hypotheses:[7]

H3a: States employing American PMCs commit less CRSV than states employing no PMCs.

H3b: States employing American PMCs commit less CRSV than states employing non-American PMCs.

Finally, I expect a cascading effect with American PMCs in the post-GWOT period. The United States increased their reliance on PMCs as the GWOT drug on, leading to better PMC performance. For example, American PMCs in Iraq improved with time as they became more institutionalized, increased monitoring, and coordinated with official forces (Petersohn, 2017). The transformation of the private military industry post-GWOT, focus on CRSV,

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[6] I do not claim US PMCs are a panacea for human rights. I only argue that, comparatively speaking, US PMCs' experience, professionalization, and the American government's efforts to oversee and regulate contractors should make them more efficient than others.

[7] My hypotheses refer to American contracting corporations. These are largely comprised of contractors from the US but sometimes include third-party. However, this does not change my theoretical expectations since third-party nationals are trained to operate similar to the more highly trained US contractors.

increasing standards of behavior, and growing experience of U.S. military personnel leads to my final hypothesis:

H4a: States employing American PMCs post-GWOT perpetrate less CRSV than states employing American PMCs pre-GWOT.

H4b: States employing American PMCs post-GWOT perpetrate less CRSV than states not employing American PMCs pre-GWOT.

H4c: States employing American PMCs post-GWOT perpetrate less sexual violence than states not employing American PMCs post-GWOT.

2.5 Research Design

To evaluate my hypotheses, I rely on two main datasets: the Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict (SVAC) dataset (Cohen and Nordås, 2019) and the Private Military Contractors dataset (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2012; Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu, 2020). These datasets provide a spatial-temporal domain spanning 1990-2008 and include conflicts across the globe. My unit of analysis is the state-conflict-year with a total of 1,258 potential observations across 101 conflicts. Table 2.1 provides descriptive statistics for the variables.

2.5.1 Dependent Variable

My dependent variable is the prevalence of CRSV committed by state militaries in a given conflict-year. The SVAC data is the most comprehensive dataset available on CRSV. The dataset follows the ICC and Wood's conceptualizations of CRSV (ICC, 2000; Wood, 2009). Crimes of sexual violence include rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization/abortion, sexual mutilation, and sexual torture. SVAC uses a four-point ordinal measure of the prevalence of CRSV by conflict-actor-year. A group is coded

as "3" for "massive" amounts of CRSV, "2" for "numerous" accounts of CRSV, "1" for "isolated" accounts, and "0" for "none."[8] The SVAC dataset includes active conflicts reported by the accounts, Uppsala Conflict Armed State Actor Data, interim years and five post-conflict years. However, I am only interested in active conflict years with possible contractor intervention, so I limit the years accordingly.

Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Sexual Violence	1,174	0.252	0.561	0	3
PMC Government	1,258	0.359	0.480	0	1
GWOT	1,258	0.312	0.463	0	1
American	1,258	0.431	0.495	0	1
Rebel Violence	1,167	0.170	0.582	0	3
PTS	1,170	4.315	0.813	1	5
Population (logged)	1,254	17.366	1.529	13.099	20.892
Democracy	1,258	0.278	0.448	0	1
Duration (logged)	1,258	1.931	0.903	0.693	4.111
Peacekeeping Mission	1,258	0.283	0.451	0	1
Proportion of Forces	1,212	3.505	2.607	-6.199	10.859
GDP (logged)	1,250	7.627	1.195	5.266	10.741
Battle Deaths (logged)	1,250	5.494	1.657	3.258	10.330
Ethnic Fractionalization	1,258	0.558	0.242	0.005	0.902
Lagged Violence	1,258	0.140	0.423	0	3

The coders of SVAC relied on reports from United States Department of State, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International individually. Amnesty International and State Department report similar values for each level of CRSV, and Human Rights Watch reported far less incidents and observations. For my analyses, I rely on the State Department indicator of CRSV which has had the lowest amount of "0" CRSV observations. Because

[8] I estimate logit models using a binary indicator for CRSV for those who committed none (0) and those who committed any CRSV (1). Results largely remain significant across all models as displayed in supplemental files

CRSV is underreported more than it is over-reported, the State Department likely provides the most accurate representation of CRSV.[9]

2.5.2 Independent Variables

My independent variables measure PMC intervention on behalf of state militaries in a given conflict-year provided by the Private Military Contractors data from Radziszewski and Akcinaroglu (2020). A PMC is defined as a "professional, corporate entity that delivers military services for monetary compensation" (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2012). They only include PMCs that provide services that may "tip the balance" of the conflict such as security, logistical support, training, and combat operations. Companies that provided support such as cooking, maintenance, and other non-military support are excluded. Freelance mercenaries and individual hires are also excluded as they are not subject to the same rules as PMCs (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski, 2012). These data cover every civil conflict from 1990-2008 and use a dichotomous measure to indicate whether contractors intervened on behalf of the government each year. The data include contracting companies from all over the world and do not specify the country of origin of the companies or contractors themselves. The authors relied primarily on the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office's reports for the years 1990-1999. Afterwards, they collected and updated their information on contractors using a various sources like newspapers, books, reports, and blogs. Other datasets on contractors exist, but the PMC dataset is the most appropriate for my analysis. I am more interested in contractor presence than events, and the PMC data provide more spatial and temporal coverage than the

[9] I estimate the models using the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch measures in supplemental files. Results largely remain consistent.

Private Security Events Dataset (Avant and Neu, 2019). The Commercial Military Actors Dataset (CMAD) focuses on the exchange event and omits European conflicts potentially losing valuable information on PMC involvement (Petersohn et al., 2022).[10]

Because I am interested in how PMCs impact state-perpetrated CRSV in various scenarios, I include several variables to test my hypotheses, and I restrict my analyses to states. For H1, I created a binary variable to indicate whether a PMC company intervened on behalf of a government each year. To test H2, I construct a binary variable indicating the periods before the Global War on Terror began and after. I use 2003 as the cutoff point for the pre-GWOT period because individuals need time to gain experience fighting this war after the invasion of Afghanistan. Additionally, the Iraq War did not begin until early 2003, meaning fewer individuals were involved in the GWOT prior to 2003.[11] Finally, I rely on the binary variable, *American,* to evaluate my third set of hypotheses. This variable is coded "1" for contracting companies based in the United States and "0" otherwise.[12]

2.5.3 Control Variables

I control for factors that may alter the relationship between contractors and CRSV. These variables are commonly used in assessing armed groups' impact on multiple forms of violence against civilians. First, I take the natural log of the conflict *duration* since longer conflicts see shifts in relations between armed groups and civilians (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, 2009; Wood, 2010). Next, I control for the proportion of forces which divides

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[10] Penel and Petersohn's (2022) piece uses the CMAD dataset which spanning 1980-2016. However, data on one-sided violence begins in 1989 (the same year as SVAC data), and some control variables used only cover civil conflicts through 2010. While the CMAD data itself covers a longer period, the control variables can only

[11] Although there are fewer years post-GWOT, the number of observations in my sample is split almost evenly. Table A1 in supplementary files breaks down the periods.

[12] American PMCs are the only ones identifiable by their origin in the dataset, but because American companies are the leaders in the PMC industry it makes sense to analyze them as a subset.

government by rebel forces since the relative number of forces can influence an armed groups' decision to use violence to coerce civilian support (e.g., Gent, 2011; Hultquist, 2013; Wood, 2010). I also control for conflict intensity by taking the natural log of battle deaths per year as more intense conflicts result in more civilian violence (Lacina and Gleditsch, 2005; Hultman, 2007; Wood, 2010). Ethnic wars may see more CRSV than non-ethnic wars as the military wants to humiliate and terrorize their opposition (Benard, 1994; Farr, 2009). For this reason, I control for the ethnic fractionalization levels within a country. Because the presence of peacekeepers can alter the prevalence of CRSV, I include a dummy variable to indicate the presence of a peacekeeping operation within a given conflict-year (Perry and Smith 2013). Finally, I control for conventional variables that consistently impact the dynamics of war: population, gross domestic product per capita (GDP), and democracy (e.g., Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). Population and GDP are transformed into their natural log values. Democracy is coded "1" for democracies and "0" for nondemocracies (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers, 2018).[13] To address the likelihood that some states only seek contracting companies with respect for human rights or that companies will only work in rights' respecting states, I control for a country's historical human rights practices. I rely on the Political Terror Scale (PTS) five-point ordinal measure, PTS, which codes ascending levels to reflect greater human rights abuses (Gibney et al., 2021).

Because past behavior is a predictor of future behavior I include a lagged indicator, lagged violence, of the prevalence of state-perpetrated CRSV in the prior conflict-year to account for autocorrelation. [14] In cases where the conflict had not occurred in the prior year,

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[13] Ideally, I could control for the regime type of the contracting company country, but the data do not permit this. However, this is common in PMC research, and I follow suit in controlling only for the regime type of the conflict state (Akcinaroglu and Radziszewski 2012, 2020; Avant and Neu 2019; Petersohn 2014, 2017).

[14] I include the models without the lagged DV in supplementary files. Results remain consistent.

I coded CRSV as "missing." "0" to indicate no perpetration. Similarly, I control for rebel CRSV in case the conflicting parties are engaged in a tit-for-tat strategy.

2.5.4 Methods

To evaluate my hypotheses, I rely on ordered logistic regression models because my dependent variable is an ordinal measure. I cluster each model by the conflict to account for any within conflict correlation. It is important to note that although data are not available capturing the direct perpetration of CRSV committed by PMCs, the data allow me to assess the impact of PMC presence on CRSV perpetration by states. Furthermore, although the reports used to code the SVAC data do not include CRSV committed directly by contractors, distinguishing between official and PMC forces is sometimes difficult and civilians often conflate the two (Avant and Siegelman, 2010; Schwartz, 2011). This may result in PMC-perpetrated SVAC being unknowingly reported with state forces.

2.6 Results

To briefly restate my argument, I contend that states employing PMCs in conflict commit lower levels of CRSV than those not employing PMCs. Furthermore, the time frame and origin of PMCs should also play a role in CRSV. I argue that the start of GWOT should lead to a decline in CRSV perpetration when PMCs are employed. The presence of American contractors should be associated with lower levels of CRSV. Finally, the presence of American PMCs in the post-GWOT period should have an even stronger effect than these two factors on their own. My results for H1 are displayed in Table 2.2, and the results for H2-H4 are provided in Table 2.3.

Table 2.2: PMC Presence and Sexual Violence

	Model 1 State PMC Presence
PMC Government	-1.1772***
	(0.001)
Rebel Violence	0.3326
	(0.179)
PTS	0.2510
	(0.204)
Population (logged)	0.0681
	(0.696)
Democracy	-0.3495
	(0.400)
Duration (logged)	0.2656
	(0.115)
PKO Mission	-0.7174
	(0.109)
Proportion of Forces	0.0811
	(0.274)
GDP (logged)	-0.0668
	(0.736)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0446
	(0.679)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.1549*
	(0.092)
Lagged Violence	1.7328***
	(0.000)
/cut1	4.7847
	(0.171)
/cut2	6.9408**
	(0.045)
/cut3	8.6045**
	(0.018)
Observations	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-576.8

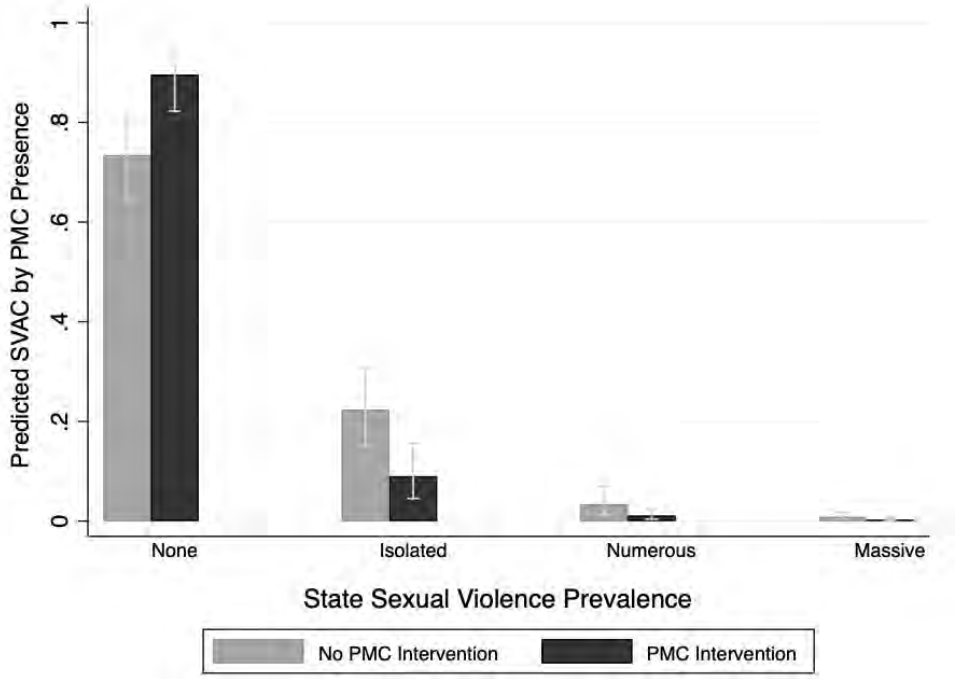
Dependent Variable is Prevalence of CRSV
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Model 1 in Table 2.2 displays the results of H1: States employing PMCs commit less CRSV than states not employing PMCs. The coefficient for *PMC Government* is negative and significant at the $p < .01$ level. States employing PMCs see a 1.1772 decrease in the logged odds of CRSV holding all else constant.

To determine the substantive impacts of PMC employment on CRSV perpetration, I calculated the predicted probabilities of CRSV across all categories when PMCs are present and not present using CLARIFY for Models 1 and 3 (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King, 2003). The substantive results in Figure 2.1 indicate that if PMCs are employed by the state, the

likelihood of a state military committing no CRSV increases by 22%. Meanwhile, the likelihood of states perpetrating isolated, numerous, and massive amounts of CRSV when PMCs are present decreases by approximately 60%, 67%, and 68% respectively.

Figure 2.1: State PMC Presence and Sexual Violence Prevalence



Note: Ordered logit model with standard errors clustered by conflict. Simulations for all models include control variables held at their means and modes. Estimates were produced using CLARIFY. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals for each predicted probability value.

Table 2.3 displays the results from my contractor-specific hypotheses. Model 2 tests my second set of hypotheses regarding PMCs and GWOT: States reliant on PMCs post-GWOT are associated with less CRSV than states employing or not employing PMCs pre-GWOT and states not employing PMCs post-GWOT.[15] The coefficient for the interaction is negative and significant at the $p < .01$ level indicating that states employing PMCs post-GWOT commit less CRSV than states employing and not employing PMCs pre-GWOT. We can see that PMCs had a pacifying effect on CRSV pre-GWOT but to a lesser degree than post-

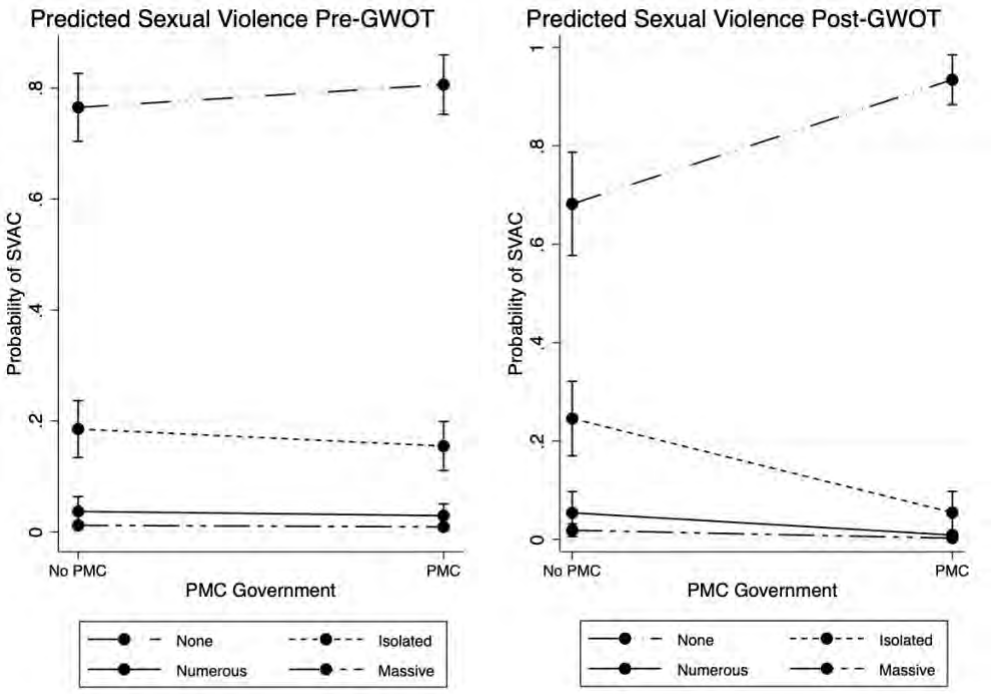
[15] I also estimate the impact of the GWOT alone on CRSV. The results are show a negative coefficient but are not statistically significant indicating the shift in time periods did not result in shifts of CRSV practices.

GWOT. This is consistent with my professionalization and monitoring arguments as these mechanisms increased in the post-GWOT era.

Table 2.3: American PMCs, GWOT, and Sexual Violence

	Model 2 GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.2957		
	(0.303)		
GWOT*PMC	-2.0007***		
	(0.001)		
GWOT	0.5018*		0.4796*
	(0.067)		(0.066)
American		-1.5177***	0.0991
		(0.001)	(0.701)
GWOT*American			-2.7362***
			(0.000)
Rebel Violence	0.3151	0.2624	0.2365
	(0.196)	(0.257)	(0.285)
PTS	0.2674	0.2703	0.2669
	(0.176)	(0.149)	(0.170)
Population (logged)	0.0731	0.0877	0.0954
	(0.682)	(0.629)	(0.608)
Democracy	-0.3927	-0.3765	-0.4378
	(0.329)	(0.370)	(0.281)
Duration (logged)	0.1918	0.2310	0.1277
	(0.244)	(0.164)	(0.441)
PKO Mission	-0.4897	-0.6250	-0.3453
	(0.222)	(0.133)	(0.386)
Proportion of Forces	0.0831	0.0917	0.0858
	(0.269)	(0.230)	(0.261)
GDP (logged)	-0.1179	-0.0574	-0.1238
	(0.534)	(0.757)	(0.500)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0591	0.0415	0.0564
	(0.594)	(0.700)	(0.614)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.9317	0.8181	0.7240
	(0.156)	(0.203)	(0.247)
Lagged Violence	1.6456***	1.7351***	1.6219***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	4.4273	5.0247	4.5016
	(0.206)	(0.156)	(0.208)
/cut2	6.5914*	7.1741**	6.6586*
	(0.056)	(0.040)	(0.058)
/cut3	8.2860**	8.8354**	8.3395**
	(0.022)	(0.016)	(0.023)
Observations	1,117	1,117	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-568.9	-576.1	-568.6

Figure 2.2: GWOT PMC Presence and Sexual Violence Prevalence

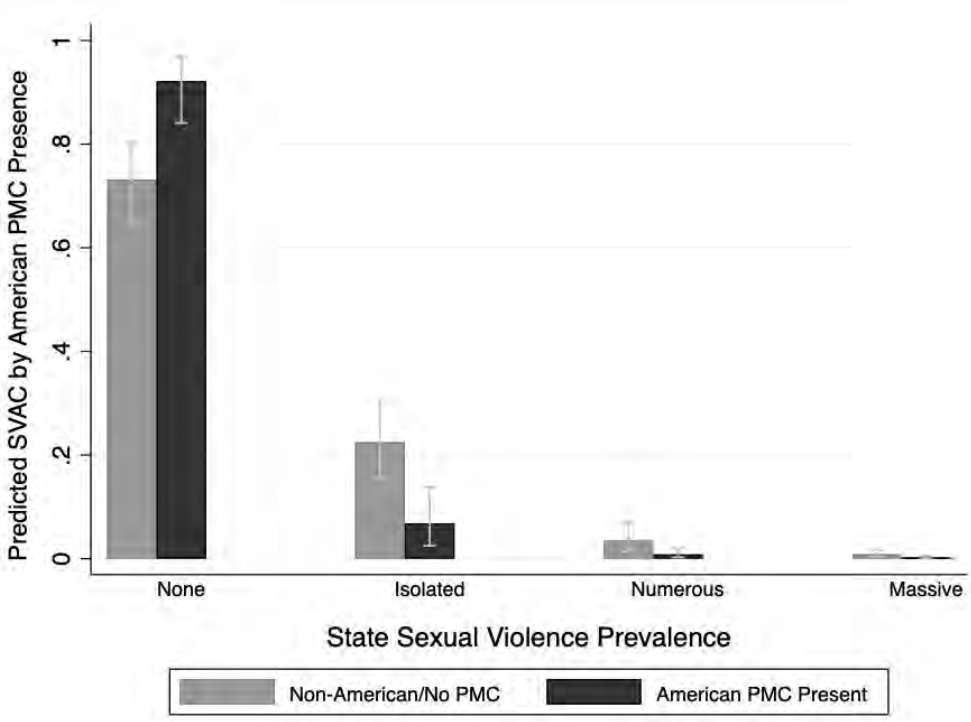


Note: Values are calculated using marginal probabilities. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals for each predicted probability.

To better illustrate PMCs' effectiveness pre- and post-GWOT eras, I display their substantive effects in Figure 2.2. The plot on the left illustrates the probability of the state perpetrating various levels of CRSV pre-GWOT for states employing no PMCs and those employing PMCs. In the pre-GWOT era, PMC employment has little substantive impact on CRSV. Post-GWOT, states employing PMCs are around 28% more likely to commit no CRSV than states not employing PMCs. Moreover, the likelihood of states perpetrating CRSV when employing PMCs decreases by approximately 20%, 5%, and 2% respectively.

Model 3 displays the results of Hypothesis 3: American PMC presence should be associated with less state-perpetrated CRSV than both no PMC presence and non-American PMC presence. Consistent with my expectations, American is negative and statistically significant at the .01 level with American PMCs resulting in CRSV reduction.

Figure 2.3: American PMC Presence and Sexual Violence Prevalence

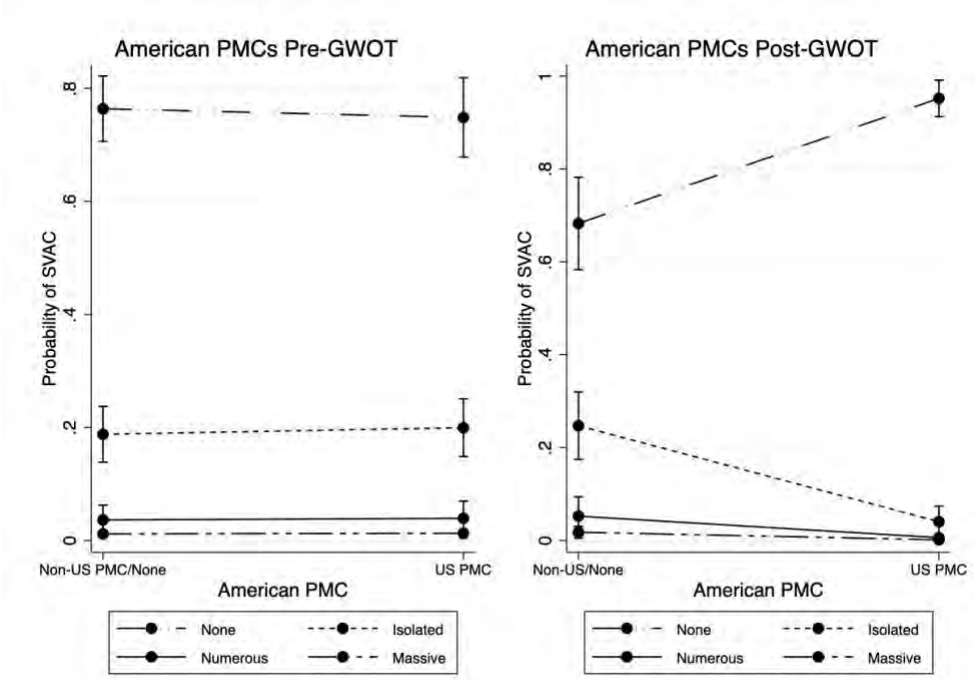


Note: Ordered logit model with standard errors clustered by conflict. Simulations for all models include control variables held at their means and modes. Estimates were produced using CLARIFY. Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals for each predicted probability value.

I calculate the predicted probability of CRSV across all four categories in Model 3. The results in Figure 2.3 indicate that when American PMCs are employed by the state, the likelihood of a state military committing no CRSV increases by 26% compared to when there are no PMCs present, or when the PMCs present are non-American. The likelihood of states-perpetrating isolated, numerous, and massive amounts of CRSV decreases by approximately 70%, 76%, and 76% respectively.

Finally, Model 4 tests H4 regarding the GWOT and American PMCs; the presence of American PMCs should be associated with less CRSV than when PMCs in general are not present and when non-American PMCs are present. The coefficient for the interaction term is negative and significant at the $p < .01$ level. Compared to non-American and pre-GWOT, when American PMCs are employed post-GWOT, state-perpetrated CRSV declines.

Figure 2.4: American PMCs, GWOT, and Sexual Violence Prevalence



Note: Values are calculated using marginal probabilities. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals for each predicted probability.

I display the substantive impacts in Figure 2.4. The left panel shows that pre-GWOT government reliance on American PMCs appears to have made little no difference on CRSV perpetration. However, results in the right panel show that post-GWOT presence of American PMCs made a substantial difference. States employing American PMCs post-GWOT are around 30% more likely to commit no CRSV than states not employing American PMCs. Likewise, states employing American PMCs are approximately 20% less likely to commit isolated instances of CRSV. There appears to be little impact on states committing numerous and massive amounts of CRSV. This is unsurprising given the small number of cases in these two categories.

Some control variables also matter for the relationships of interest. Lagged Violence is positive and significant across all models. The biggest predictor of state-perpetrated CRSV

in a given year is perpetration in the prior year. Only in Model 1 is Ethnic Fractionalization positive and significant. This is consistent with prior research that suggests heterogenous populations do not always indicate more violent conflicts (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Cohen and Nordås, 2014). PTS fails to achieve statistical significance across models suggesting that repression, broadly, may not encompass CRSV. This reiterates the notion that CRSV is a distinct form of civilian victimization. Duration, Population, Proportion of Forces, and Battle Deaths are positive in all models but are not statistically significant. Meanwhile Democracy, PKO Missions, and GDP are negative but also fail to achieve statistical significance.[16] While contrary to my expectations, these results mirror those in other studies on state-perpetrated CRSV (e.g., Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Cohen and Nordås, 2015; Johansson and Hultman, 2019; Willis 2021). The insignificance of many controls may be due to only examining states. A large portion of CRSV studies examine both rebels and states or solely rebels. Different mechanisms may be play when only analyzing states.

2.6.1 Discussion

One might argue potential selection effects exist as PMCs are more likely to be deployed to severe conflicts. However, prior research suggests there is no apparent pattern in where PMCs deploy (Avant and Neu, 2019; Tkach, 2020; Petersohn, 2017; Petersohn et al., 2022). Therefore, I do not account for potential selection effects of contractors in conflicts. However, Petersohn (2017) finds that PMC deployment is not related to conflict intensity, which is the main reason one might expect contractors to be hired. Rather, the lack of a pattern can alleviate some concerns for selection effects.

[16] Control variables do matter in supplementary files when using alternative measures suggesting the control variable findings should be interpreted with caution.

Endogeneity concerns would arise if states were more likely to choose PMCs with good reputations. I address endogeneity empirically by relying on several control variables to address variation in behavior. An important point to consider is that the states succumbing to civil war often lack the capacity to deter violence dissent and suffer from instability and political violence (Hegre et al., 2001; Sambanis, 2004). Moreover, contractors are not deployed to peaceful, nonviolent warzones. It is unlikely the results will be driven due to nonrepressive, rights-respecting states only seeking out "good" PMCs. If this were the case, these states would not need to rely on contractors in the first place. In fact, the data show where PMCs intervened, 80% were nondemocracies and 20% were democracies. They did not intervene in about 65% nondemocracies and 35% democracies. While we cannot necessarily capture the intentions of the states employing PMCs, we can observe that similarly violent states see different results upon hiring contractors.

I address this concern in two ways. First, I estimate my models using lagged independent variables to indicate temporal ordering of PMC presence and CRSV. The results remain consistent, but the interaction term in Model 4 drops below conventional levels of statistical significance. Second, I provide tabulations of the states employing PMCs and their PTS scores. The tabulations show that PMCs rarely deploy to nonrepressive states, but instead, deploy to the most repressive states the majority of the time.[17] These tests lend further support to my argument and results.[18] I perform several robustness tests by using a binary dependent variable, alternative CRSV measures, and accounting for conflict and armed group characteristics. Results largely remain consistent, and in some cases are strengthened.

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[17] I estimate a model of states' human rights impact on their CRSV perpetration in conflict and find no relationship.

[18] Some research finds publicly-traded PMC corporations to be associated with less violence. However, this variable due to was excluded due the high level of multicollinearity. Most companies hired by the government, especially American companies, are publicly-traded.

2.7 Conclusion

This study is the first to empirically evaluate the relationship between PMCs and CRSV. Scholars only recently began to focus on PMCs' impact on behavior, with most studies examining how PMCs influence conflict duration, intensity, and other war outcomes. Contrarily, there is a burgeoning research agenda examining CRSV. Extant literature focuses on several conflict factors, especially armed group dynamics, and their impact on CRSV prevalence. Despite numerous anecdotes of contractors perpetrating CRSV, there exists no empirical evidence on the matter until now.

I argued that PMCs should be associated with reductions in CRSV, and that this relationship is conditional on factors such as the time period and company origin. PMC reliance has drastically increased since the turn of the century with states frequently opting to use them to carry out foreign policy objectives. When contractor personnel violate human rights, it reflects poorly on the state and leaves the government to face the political, social, and economic ramifications. Meanwhile, PMCs are incentivized to behave well and maintain good reputations to receive future employment. For this reason, states' and PMCs' interests align and result in mutual monitoring that should deter state-perpetrated CRSV. Additionally, a prolonged GWOT required extensive training and combat, churning out professional fighters who often opted for contracting after their military careers. As the leader of the GWOT, Americans built the framework for modern private military companies, with many consisting of US combat veterans. For these reasons, I expected post-GWOT PMCs and American PMCs to reduce CRSV perpetration.

Using cross-national time series data on PMC involvement and CRSV, I find, in general, contractors are associated with lower levels of state-perpetrated CRSV. The results largely support my expectations and produce some surprising findings. Contractors employed

in the post-GWOT era are associated with lower levels of CRSV than those pre-GWOT. American contractors appear to further exacerbate this effect. Compared to having non-American contractors or no contractors at all, American PMCs are associated with less CRSV. Indeed, their presence post-GWOT leads to lower rates of CRSV compared to the pre-GWOT period. Although there are qualitative reports of contractors perpetrating CRSV, the results here indicate that these reported cases appear to be the exception, not the rule.

My analyses also reveal unexpected findings that should not be overlooked. First, I am unaware of studies examining states' general human rights abuses in relation to their sexual abuse, but my results indicate there is no significant relationship between the two. Additionally, there does not appear to be a difference in the prevalence of state-perpetrated CRSV in the pre- and post-GWOT periods. Although both discoveries do not involve PMCs, their null effects lend stronger support to my findings that PMCs may be key to reducing CRSV.

The results here have several implications. First, to my knowledge, this is the first empirical assessment of the influence of PMCs on CRSV in armed conflict. This paper provides a steppingstone to future research in an increasingly important area of conflict and is useful for policy insight. It provides evidence that contractors may not be as heinous as perceived but instead can have positive effects in conflict. Although there is anecdotal evidence of contractor misbehavior in conflicts, the evidence here indicates that private military companies are largely professional entities abiding by human rights laws.

Future work should provide a clear causal link between PMCs and CRSV. The discrete nature of PMCs limits good data collection. Contractors are used because they are more difficult to detect and they are employed by private companies, not governments. The data also do not provide names or characteristics of the contracting companies. It is possible that some companies commit CRSV more than others, but the nature of the data do not allow me

to evaluate this. Future studies could benefit by gathering precise data on PMCs and direct perpetration of CRSV, remedying this limitation. Moreover, these results do not speak to the impact of PMCs on rebel-perpetrated CRSV. Because states are often more heavily monitored than rebels and face more costs for bad behavior, it is plausible that rebels may not alter their actions when employing PMCs. Similarly, states may be more particular with the PMCs they hire while rebels will employ anyone regardless of their respect for human rights. An examination into the relationship between rebels, PMCs, and CRSV is warranted for scholarly expansion and policy insight.

CHAPTER 3. CAN'T LIVE WITH THEM OR CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT THEM? HOW THE VARYING ROLES OF WOMEN IN REBEL GROUPS INFLUENCE ONE-SIDED VIOLENCE

3.1 Introduction

How does women's presence in rebel groups influence the perpetration of violence against civilians? Past research is invaluable for explaining political violence but has paid scant attention to women rebels' impact on armed group behavior, specifically, the perpetration of one-sided violence (OSV) or "the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians" (Pettersson, 2022, 3). Armed groups target civilians for numerous reasons, including displaying their power to hurt, extracting resources, coercing support, poor disciplinary structure, and as a bargaining tool (e.g., Azam and Hoeffler, 2002; Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, 2004; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Kalyvas, 2006; Wood 2010). Research concerning group composition and violence against civilians has recently received attention with scholars taking special note of the importance of gender (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2016; Doctor, 2021; Mehrl, 2020, 2022). But some components in this research agenda have been overlooked; no cross-national studies on gender and OSV exist to date while quantitative studies rarely consider women's varying roles within rebel groups.

Scholarly contribution aside, there are pragmatic reasons to examine armed group composition in relation to civilian abuse. The twentieth century was plagued with fluctuating levels of OSV, and after years of decline, we are now witnessing the largest number of wars since World War II (Palik, Obermeier, and Rustad, 2022). Moreover, OSV has increased in the last few years with the number of groups opting for this strategy at an all-time high. Unfortunately, there is no sign of decline of OSV or conflict in general. Given the rise in

violence, it is important to examine what factors reduce civilian deaths during these events. Therefore, I seek to explain and empirically examine the relationship between women rebels and OSV.

Research examining women's influence on conflict dynamics faces three major shortcomings. First, conventional wisdom suggests women are either victims or bystanders of war. This focus is largely driven by the idea that women are inherently nonviolent as opposed to central players within rebel groups even though their participation as combatants is not novel (e.g., Goldstein, 2001; Caprioli, 2005; Plümper and Neumayer, 2006; Sjoberg, 2014). Second, until recently the lack of available data on female rebels has limited our ability to examine their influence on civilian fatalities. Last, most research on women rebels treats their roles statically, overlooking the nuance of their participation and its impact on the group (Donelly, 2018; Loken, 2022; Loken and Matfess, 2022, 2023). Fortunately, recent data on women's activities in armed rebellion makes such exploration possible (Loken and Matfess, 2023).

To address these shortcomings, I explore how women's roles in rebel groups affect OSV. I argue that stereotypes of women are important determinants, but women's impact on rebel group behavior is largely contingent upon their roles in the group. Specifically, women in frontline roles are susceptible to socialization effects from comrades and should conform to the expectations of violence (Wood, 2008; Coulter, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Fujii 2017). Because war is considered a masculine phenomenon where violence is rewarded, women tasked with fighting should be socialized to behave violently. Gendered perceptions of women as peaceful push women on the frontline to defy this stereotype and be especially violent to be taken seriously as combatants. Meanwhile, it is the same stereotypes as honest and nonviolent that allow women to be more successful and lethal in their attacks on civilians

because society does not expect it. Alternatively, women in outreach roles are tasked with acquiring support from local, domestic, and international audiences through nonviolent means. The perception of women as legitimate, trustworthy, and peaceful makes women in outreach roles effective in garnering support for the group both at home and abroad. This reduces the group's need to resort to civilian violence as they can obtain support through diplomatic means. Committing OSV only jeopardizes this goal (Viterna 2013; Mehrl and Dworschak 2021; Mehrl 2022). Stereotypes of women are responsible for women killing both more *and* less civilians. Consequently, I posit that rebel groups composed of larger shares of frontline women fighters commit higher levels of OSV. Contrarily, groups using women in outreach roles commit less OSV.

I rely on the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion dataset to measure women's participation in rebel groups as frontline fighters and noncombat outreach personal. Uppsala Conflict Data Program's Georeferenced Events Dataset provides counts of OSV fatalities. With these data, my analyses cover OSV committed by 211 rebel groups across the globe from 1990-2011. I find support for both of my hypotheses: groups with higher levels of women on the frontline are associated with increasing instances of OSV while groups utilizing women in noncombat outreach roles are associated with lower levels of OSV.

This study makes several contributions. First, it adds to the growing field of gender and conflict by examining women not as victims of violence, but as potential perpetrators. It illustrates that women's involvement in conflict is diverse with some taking on more direct combat roles and others in supporting positions. Disaggregating their involvement helps us understand their influence in each position. Finally, this study has important policy implications by revealing armed group features that may threaten human security.

3.2 Rebel Groups and One-sided Violence

Rebel-perpetrated OSV is a pervasive phenomenon, accounting for most deaths by OSV since the turn of the century (Allanson, Melander, and Themńer 2017; Palik, Obermeier, and Rustad 2022). Rebels target civilians to achieve conflict goals, like extracting concessions or overturning the regime. Often, OSV is a coercion strategy used to gain support. Securing civilians' support is frequently key to a victorious insurgency, leading rebels to rely on this "war by other means" to gain control of the local population (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004). Rebels may have different motivations to abstain from or commit OSV to gain support, resources, or turn civilians against the government (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2010). Insurgents may target civilians to intimidate and pressure civilians into supporting them as opposed to the regime. This tactic can be used as a bargaining strategy against governments or to signal that a government is incapable of protecting its population (Azam and Hoeffler 2002; Kalyvas 2006; Wood and Kathman 2014). Even in attempts to make peace, rebels may increase civilian attacks to undermine the peace process if they anticipate a negative shift in their bargaining position (Pospiezna and DeRouen Jr. 2016). Contrarily, some rebel groups refrain from OSV to gain support (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004; Wood 2013). Groups aiming to win the hearts of minds of a domestic audience hesitate to harm civilians (Stanton 2016). Meanwhile, refraining from abuse can signal the group's devotion to human rights and help them obtain international support (Fazal 2018; Gleditsch et al. 2018).

Research on rebel group dynamics and OSV show recruitment methods are important determinants of group behavior and illustrate the power of violent combatant socialization. For groups that forcibly recruit their combatants, multiple-perpetrator rape is used as a mechanism to create ties, build trust, and bond fighters who otherwise have little in common through a process of combatant socialization (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2017). Surveys of former

child soldiers reveal they are frequently coerced or forced to kill to prove their devotion and capability (Beber and Blattman 2013). Others note that many rebels were once victims of violence themselves, often as child soldiers (Coulter 2008, 2009). Armed groups can reduce one's aversion to violence and upon perpetrating violence, group identity increases. In turn, heightened identification increases the likelihood of committing subsequent violence on behalf of the group (Littman and Paluck 2015; Littman 2018). These experiences can lead to internalization of violent norms and civilian abuse as routine, not only for child soldiers, but for adults as well (Mitton 2015; Gates 2017; Littman 2018).

Several studies disentangle the structure of rebel groups through gender composition and note the value that women's feminine nature brings. Groups frequently use women as suicide bombers because women's perceived gentle nature attracts less suspicion, grants women more access to civilian settings, and generates more lethal attacks (Cunningham 2003; Bloom 2005; O'Rourke 2009; Alakoc 2020; Thomas 2021). Meanwhile, recent studies demonstrate women's unique ability to draw both domestic and transnational support by engaging local civilians, building ties and trust, and making groups appear more legitimate (Manekin and Wood 2020; Giri and Haer 2021; Mehrl 2022). Scholars find these mechanisms crucial in reducing the group's perpetration of OSV citing evidence of female rebel participation in the Nepalese civil war (Mehrl 2022). However, such findings are limited to single cases and do not disaggregate women's participation. Nonetheless, these studies provide evidence that stereotypes of women can be manipulated to have different outcomes on rebel group behavior and OSV.

Research on organizational structure and demographics often leans towards topics like ethnicity or ideology, partially disregarding demographics (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Kalyvas 2006; Balcells 2010; Hoover Green 2018). Where such studies exist, they are typically

quantitative at the subnational level or qualitative in nature (Balcells and Stanton 2021). Even so, they provide information that is vital for analyzing and understanding women's discrepant roles and influences on group behavior. Meanwhile, the studies mentioned in this section demonstrate that different mechanisms are at play when determining civilian targeting. Groups are incentivized to kill or refrain for reasons internal and external to the group, while group composition may drive certain behaviors. I focus my attention on this point and attempt to provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between women rebels and violence against civilians.

3.3 Political Violence and the Role of Women

Relative inattention to gendered OSV perpetration is largely owed to the long-standing perception that women are merely victims or bystanders of war. Conventional wisdom holds that women and men play different roles in conflict. Men are stereotyped as fighters, women as victims. Indeed, there is truth to this wisdom. War has adverse effects on women by decreasing their life expectancy (Caprioli 2005; Plümper and Neumayer 2006) and increasing their likelihood of experiencing sexual violence (Brownmiller 1993; Wood 2006). Consequently, women are perceived as having little agency in conflict and are regarded as victims. But women do have agency and are sometimes perpetrators. For example, women have participated in 40-60% of civil wars within the last 40 years, rebels include women in lower capacities on the frontline than at similar levels in supporting roles, and over a third include a women's wing and a fourth include women in the military hierarchy (Henshaw 2016; Wood and Thomas 2017; Wood 2019; Loken and Matfess 2023). Recent work shows women's inclusion can shape rebel behavior and tactics, conveying the need to understand women's varying effects (Bayard de Volo 2001; Donelly 2018).

Several mechanisms explain female combatant presence from both the supply and demand sides. Ideology consistently predicts women's recruitment. Groups espousing Leftist and gender-inclusive ideologies are likely to recruit women into their ranks, viewing women as indispensable to their movement and ideals (Thomas and Bond 2015; Henshaw 2016; Wood and Thomas 2017). Leftist ideologies often equate the struggle of women to overall class struggle and women's freedom as a determinate of universal freedom (Brown 2013; Szekely 2020). Gender equality and female inclusion into educational and economic institutions benefit women and provide them with knowledge and skills invaluable for conflict. Medical training, mechanical and technical skills, literacy, communication, information gathering, and dissemination skills make them optimal recruits (Bueno de Mesquita 2005; Thomas and Wood 2017). Furthermore, perceptions of women as legitimate and trustworthy make them efficient at obtaining local and transitional support, especially as the conflict prolongs (Viterna 2013; Henshaw 2016; Wood 2019; Manekin and Wood 2020).

Certain supply-side factors motivate women to defy pacifist stereotypes and take up arms. Social environments providing women with political engagement opportunities and access to institutions appeal to women and increase the likelihood they will join groups advocating for such rights and environments (Thomas and Wood 2017). Here again, women are more likely to join groups espousing Marxist, gender-inclusive, and redistributive ideologies, insinuating that women join groups they believe will bring them equality and economic opportunity (Henshaw 2016; Wood and Thomas 2017; Wood 2019). Abstract ideals are not all that drive women to participate in armed rebellions. Rather, women may view fighting as their only real option. Threats to family and community, coupled with government repression, can push women into rebellion (Wood 2003; Viterna 2013). Not only is women's involvement in rebel groups multifaceted, so, too, is their motivation for enlisting.

Most studies investigating women in armed groups focus on women fighters, but women take on a myriad of roles. Aside from combat, they serve in auxiliary or supportive roles with women serving as spies, recruiters, medics, cooks, cleaners, honey-traps, fundraisers, childcare, couriers, and more (Coulter 2008, 2009; Viterna 2013; Wood and Thomas 2017; Schlesinger 2022; Loken 2022; Loken and Matfess 2023.) When women join groups, they join because they are devoted to and want to be part of the cause. They do not join out of a desire to take on one specific role, and instead often take on more than a single one.

Studies offer inconsistent findings of women's contributions once enlisted (e.g., Moser and Clark 2001; Goldstein 2001; Caprioli 2005; Sjoberg 2014; Wood 2019). A substantial portion focuses on the rise of female terrorists, showing that women terrorists are effective and often more lethal than men (Cunningham 2003; Bloom 2005, 2011; O'Rourke 2009; Thomas 2021). Other areas diverge from the "women as victims" approach noting women's active involvement in group-perpetrated sexual violence in cases of forced recruitment (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Loken 2016; Mehrl 2020). Importantly, this work emphasizes these acts of gang rape as a cohesion building and bonding mechanism where women participate alongside the men, conforming to misogynistic and violence norms in order to be socialized into the group (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Loken 2016). There is substantial evidence illustrating women's capabilities as perpetrators and not just victims in war.

Women's participation has also yielded fewer harrowing results. Their participation can build vertical and horizontal ties, attract supporters, provide political and strategic advantages, increase the group's fighting utility, and, thus, prolong the conflict (Braithwaite and Ruiz 2018; Giri and Haer 2021; Wood and Allemang 2021). Women's involvement can sound an alarm around the world. People often view women's participation as a sign of an especially brutal opponent that poses a dire threat to human security. This attracts support and

intervention from multiple international actors and can increase the likelihood of a peacekeeping deployment (Manekin and Wood 2020; Mehrl and Dworschak 2021).

Although research pinpoints explanations for female rebel recruitment, the findings on their impact are less clear. This is partly due to treating women's roles statically and not disaggregating forms of participation in rebel groups. This study aims to delineate women rebels' influence by parsing out their roles. In doing so, I draw on political and psychological research to explain how women rebels' varying roles impact OSV.

3.4 Women Combatants and One-sided Violence

Research on women in conflict has produced mixed findings. The tendency to treat women rebels uniformly is likely a contributing factor. I attempt to remedy this by disaggregating women's roles into (1) frontline fighters and (2) outreach personnel to understand how women impact rebel group behavior. I argue that women's impact on OSV depends on their role in the group. Women's increasing presence on the frontline should be associated with increased OSV for two reasons. First, women combatants are expected, and thus socialized, to behave aggressively to conform to the violent notions of the group. This leads to women overperforming violent acts to compensate for their "nonviolent nature" to be taken seriously by the group. Simultaneously, societal perceptions of women as pacifistic contributes to women's lethality in suicide attacks because they are able to use the element of surprise. These two mechanisms result in increasing OSV. Alternatively, women in outreach roles are expected to behave diplomatically to obtain support for the group, decreasing OSV.

3.4.1 Women in Combat

War is considered a gendered phenomenon with men expected to behave as warriors and women as supporters (Goldstein 2001). But, during conflict, women often defy this gendered notion and take on the warrior role. Unlike other institutions, militaries generally remain unamenable towards inclinations to femininity. Once part of the group, women are expected to adopt misogynist and violent norms exhibited by their male counterparts and expected of warfighters (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Wood 2008; Loken 2016). During conflict, the culmination of hierarchical military structures, threats, and the need to place the group above oneself assures combatants conform to the needs of the group (Hoover Green 2018; Loken 2016). The result is women are socialized into group norms and preferences rather than the women socializing the group to adapt them (Wood 2008; Loken 2016).

Women are not solely victims, but they are also responsible for perpetrating violence, sometimes equal to or surpassing men (Carpenter 2007; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Bloom 2011). Research shows armed groups' perpetration of violence serves multiple purposes: socializing combatants, increasing group cohesion, reinforcing masculinity, strengthening group identity, and conveying loyalty (Cohen 2017; Littman and Paluck 2018; Fujii 2017). Males and females alike participate in group violence during this socialization process, but women need to "overperform" violence and brutality just to be considered equivalent to male combatants; women must surpass men in acts of violence. Men's historical role as warfighters and defenders throughout history proves their capabilities. But women's participation as warfighters is less conventional requiring them to be all the more violent to prove themselves as serious, competent fighters (Coulter 2008, 2009). Thus. as more women join the frontline, there are more women that must undergo a violent socialization process leading to an overall increase in the group's perpetration of OSV.

The "burden of proof" is largely unique to women who need to shed traces of femininity to internalize the masculine, violent norms required in a combat environment. For example, in Guatemala women combatants "had to make oneself be respected" and show that they were strong (Weber 2021, 276). In the FARC, women were degendered to create a "sameness" and equivalence with the males. The goal was a uniform performance of masculinity among both men and women (Bernal 2001; Weber 2021, 276). The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) were noted for their restraint and restriction of sexual violence, but the differences between male and female members were still obvious. Women FMLN fighters were sexually harassed and faced more demands from the group than the men (Luciak 2001). In cases where women face a seemingly "choiceless decision" to join a rebel movement, they may feel an even stronger need to behave violently (Bennett, Bexley, and Warnock 1995; Coulter 2008, 2009, 146). The repercussions for failing to do so can be dire and sometimes fatal. Women who defy orders or even hesitate to kill may be raped by fellow combatants, or, if they fall into the enemy's hands, face rape, and then murder (Coulter 2008, 2009).

Inside the group women feel the need to defy stereotypes to become legitimate fighters. Research on female terrorists explains that in shedding these stereotypes, women can strengthen their resolve and commitment to the cause, motivating them to become more effective and deadly fighters (Bloom 2011). Moreover, women are often described as more brutal, bloodthirsty, and cold-hearted than male fighters (Taylor 1999; Coulter, Persson, and Utas 2008). Interviews with Sierra Leonians provide evidence of women's behavior in the groups (Coulter 2008, 2009). Both former rebels and civilians described how women had to be tougher and more brutal than men. A former rebel recounts this:

> When you reach there (the camp) they will give the weapons to the women. Then they will appoint a leader, a woman that has been with them for a long time and count eight women and put that old rebel woman in charge of them. This is where the women will be wicked. When the commanders say, "Kill that person," the woman would kill. The commander will also say, "If anyone escapes, we will kill you." So this made women to cause more danger and become wicked persons (Coulter 2008, 2009, 137).

Even though women in frontline roles must adopt violent norms, society still perceives women as softer, more trustworthy, and peaceful (Goldstein 2001; Melander 2005; McDermott et al. 2007). Here, instead of defying stereotypes, women capitalize on them. This discernment is paramount in allowing women to become effective killers (Taylor 1999; Bloom 2005). In fact, it is a key reason rebels want women in their group (Thomas 2021). Research on female terrorists shows women are the most effective because people do not suspect them as nefarious operators. This allows women to travel behind enemy lines to access their target, blindside them, and leave them defenseless and unable to reciprocate (Cunningham 2003; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; O'Rourke 2009). For example, groups may use women to plant bombs in civilian settings and baby strollers while others feign a pregnancy belly to mask a bomb (Brunner 2005; Bloom 2011; Davis 2017; Loken 2022). Women's stereotypes and pacifistic and nonviolent helps women be more lethal suicide terrorists than men (O'Rourke 2009; Thomas 2021). Taken together, typecasting women as peaceful not only gives them more opportunity to kill, but this perception enables women to be more deadly when they do kill. More OSV deaths occur as a result.

It is important to note I do not claim women are the sole perpetrators of OSV. My argument suggests that in environments where women combatants are introduced, a violent socialization effect occurs. Socialization involves multiple people, not just the individual. Rather, combatants are often bonded through group-perpetrated violence involving both men and women because it creates ties between dissimilar individuals. But to be adequately socialized into a male-dominated environment, women fighters must be exceptionally violent

to be considered commensurate to men. As more women join the group, socialization increases because there are more women that must undergo the process. One-sided violence increases as a consequence. Although I expect this to mean more women will kill more civilians, I can only observe killings by the group as a whole, not the individual.

To reiterate my argument, women on the frontline should be associated with more OSV because societal perceptions of women as nonviolent necessitate their violent socialization in conflict. The group expects women to conform to violent norms required on the frontline, and because of nonviolent stereotypes, women's socialization into the group requires them to be even more violent than men to disprove this stereotype. Women on the frontline are tasked with killing the enemy, so violence is expected. Outside the group, stereotypes of women as nonviolent allow women to be successful and especially lethal in their attacks because it is unexpected. Taken in tandem, these two mechanisms lead to women needing to behave more violently and allows their violent behavior to be exceptionally lethal. These two points lead me to my first hypothesis:

H1: *As the prevalence of women on the frontline in a rebel group increases, perpetration of OSV by that group should increase.*

3.4.2 Women in Outreach

While women are capable of, and do commit atrocious acts of violence, society still perceives women as gentler, even when fighting (Elshtain 1982; DeGroot 2001; Goldstein 2001; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007). International relations literature shows women's value in preventing conflict relapse and increasing community ties, while psychological research provides explanations for why women may be less violent. In one study, a simulated crisis exposed testosterone as the principal cause of aggressive behavior. The experiment revealed

higher testosterone levels led men to behave aggressively and engage in unprovoked attacks (McDermott 2015). Furthermore, research finds women to be more altruistic, more likely to lend a helping hand, exhibit prosocial behavior, and feel rewarded in doing so (Andreoni and Vesterlund 2001; Soutschek et al. 2017). Not only are women rewarded intrinsically, but they also receive external reinforcement from society (Espinosa and Kovářík 2015). Whether due to biological or social factors, the notion of women as altruistic and peaceful is repeatedly observed.

Political scientists have expanded on gendered behavior, producing the women and peace hypothesis, arguing women are more peaceful, pacifying, eager to compromise, and less hostile than men (Tessler and Warriner 1997; Melander 2005). Several studies lend credence to this hypothesis. When women are active in nonviolent settings throughout society, the likelihood of violence declines. Greater female representation produces more legislation dealing with women, children, and families (Thomas 1991; Bratton 2005). These laws address core societal issues largely responsible for spawning violence. Similarly, greater female representation in parliament is associated with fewer state abuses, less intrastate conflict, and reduced conflict relapse (DeMeritt, Nichols, and Kelly 2015; Caprioli 2005; Melander 2005; Narang and Liu 2021). In peacekeeping operations, female peacekeepers as well as those from gender egalitarian countries are associated with reduced sexual violence perpetration (Kronsell 2012; Karim and Beardsley 2016; Narang and Liu 2021) This is because the organization of the group and higher prevalence of females leads to a shift within the group away from militarization and hypermasculinity towards norms of gender equality, reducing sexual violence. Furthermore, adding females to security forces can increase unit cohesion (Karim et al. 2018). Female security personnel often opt for de-escalation methods and use less physical force than their male counterparts and, as a result, exhibit less excessive force (Brandl,

Stroshine, and Frank 2001). Including women in policing can form greater gender egalitarian attitudes, thereby reducing police violence and violence against women (Carson 1993; Córdova and Kras 2022).[19]

Extending this presumption, even when women place themselves in aggressive settings, the stereotype largely holds regardless of their behavior. Rebel groups benefit by including women and playing on these stereotypes. Research shows groups frequently use women as propaganda to attract transnational support (Bayard de Volo 2001; Viterna 2014; Manekin and Wood 2020). Groups sometimes use images of armed mothers to attract support even when they do not use them on the frontline (Loken 2022). Women's involvement validates the group's struggle, creates sympathetic supporters, and legitimizes the group to the outside world (Barter 2014; Viterna 2014; Loken 2022). While women may join rebel movements for various reasons, the public perceives they join out of necessity. Given the perception of women as pacifistic and peaceful, women's presence in armed groups signals that the enemy is so brutal that even fragile women must take up arms to defeat them and defend their families (Cunningham 2003; Sjoberg 2014; Viterna 2014). Moreover, because women are perceived as defying their natural demeanor, the public views them as devoted to the cause (Bayard de Volo 2001; Viterna 2014)). This makes their plight and the rebel group even more legitimate to outsiders, increasing the likelihood the group will obtain outsiders' support.

Women in outreach roles have the sole purpose of obtaining support for the group. In other words, they are the ones shaking hands and kissing babies. They liaise with civilians and build rapport. Groups like al-Shabaab, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, the

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[19] An important distinction here is the expectation and normalization of violence. A combatant's purpose is to kill the enemy, while peacekeepers and police should minimize violence. Where violence is the norm, a socialization process encourages violence. Where nonviolence is the norm, this process is absent.

National Resistance Army, the Irish Republican Army, and the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola all use women in outreach roles and consider them tantamount to the group's survival (Loken 2022). Using women as the face of the group is a viable option for attracting support because it yields sympathetic supporters and legitimizes the group abroad and at home (Viterna 2013, 2014; Mehrl 2022). For example, in the FMLN women were especially powerful representatives as "their femininity tugged at the heartstrings of civilians, and in part because young boys felt shamed when young women in uniforms and carrying guns entered their communities" (Viterna 2013, 78). When people empathize with and believe in the cause they are more likely to support it.

In trusting the women rebels, locals become more cooperative, dispensing information and resources, and supporting or even joining the rebel movement (Mehrl 2022). Civilian cooperation reduces the need to resort to violence to gain compliance and in doing so the group may alienate locals. These women also aim for transnational support, and groups use them to attract international audiences because they know it is an effective strategy (Manekin and Wood 2020; Loken 2021). Rebels may use such external support to provide social services to locals, making them appear more legitimate (Huang and Sullivan 2021). In fact, when rebels provide such services, negative public opinion towards their civilian abuse is minimized and sometimes eliminated (Flynn and Stewart 2018). Rebels risk losing support both at home and abroad in committing OSV. Thus, women in outreach roles are effective in securing support, and, subsequently, lessening the group's reliance on OSV.[20]

Women's presence in outreach roles increases the likelihood that rebels initially receive support. Locals become more trusting of the group, and thus more likely to assist them.

[20] It is important to note that women join the organization, not the role. The group assigns women their role.

Transnational supporters view groups using women as more legitimate and are more likely to sponsor them. After acquiring initial support, groups become less dependent on OSV, lest they lose this support. As a result, I expect rebel groups using women in outreach roles to be associated with less OSV. This leads to my second hypothesis:

H2: *The presence of women in outreach roles in a rebel group is associated with lower levels of OSV perpetration by the rebel group.*

3.5 Research Design

This study relies on two main datasets to evaluate the relationship between women rebels and OSV: the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion Dataset (Loken and Matfess 2023) and UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset (GED) version 20.1 (Sundberg and Melander 2013; Högbladh 2022). The WAAR dataset is the most expansive data on women's participation in rebel groups. The UCDP GED dataset offers vast coverage with concise data on deliberate targeting and killing of civilians. This study uses the rebel group-year[21] as the unit of analysis, covering rebel groups from 1990-2011 with 211 groups across 999 possible group-year observations.[22] The sample consists of four indicators of female presence per rebel group while OSV estimates reflect fatalities committed by the armed group in a given conflict-year. The observations match each indicator of female personnel to every recording of civilian killings committed by the corresponding rebel group in a given year. Table 3.1 provides descriptive statistics of all variables in my analyses.

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[21] Time invariant data is typical of both combatant typology and rebel OSV studies. I follow similar studies examining rebel demographics and OSV in using the group-year as my unit of analysis (see Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014; Doctor 2021).

[22] OSV data extends through 2022, but several control variables do not extend past 2011. I chose to exclude observations where accurate control variables are unavailable. With a sample size of nearly 1,000 observations, I can draw generalizable conclusions.

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Fatalities	999	68.200	289.904	0	5016
Frontline Fighters	927	1.532	1.152	0	3
Noncombat Outreach	995	0.724	.447	0	1
Central Command	999	0.718	.45	0	1
Population (logged)	995	17.293	1.552	13.099	20.934
Duration (logged)	999	1.544	.799	0.693	3.664
Democracy	999	0.357	.479	0	1
Battle Deaths (logged)	999	5.128	1.526	3.258	10.330
Government OSV (logged)	999	2.149	2.206	0	8.324
Lagged Rebel OSV	999	103.193	1354.814	0	30110
Leftist	999	0.284	.451	0	1
Fertility	992	4.416	1.832	1.157	7.772
Resource Exploitation	999	0.602	.49	0	1
Rebel Strength	999	3.471	1.431	1	5
Secessionist Conflict	999	0.319	.466	0	1

3.5.1 Independent Variables

I use two variables to capture women's roles in rebel groups: *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombatant Outreach*. These variables present the greatest divergence in role responsibilities in the WAAR dataset. Most studies on women rebels focus on their role as combatants but produce mixed findings regarding women's behavior and influence on group tactics (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken 2016; Mehrl 2022). The purpose of women in outreach positions is the opposite of combatants. This contrast allows me to examine variation in behavior and stresses the importance of specifying roles when determining women's contribution. I rely on the Loken and Matfess (2023) WAAR dataset covering women's activities in rebel groups from 1946-2015. To measure women's participation, Loken and Matfess (2023) gather information from digital archives on rebels, international and nongovernmental organizations, regional monitors, local news reports, governmental resource directorates, policy briefs, expert case

studies, ethnographic and field research, interviews with rebels, and Google/Google Scholar search engines (Loken and Matfess 2023). Similar datasets are less exhaustive than WAAR. The Women in Armed Rebellion (WARD) dataset covers nearly 20 years less and around 50 fewer rebel groups. The WAAR data also finds evidence of female presence in 68 cases where WARD records no female presence. Henshaw's (2016) data on women rebels focuses at the conflict level challenging evaluations of group-level factors on group behavior. Therefore, WAAR is the most appropriate for my analyses.

To measure women's participation, I first rely on the *Frontline Fighters* variable. It is an ordinal measure of women's frontline presence in armed combat, combat training, violent acts, or supporting the group in in the front-line environment. It is coded 0 for groups where no participation is verified, 1 if women occasionally participated (less than 5% of participants), 2 if women participated at low levels (5-9%), 3 for moderate to high female participation (10% or more).[23]

For outreach roles, I rely on the *Noncombat Outreach* measure. *Noncombat Outreach* is coded 1 for groups where women work in outreach roles such as recruiters, service provision, fundraising, representatives of the rebel group international or domestic audiences, and mobilizing the community. It is coded 0 if women do not serve in this role.[24]

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[23] WAAR codes Frontline Fighters into 5 categories with level 3 consisting of groups with moderate amounts of women combatants (10-19%) and level 4 with at least 20% women combatants. Level 3 consists of few observations which may be problematic when estimating my models. I collapse levels 3 and 4 into a single category. The appendix displays results using all 5 levels, and results remain consistent.

[24] These data do not provide information on the presence of outreach wings in general. In the appendix I attempt to account for the presence of an outreach wing in general by controlling for groups with a political wing and by estimating my model using only groups with political wings. The results hold.

3.5.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable, *Fatalities,* captures the number of civilians killed from rebel-perpetrated OSV. To measure fatalities, I use data from the UCDP GED dataset spanning active conflict years from 1990-2011.[25] The GED dataset covers events of organized violence around the world from 1989-2022. UCDP defines an event of organized violence as "an incident where armed force was used by an organized actor against another organized actor, or against civilians, resulting in at least 1 death at a specific location and a specific date" (Högbladh 2022). All recorded events of civilian killings by the GED dataset include only events in which armed groups intentionally and directly targets civilians. Extrajudicial killings and collateral damage are not recorded as incidences of OSV. Active conflict years without instances of OSV are recorded as 0 fatalities. I calculate deaths from OSV by collapsing the number of fatalities by a given group per country year.

Some OSV studies use the UCDP OSV dataset. However, it only records armed groups killing at least 25 civilians per year, omitting numerous groups and instances of OSV. Additionally, this data is aggregated to the group-year level, prohibiting me from analyzing data on groups involved in multiple conflicts, dyads, and locations. This is problematic because unless disaggregated by location, we cannot capture dyadic and country specific dynamics influencing behavior. Scholars of OSV note advantages of the GED data, and I have followed suit in opting for it here (Wood and Kathman 2014; Fjelde and Hultman 2014; Fisk 2018; Mehrl 2022).

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[25] I eliminate outliers by dropping two observations with over 30,000 OSV fatalities.

3.5.3 Control Variables

I include several control variables related to women rebels and OSV. The first set reflects rebel groups' characteristics. Because rebel groups espousing a Marxist or left-leaning ideology are most likely to recruit women, I include a binary measure, *Leftist*, capturing whether the group held such ideologies (Braithwaite and Ruiz 2018). I also control for command capabilities with *Central Command*. Groups with stronger command structures can regulate and discipline behavior and minimize abuse (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006). Groups funded through exploited resources are less reliant on locals for resources and often attract opportunistic individuals, increasing OSV (Weinstein 2006; Wood 2010; Whitaker, Walsh, and Conrad 2019). *Resource Exploitation* indicates whether rebel groups engaged in smuggling, theft, and extortion within a given year (Conrad et al. 2018).[26]

I include several conflict-related variables from UCDP datasets explaining lethality. Longer conflicts present more opportunity and incentives to kill, and groups may change their recruitment strategies as the conflict endures (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2010). Extended conflicts experience more OSV, and more women are recruited as demand for resources and fighters increases (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2013; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014). Thus, *Duration* gives the logged years since conflict onset. Because past group behavior is indicative of future behavior, I include a one-year lag of *Rebel OSV*. Rebel OSV may be carried out in response to government OSV, and, therefore, *Government OSV* controls for the natural log of government OSV (Raleigh and Choi, 2016). As conflicts worsen, groups often increase OSV (Downes 2007). *Battle Deaths* provides logged battle-related deaths per conflict-year. I control for

[26] Missing observations from the Rebel Contraband Dataset were replaced using the modal value of whether the rebel group engaged in resource exploitation. Groups without observations were unable to produce modal values and were replaced with a 0 for missing values.

Secessionist Conflicts because groups seeking secession may commit less OSV since doing so inhibits international support (Wood 2014). Other variables from the Nonstate Actor Dataset (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013) account for dynamics between warring parties. *Rebel Strength* provides the ratio of rebel to government strength because comparatively stronger rebels have the capability to refrain from or commit violence (Wood 2010; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014).

Finally, I control for conflict state attributes. *Fertility* provides a state's annual average of live births per woman (Caprioli 2005; World Bank 2015). Lower fertility rates indicate greater gender equality, respect for women, and is associated with more female combatants (Thomas and Wood 2017). *Democracy* is an annual binary indicator of democracy in the conflict state (Coppedge et al. 2011). Since higher OSV rates may occur in more heavily populated areas, I control for the annual logged *Population* of the conflict state (Gleditsch 2002).

3.5.4 Methods

Because the dependent variable is a count of civilian fatalities, I rely on a negative binomial regression model. Negative binomial models are suited for count data that is not normally distributed and in which events are unlikely independent of one another (Long 1997; Hilbe 2011). This model accounts for the overdispersion of my dependent variable. Furthermore, the GED measure of OSV only provides counts for *intentional* civilian killings. Thus, all zeros can be considered true zeros as accidental deaths from collateral damage are excluded. Groups who do not commit OSV do so intentionally. My model choice aligns with other scholars' evaluations of OSV (Balcells 2010; Wood 2010; Fjedle and Hultman 2014; Fisk 2018). Standard errors are clustered at the group level.

3.6 Results

Coefficients and p-values for my results are reported in Table 3.2. To reiterate, my hypotheses predict an increase in females on the frontline is associated an increase in OSV while the presence of women in outreach positions is associated with less OSV. Model 1 presents the baseline results and excludes control variables. Both variables are in the direction expected, but only *Frontline Fighters* achieves statistical significance. Due to concerns about temporal ordering with the time invariant data, some control variables may present post-treatment bias. I exclude control variables capturing conflict dynamics in Model 2, and the results remain consistent with my expectations. Model 3 presents the full model with all control variables. The results of Frontline Fighters can be interpreted by holding Noncombat Outreach constant and vice versa. Both variables are statistically significant in the expected direction, supporting H1 and H2.[27] *Frontline Fighters* is positive and significant at the $p < .01$ level, and *Noncombat Outreach* is negative and significant at the $p < .01$ level. Greater prevalence of female combatants is associated with an increase in OSV while having women in outreach positions is associated with a decrease in OSV holding all else constant. Finally, to evaluate linearity, I estimate my model at each level of *Frontline Fighters* in Model 4. "None" serves as the baseline category to which "low", "occasional", and "moderate/high" are compared. Each category is positive and significant at the $p < .01$ level. However, the coefficient for category 2 is slightly larger than the coefficient for category 3. The effect of *Frontline Fighters* on OSV

[27] I estimate the interactive effect of Frontline Fighters and Noncombat Outreach in the appendix. The coefficient fails to achieve statistical significance.

does not exhibit a completely linear effect. Instead, having a moderate number of *Frontline Fighters* appears to have an almost identical effect as having a large number of *Frontline Fighters*.[28]

Figure 3.1 displays the predicted number of OSV deaths estimated in Model 3 for both *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombat Outreach*. The plot on the left shows the predicted fatalities at each level of *Frontline Fighters*. Groups with none, low, occasional, and moderate/high levels of *Frontline Fighters* will kill, on average, 5, 12, 29, and 68 respectively. The highest category shows more variation in OSV perpetration. One possible reason is that some groups may eventually accommodate to higher rates of women, shift their norms, and place less emphasis on a violent socialization process. Meanwhile, the right-hand plot shows the predicted fatalities for groups with and without women in *Noncombat Outreach* roles given the average *Frontline Fighters* presence. Groups without women in outreach positions will kill approximately 46 civilians while those with women in outreach will around 14. Table 3.3 gives the predicted OSV values for each combination of *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombat Outreach*.

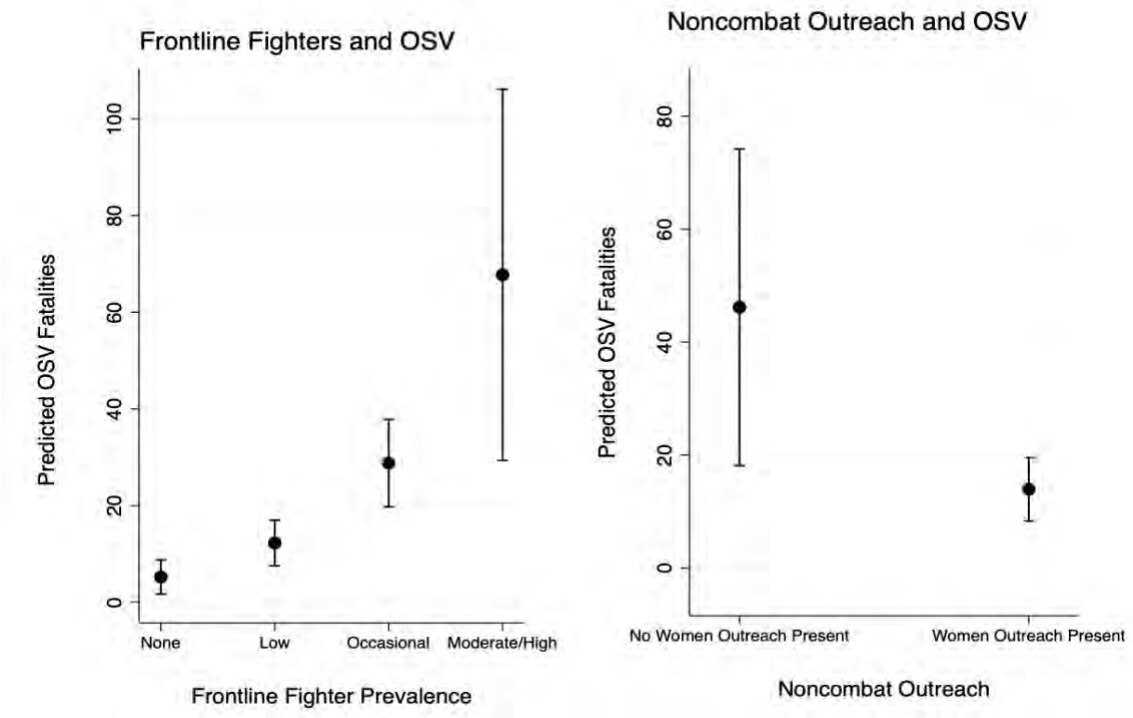
[28] Substantive effects for Model 4 are presented in the appendix. Although Model 4 indicates there is not a clear linear effect between groups with "Occasional" and groups with "Moderate/High" frontline fighters, there is not a statistically significant difference between the two categories.

Table 3.2: Frontline Fighters, Noncombat Outreach, and OSV

	Model 1	*Model 2*	*Model 3*	*Model 4*
Frontline Fighters	0.7101**	1.2998***	0.8559***	
	(0.011)	(0.000)	(0.000)	
Frontline Fighters = 1				2.0399**
				(0.047)
Frontline Fighters = 2				3.0781***
				(0.000)
Frontline Fighters = 3				3.0041***
				(0.000)
Noncombat Outreach	-0.3317	-0.8520*	-1.1969***	-2.0321***
	(0.558)	(0.056)	(0.004)	(0.002)
Central Command		-0.3175	-0.8571**	-0.8216**
		(0.420)	(0.010)	(0.023)
Population (logged)		0.1531	0.1059	0.0783
		(0.252)	(0.328)	(0.467)
Duration (logged)			0.3835	0.4067*
			(0.102)	(0.057)
Democracy		-0.8747*	0.3055	0.3744
		(0.067)	(0.471)	(0.464)
Battle Deaths (logged)			0.6877***	0.6862***
			(0.000)	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)			0.0008	0.0491
			(0.991)	(0.502)
Lagged Rebel OSV			0.0050***	0.0054***
			(0.004)	(0.003)
Leftist		-1.4703***	-1.2510***	-1.1263**
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.022)
Fertility		0.0481	0.1775	0.1170
		(0.739)	(0.129)	(0.338)
Resource Exploitation		1.4459***	0.5569*	0.4027
		(0.000)	(0.076)	(0.237)
Rebel Strength			-0.1525	-0.1500
			(0.144)	(0.154)
Secessionist Conflict		-1.2590***	-0.7058*	-0.7971*
		(0.007)	(0.063)	(0.059)
/lnalpha	2.1417***	2.0067***	1.7937***	1.7603***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	2.9972***	-0.2745	-3.1727	-2.7398
	(0.000)	(0.908)	(0.161)	(0.248)
Observations	927	921	921	921
Log pseudo-likelihood	-3093	-3046	-2975	-2963

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Figure 3.1: Frontline Fighter Prevalence, Noncombat Outreach Presence, and OSV Fatalities



Note: Figure presents substantive effects from Model 3. Predicted values of OSV are calculated at each level of Frontline Fighters on the left and for groups with and without women in Outreach roles on the right. Control variables are held at their means. Vertical bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Regarding the control variables *Leftist* and *Secessionist Conflict* are negative and statistically significant in all models. *Leftist* groups are associated with less OSV, reaffirming findings surrounding ideology and sexual violence (Sarwari 2021), but this is a novel finding for OSV. *Secessionist Conflicts* is associated with less OSV. Groups seeking secession often refrain from committing violence against civilians because they want to attract supporters and gain legitimacy (Wood 2010; Fazal 2018). *Central Command* is negative in all models and statistically significant in Models 3 and 4. *Central Command* is frequently linked to less OSV as groups with strong command and disciplinary structures have capable mechanisms to regulate behavior and discipline combatants (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Weinstein 2007). *Lagged Rebel OSV* is positive and significant in both Models 3 and 4, implying that past behavior predicts future behavior towards civilians in the subsequent years. The positive and significant

coefficient of *Battle Deaths* is consistent with prior findings and indicates that civilian lethality mimics battlefield lethality (Wood 2013, 2014; Moore 2019). Research shows rebels engaging in *Resource Exploitation* kill more civilians. This finding is reflected in Models 2 and 3, but resource exploitation is not statistically significant in Model 4 (Wood 2010, 2013). Similarly, longer conflict *Duration* is associated with more OSV in Model 4 but not Model 3. *Fertility, Population, Government OSV,* and *Rebel Strength* fail to achieve statistical significance in any model which is not uncommon in OSV studies (e.g., Wood 2013; Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014; Stanton 2016; Pospieszna and DeRouen Jr. 2017; Moore 2019). Similarly, *Democracy* is negative and statistically significant in Model 2 but not in the models where conflict dynamics are included.

Table 3.3: Predicted OSV Fatalities

		Frontline Fighters			
		None	*Low*	*Occasional*	*Moderate/High*
Noncombat Outreach	*Absent*	**12**	**29**	**69**	**162**
	Present	**4**	**9**	**21**	**49**

Note: Predicted OSV values are calculated for each combination of Frontline Fighters and Noncombat Outreach and are significant at $p < .05$ level. Predictions are generated from Model 3 estimation.

3.6.1 Discussion

A potential concern is that the results are not necessarily causal in nature. Rather, one may argue that groups who recruit women generally disregard human rights. Unfortunately, the time invariance of the data complicates this and do not permit temporal ordering. I address this empirically by including variables consistently linked with female recruitment. Because women are more likely to join left-leaning groups, I control for groups espousing such ideologies. Women are also more likely to join as the conflict prolongs. Meanwhile,

information about the group is revealed with time allowing women to better assess groups' behavior. Controlling for conflict duration accounts for these two alternative explanations. Furthermore, if it were the case that groups who recruit women do not respect rights in the first place, then we would expect to see OSV increase with the inclusion of women in general. The findings do not support this sentiment. Moreover, there is no evidence to show women are drawn to groups based on their level of civilian violence. Nevertheless, the results here should be understood these limitations in mind.

My findings reflect similar evaluations between combatants and civilian violence where scholars attribute causality in the same direction (Beber and Blattman 2013; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Mehrl 2020, 2022). Even so, I attempt to address endogeneity through several robustness checks in the appendix. I control for potential omitted variables and use proxies for controls such as: forced recruitment, rebels' fighting capacity, territorial conflicts, Islamic groups, and the ratio of women to men in the work forces. Due to the time invariance, I estimate my models at the dyad level as well. The results remain consistent across all models.

3.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine how women's varying roles in rebel groups influences the group's propensity to commit OSV. I argued women's impact on OSV is contingent upon their role in the group. Society views women as nurturing, caring, altruistic, and prosocial. Therefore, we should expect that women's presence in nonviolent outreach roles promotes pacifistic behavior when they are not made to conform to violent norms. This type of behavior is more likely to attract support and lowers the group's need and desire to target civilians for resources. Instead, they are more successful in their outreach role by opting for nonviolent means which should lead to a reduction is OSV. Meanwhile, women in frontline

positions are expected to behave violently as warfighters. Because war is a masculine and violent phenomenon, women, stereotyped as peaceful and weaker, are often socialized to become violent, deadly warriors than the men. Women need to be exceptionally violent to perceived as equivocal to men. The more women comprise a group, the more this socialization process occurs. Simultaneously, the notion of women as softer, kinder, and trustworthy makes women more lethal by providing them opportunities to target and kill more people. The socialization of women, coupled with societal perceptions should lead to the rebel group committing more OSV. Using the WAAR and GED datasets, I test my argument empirically. The results provide support for my hypotheses. Having more women on the frontline leads to increased OSV but having women in outreach roles leads to decreased OSV. Women's presence can impact overall group behavior, but this is contingent on their role.

This study has several important implications. Notably, it illustrates that women's participation in rebel groups should not be treated evenly across the board, but instead *how* they participate is crucial. My results challenge recent findings that women's presence in rebel groups reduces violence against civilians (Mehrl 2020, 2022). While most studies focus on which rebel groups are likely to commit OSV, I focus on the demographics and activities inside groups. The findings illustrate that the notion of women as peaceful and nonviolent is not necessarily true and can even be damning in war. These discoveries can inform policymakers by highlighting factors that increase OSV.

These findings present several avenues for future research. The WAAR data provide a single snapshot in time of a group's female prevalence. Therefore, I cannot assess how fluctuating female presence influences OSV throughout conflict. Future research should investigate temporal factors of female combatant recruitment. My findings also do not speak to women as rebel leaders. While more women on the frontline is associated with more OSV,

we do not know if having women in positions of power can change this. Future research should focus on women's roles in various combat, noncombat, foot soldier, and leadership roles to determine if women consistently lead to more, or have no effect on, civilian abuse.

Regarding women in outreach positions, the data do not disentangle the types of outreach women partake in. Groups relying on women at the grassroots level may behave differently than those using women to attract international support. Similarly, the group's main source of support may be a key factor. Groups relying on locals for support may commit less OSV in case it jeopardizes this support while groups receiving most of their resources from external sources may care less about local support. Future research would benefit from more precise data on rebel groups' outreach and sources of support.

CHAPTER 4. THE (GENDERED) DICHOTOMY OF LEADERSHIP: WOMEN MILITARY LEADERS AND ONE-SIDED VIOLENCE IN REBEL GROUPS

4.1 Introduction

Does the presence of women military leaders influence violence against civilians? Recently scholars have begun to acknowledge and analyze women's presence in rebel groups as combatants, foot soldiers, and suicide bombers (e.ge. Bloom, 2005, 2011; Thomas and Bond, 2015; Thomas and Wood, 2017; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Wood, 2019; Loken and Matfess, 2020, 2022; Mehrl, 2022). These studies highlight why women join, the roles they play, and their behavior towards civilians. Meanwhile, research on civilian victimization reveal several reasons why rebels target civilians in conflict; coercing support, displaying the power to hurt, extracting resources and information, bargaining with the government, and inability or unwillingness to punish the abusers (e.g., Azam and Hoeffler, 2002; Valentino, Huth and Balch-Lindsay, 2004; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Kalyvas, 2006; Wood, 2010). But one important facet has been largely overlooked by both camps: the impact of women rebel leaders on civilian targeting. This study provides insight to both research agendas by conducting the first analysis on the impact of women rebel military leaders on one-sided violence (OSV) or the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians" (Pettersson, 2022).

The importance of understanding how women leaders influence OSV has practical implications that extend beyond scholarly contribution. First, both civil conflict and OSV has trended upward for the last five years (Palik, Obermeier, and Rustad, 2022). As such, there is a growing need to identify what factors contribute to both the rise and decline in civilian killings. Second, although women frequently participate in armed conflict, their contribution is still unclear. More often than not, women are viewed as victims of conflicts even though

they frequently participate in armed groups (e.g., Goldstein, 2001; Carpenter et al., 2003; Caprioli, 2005; Plümper and Neumayer, 2006; Sjoberg, 2014). This perception is in part attributed to our lack of understanding of women's pacifying or violent effects on conflict dynamics. Moreover, it has led to women evading punishment for war crimes, jeopardizing attempts at justice and reconciliation (Steflja and Trisko Darden, 2020). I address both issues by identifying how women rebel leaders influence OSV perpetration.

Research examining women in leadership and conflict denotes ambiguous findings on women's impact. Much of the research on women leaders analyzes women in defense and political leadership positions constrained to the state level finding that women are often just as, or even more, hawkish than men (e.g., Koch and Fulton, 2011; Barnes and O'Brien, 2018; Post and Sen, 2020; Schramm and Stark, 2020; Imamverdiyeva and Shea, 2022). Research has yet to examine the influence of women rebel leaders' impact on conflict outcomes. However, this existing line of research does not speak to women leaders in rebel groups, and the lack of institutional restraints on rebel groups suggests women may have more exaggerated impacts in nonstate environments. Lack of constraints here create a unique window of opportunity for women to express hawkishness through explicit violence. Where research does examine women in nonstate settings, women are often evaluated in their roles as foot soldiers, auxiliary personnel; victims of conflict, or in post-conflict environments (e.g., Brownmiller, 1993; Bloom, 2011; Coulter, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Thomas and Bond, 2015; Berry, 2015; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Loken, 2017; Braithwaite and Ruiz, 2018). These studies tend to view women as victims, or they highlight the positive contributions women have on conflict dynamics. Taken together, the two strands of research indicate that women can have varying effects given their position and environment.

I seek to understand the intersection of these two research agendas by exploring the impact of women rebel leaders on violence against civilians. I argue that the women who select into military leadership positions have more masculine traits than the average woman. However, women are often viewed as inept and incapable in defense settings leading them to follow through on their threats with action to demonstrate their resolve. Women do so by behaving and tolerating more violence than males in similar positions. This supplants their competence and seriousness as military leaders to their adversaries as well as those within their own group. This should manifest into higher rates of OSV by the rebel group. I subsequently posit that groups with both women military leaders and those with larger numbers of women frontline fighters should be especially prone to committing higher levels of OSV than groups with low levels of women frontline fighters or without women military leaders. Women combatants are often subjected to a violent socialization process in which they must demonstrate their masculinity and capacity for violence in order to prove themselves to the rest of the group. The more women combatants are introduced to the group, the more women there are that must undergo this socialization process, and OSV deaths accumulate. Women in military leadership roles should see this process as justified in producing effective fighters and will tolerate these acts of violence. After all, they likely underwent the same experience and later rose to a leadership position. The combination of women leaders and a higher prevalence of female combatants should result in the greatest level of OSV perpetration.

Using data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's Geocoded Dataset and the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion Dataset, I empirically evaluate my hypotheses. Consistent with my expectations, I find that having women in rebel military leadership positions is associated with an increase in a group's perpetration of OSV. Meanwhile, I find this association is largely contingent on the prevalence of women frontline fighters in the

group. Rebel groups having both women military leaders and higher numbers of female combatants are associated with more OSV than groups with few female combatants. There appears to be few gendered effects of having female, as opposed to male, rebel military leaders in shaping violence against civilians.

This study contributes to scholarly and policy insight in several ways. First, it places women's agency at the forefront and considers the implications of their presence as leaders and perpetrators rather than perceiving women as victims in war. Second, contrary to findings of numerous studies on women in leadership roles and women in conflict, the results here indicate that women can inflict more harm than good in certain cases. Finally, this study has implications for policy in highlighting factors that contribute to civilian victimization during civil war.

4.2 Rebels and One-sided Violence

One-sided violence is typically considered the intentional targeting and killing of noncombatants (Valentino, 2014). Nonstate actor OSV has received growing scholarly attention to coincide with its growing perpetration, including one million civilian fatalities, in the last thirty years (Allanson, Melander, and Themner, 2017; Pettersson and Öberg, 2020). Although OSV is considered the worst form of wartime violence, its intentional perpetration serves several purposes for armed groups (Valentino, 2000; Kalyvas, 2006; Valentino, 2014; Balcells and Stanton, 2021). For the most part, OSV is considered an instrument to gain cooperation from civilians through deterrence (Kalyvas, 2006). Because civilian support is often crucial for insurgent victory, insurgents will go to extreme measures to gain or enforce compliance (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, 2004; Kalyvas, 2006). Rebels targeting civilians do so in hopes of gaining crucial information about the enemy, preventing any aid to

the government, or obtaining material resources necessary for survival or advancing their fight (Azam and Hoeffler, 2002; Weinstein, 2007; Kalyvas, 2006; Kalyvas and Kocher, 2009; Wood, 2010, 2014; Valentino, 2014). Civilian targeting may also be used as a signal. It signals that the government is unwilling or incapable of protecting them against violence, forcing the government into negotiations, and thereby improving rebels' bargaining position (Azam and Hoeffler, 2002; Kalyvas, 2006; Hultman, 2007, 2009; Wood and Kathman, 2013; Pospiezna and DeRouen Jr., 2016). Other times, rebels commit OSV to display their strength and lethality to place themselves above other nonstate armed groups (Raleigh and Choi, 2016). Rebels commit violence against civilians strategically to advance their goals.

On the other hand, some rebel groups seek benefits by refraining from OSV. Because civilian support is so important for rebel advancement, some rebels prefer to win hearts and minds through the heart rather than the fist. By maintaining this type of relationship with locals, the locals may be more willing to support them (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay, 2004. When this support base exists, rebels do not want to jeopardize by turning on their supporters (Wood, 2010; 2013). Rebels understand their fighting and cause do not exist in a vacuum, and external support is paramount. Exercising restraint in civilian killing signals to international audiences that the rebels' support human rights, international law, and democracy, and, consequently, draws support from foreign governments and nongovernmental organizations (Stanton, 2016; Jo and Simmons, 2016; Fazal, 2018; Gleditsch et al., 2018). Violence against civilians, and the lack thereof, is a double-edged sword with some groups choosing to kill for the same reasons others choose not to kill.

Scholars identify the strategic logic of committing, and not committing, OSV, but they also identify group characteristics lending to variation in civilian victimization. Intragroup homogeneity can reduce OSV by eliminating the need to prove devotion and loyalty to the

group, build ties, and cohesion through violence against civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Beber and Blattman, 2013; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b, 2017; Ottman, 2016). Combatants' commonalities with locals also reduces OSV as individuals do not want to kill their own kind and locals are more willing to cooperate when there are shared values and traits (Weinstein, 2007; Fjelde and Hultman, 2014; Moore, 2019). Other times, individuals' motivations are the guiding factor in shaping their behavior. Opportunistic individuals may join rebel groups for personal gain using violence to grab valuable resources or inflict violence on opposing ethnic groups (Ottman, 2016; Manekin, 2020). Despite all this, command structures can mitigate civilian targeting. Groups with strong central commands can deter violence by enforcing good behavior through strong disciplinary efforts and punishing abuses, reducing OSV (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Manekin, 2013; Doctor and Willingham, 2022).

Research on OSV has identified several predictors of OSV, but several important components have yet to be evaluated. Only recently have scholars begun to focus on the behavioral consequences of rebel leadership. Rebel groups that select their leaders via electoral processes, especially with civilians' participation, are less likely to perpetrate sexual violence in wartime (Sawyer, Bond, and Gallagher Cunningham, 2021). Of particular importance to this study is the revelation that state leaders that achieved power through revolutions or rebellion are likely to switch from voluntary to forced recruitment methods during civil war (Chaudhry, Karim, and Scroggs, 2020). I expand on these discoveries by examining how the gender of rebel military leaders influences OSV.

4.3 Women in Rebellion and Conflict

For many years conventional wisdom held that women were victims in conflict, but scholars have noted they are frequently active participants and can have important

consequences. Women have participated in 40-60% of civil wars in the last 40 years as household keepers, spies, fundraisers, recruiters, nurses, and other roles. But they have also participated as combatants and even leaders (Coulter, 2009; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely, 2019; Loken, 2022; Loken and Matfess, 2022). Women's involvement is appealing to rebel groups because it can provide them with strategic benefits such as legitimacy, increased domestic and international support, and advancement in revolutions (Thomas and Bond, 2015; Henshaw, 2016; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Wood, 2019). Groups espousing Leftist and gender egalitarian views are not only more willing to recruit women, but these beliefs are attractive to women seeking more opportunity and equality (Henshaw, 2016; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Wood 2019). Other times women join because they see no other viable option. Often times, violence is brought to one's doorstep, and when this happens, women may choose to take up arms in attempts to defend their families, community, and deter government violence (Wood, 2003; Viterna, 2013).

Although scholars have identified patterns in women's involvement in rebel groups, their impact on conflict is less straightforward. For example, women combatants are known to commit similar acts and levels of violence to, and may even be more brutal than, men (Coulter, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2017; Thomas, 2019). As suicide terrorists, women are often able to kill higher numbers of people (Bloom 2005, 2010; Cunningham, 2003; Thomas, 2019). And although females are the primary victims of sexual violence during war, scholars note that they frequently commit sexual violence alongside their male comrades at similar levels (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2017).

However, other studies find women to have pacifying effects in conflict. Women can increase both horizontal ties within communities as well as vertical ties to gain support, and these ties can help shorten the conflict (Braithwaite and Ruiz, 2018). Likewise, women's

pacifying nature and desire for peace means they prefer to direct resources to foundational needs like poverty, education, development, and human security rather than defense. In doing so, women can help successfully negotiate ends to conflict, reduce the likelihood of conflict relapse, and prolong peace (DeMeritt, Nichols, and Kelly, 2015; Shair-Rosenfield and Wood, 2017; Krause, Krause, and Bränfors, 2018). These studies suggest that have differing impacts on conflicts and violence, but they also indicate women's role in conflict might be a key element.

Scholars have conducted numerous studies analyzing how women leaders behave in defense settings, but these studies produce mixed findings. Some work shows women behave more aggressively in crisis bargaining scenarios and may be more likely to initiate conflict than men. But this applies to women in executive roles where women face less institutional constraint than women in legislative roles or roles requiring compromise (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Koch and Fulton, 2011; Schramm and Stark, 2020). However, others suggest that women behave similarly to men in leadership positions (Norris, 1996; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis, 2015; Imamverdiyeva and Shea, 2022). These studies are important for understanding women in leadership positions, but they do not speak to women leaders in nonstate contexts.

It is important to evaluate women in the nonstate context because nonstate actors can behave differently than states. States can be dissuaded from committing human rights violations due to domestic and international backlash that can result in economic, reputational, and political consequences (Simmons, 2000; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui, 2005; 2007; Franklin, 2008). Nonstate actors can commit human rights abuses with less detection, and they do not necessarily face the same level of repercussions as states (Walter, 2009). This leaves them less incentivized to abide by international law, posing an even greater threat to human rights than states. In fact, the greatest threat nonstate armed groups pose is not to state military security

or transnational security, but it is to the human security of the local populace within their own state (Englehart, 2016). At the same time, women's empowerment, societal, and political participation within the state if frequently associated with reduced violence (Caprioli, 2005; Melander, 2005; Gizelis, 2009). But the same cannot be said for nonstate groups, even those with gender inclusive ideologies where women participate the most. The lack of institutional restraint and repercussions for bad behavior faced by nonstate groups means we should not assume women's involvement in nonstate settings has the same outcome as women's involvement in state settings. These factors necessitate more inquiry into how women' involvement in nonstate armed groups influences violence.

Research shows that women participate in military leadership roles more frequently than expected- in 28% of rebel groups (Loken and Matfess, 2022). The biggest predictors of women's placement in these leadership roles are the presence of women combatants in general and groups with left-leaning ideologies (Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely, 2019). However, rebel groups may place women in these positions merely to signify their devotion to change and legitimacy rather than to actually lead (Eisenstein ,2007).[29] In some cases, their leadership can be restricted to women-only wings, prohibiting women from leading conventional units (Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely, 2019). While these studies identify when women become leaders in rebel groups, they do not explain what effects women have on the group once they secure leadership positions.

The research mentioned here evaluates women in multiple defense and conflict scenarios. In doing so, scholars have identified why rebels recruit women, why women join and potentially lead, and how women combatants behave (Henshaw, 2016; Wood and

[29] A potential concern here is that women are placed into these leadership roles in groups that are less prone to committing OSV in the first place due to a commitment to change and legitimacy. However, this would predict this opposite of the effect I expect to observe.

Thomas, 2017; Loken, 2017; Wood, 2019). Numerous studies have also examined the behavior of women in government leadership positions, producing conflicting findings (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis, 2015; Imamverdiyeva and Shea, 2022). However, scholars have yet to converge the two lines of research to understand how the presence of women military leaders impact the behavior of the group. In the next section I lay out a theoretical story to tell why women military leaders in rebel groups should be associated with higher levels of OSV.

4.4 Women in Military Leadership and One-sided Violence

Scholars are taking more interest in women's involvement and active participation in war and are making important discoveries. However, our knowledge of women's impact in rebellion is limited due to the common treatment of women solely as combatants. But as studies show, women may behave differently in various defense contexts. For example, when women take on the role of soldier, they are frequently as brutal as the men, participating in gang rapes, carrying out suicide bombings, and leading full combat wings (Bloom, 2005; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2017; McKay, 2020). Other times, women are more pacifistic taking on support roles, recruiting new members, and "mothering" the group (Coulter, 2008, 2009; Viterna, 2013; Wood, 2019; Loken, 2022). Women in state and decision-making roles can help deter conflict sometimes or progress hostilities at other times (Shair-Rosenfield and Wood, 2017; Krause, Krause, and Bränfors, 2018; Schramm and Stark, 2020). At the same time, recent studies have examined how rebel leader attributes can influence group behavior. Rebel leaders' educational background, combat experiences, and path to leadership are predictive of sexual violence perpetration and terrorism (Sawyer, Bond, and Gallagher Cunningham, 2021; Acosta, Huang, and Silverman, 2022). Given these discrepancies, I

examine the influence women military rebel leaders have on a rebel group's perpetration of OSV. I argue that women seeking these leadership roles are less pacifistic than the general population of women, but to obtain these roles and be taken seriously they must exhibit more violence, or tolerate it, than male leaders.

Before we can understand the impact women rebel military leaders have on group behavior, it is important to first evaluate unique characteristics of these women. Conflict is largely a masculine phenomenon where violence is rewarded, and frailty is rebuked (Goldstein, 2001). To be promoted to a military leadership position, individuals must exhibit qualities becoming of a leader- one being acceptance of violence. Although women join rebel groups for different reasons and take on various roles, this does not necessarily mean they are inherently different or more aggressive. In fact, research shows that women combatants conform to group norms and violent participation to form ties with and be taken seriously by other group members (Coulter, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2017). Women seeking military leadership roles must convey exceptional devotion to the group (Henshaw, 2016; Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely, 2019). Women taking on these roles likely exhibit masculine traits that are valued in conflict even more than regular foot soldiers (Fukuyama, 1998). As combatants, these women need to be more brutal than the men to move up in rank, and this behavior should carry over into their role as leaders. In other words, a self-selection process of women leaders takes place (Elsesser and Lever, 2011). The women seeking military leadership roles exhibit masculine qualities that are valuable in conflict.

Women military leaders of the Liberians United for Reconciliation of Democracy (LURD) rebel group illustrates the brutality women in these positions are capable of exhibiting. The most notorious of these leaders, Black Diamond, was considered as one of LURD's best by senior group officials and was feared by many as indicated by one civilian:

> "She beats men as well as women, whoever has done something wrong. Everybody is afraid of her" (Carroll, 2003).

Another LURD female commander described her path to leadership:

> "They bite, and I bite. I'll bite any man," she says in a singsong voice. "Growing up I prayed to be stronger than the men. They made me a commander because of my hardiness. We wanted to fight so we formed our own lady unit. We shoot better than the men. Last week I shot a government soldier in the head, here" (Carroll, 2003).

Once women are positioned into military leadership roles, they must demonstrate their capability to lead in a military capacity. Women are stereotyped as frequently peaceful, nurturing, and fragile while men are stereotyped as tough, aggressive, and strong (Goldstein, 2001; Melander, 2005; McDermott et al., 2007; Reiter, 2014). Even though women frequently participate in combat, these stereotypes accompany them. This results in women attempting to compensate and shed notions of femininity (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007; Coulter, 2008, 2009; Bloom, 2011). Research on female executives show that women face a different set of standards than men and must outperform men in similar positions to be considered equally qualified (Heilman, 2001; Bauer, 2015, 2017). Studies consistently attribute this factor to women behaving more belligerently and war-prone than men in defense, crises, and foreign policy settings (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Bauer, 2017; Schwartz and Blair, 2020; Schramm and Stark, 2020; Post and Sen 2020). However, these findings do not mean women leaders are inherently more violent than men. Instead, scholars attribute women's more aggressive stances to others' perceptions of them (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001). Women leaders are viewed as weaker than men in defense scenarios leading opponents to underestimate their resolve and doubt the credibility of their threats (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Bauer, 2015; 2017. Consequently, women are forced to follow through on their threats and take real action while men do not because they are considered more credible in the first place (Post and Sen, 2020; Schwartz and Blair, 2020).

For women military leaders in rebel groups, this manifests differently. Women in government positions express their views and behavior in more diplomatic, institutional settings instead of through violence.[30] However, in the context of civil war, institutions are absent or eroded, violence is the norm and is used as a means of expression. Here, women leaders do not demonstrate their seriousness and capabilities through military spending or certain foreign policy stances. They do so through violent perpetration. Women in military leadership roles may be underestimated not only by their own unit, but opponents may do so as well. As such, these women are likely to be more brutal to those suspected of supporting the enemy including civilians. This does not mean women necessarily order their unit to target and kill civilians, but they should be more likely to tolerate such violence. In doing so, it effectively demonstrates their fierceness to the opposition while establishing credibility as a "serious leader" to those within their own unit. The result is an increase in the rebel group's perpetration of OSV.

To reiterate my argument, there are several factors that should lead to women rebel leaders being associated with higher levels of OSV. First, women that become military leaders set themselves apart from regular women foot soldiers by displaying greater devotion to the group and propensities for violence. It is not the meek that take on these leadership roles, but women with more warlike masculine traits and proclivities for violence select into such positions. Second, women in leadership positions are underestimated and have their threats taken less seriously than men in leadership positions. Thus, women must be especially tolerant of and may even endorse violence to have their threats perceived credibly. Finally, women leading military units in war exhibit their leadership competence through violent acts.

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[30] Here I am referring to women in government legislative or executive positions. I am not referring to women involved in state military leadership roles as there is little research on this topic.

Committing violence against civilians serves to demonstrate women leaders' resolve and capabilities both to opponents and to their own group members. This leads me to my first hypothesis:

H1: *Rebel groups with women in military leadership positions commit greater levels of OSV than rebel groups without women in military leadership positions.*

Women do not come into leadership positions without having first served as combatants. Indeed, the best predictor of women's military leadership in rebel groups is the presence of women in combat roles (Darden, Henshaw, and Szekely, 2019). Indeed, the data show there are no groups where women military leaders are present without female combatants present. In order to be promoted to military leadership positions within the group women need to have exemplified their effectiveness as fighters in combat experience for the group. This means that before these women attain leadership roles, they must undergo the violent socialization process themselves.

Research shows that as the prevalence of women combatants in a rebel group increases, so does the group's perpetration of OSV (Harrell, 2023). Stereotypes of women as pacifistic and nonviolent carry over to war even as women take on combatant roles. In order to shed these stereotypes, women must "overperform" violence to be taken seriously as combatants and become socialized with the group (Carpenter, 2007; Coulter, 2008, 2009; Weber, 2021). In fact, by demonstrating propensities for participating in violence on behalf of the group, women can actually become more devoted fighters eager to perpetrating violence on behalf of the group (Bloom, 2011). Consequently, before women can obtain military leadership positions, they undergo a violent socialization process which not only demonstrates their capabilities as fighters but increases their identification with and devotion to the group as well.

Once leadership is attained, women can reflect on these experiences and justify violent combatant socialization as effective in producing competent fighters. Therefore, we should expect that when women are in military leadership positions, they tolerate violence against civilians. This affect should be exacerbated as more women join the frontline and more violent socialization is required to assimilate them into the rebel combatants. Because women in military leadership positions perceive this process as a necessary evil, they should be particularly willing to turn a blind eye to such acts. As a result, when groups have high levels of female combatants in conjuction with women military leaders, we should see even higher rates of OSV than when groups have few female combatants.

Research on women's behavior in government positions is insightful here as well. Legislatures with larger representations of women hold more gender inclusive and less misogynistic attitudes. Meanwhile, women in executive positions still exert hawkish behavior because they are less able to escape pacifistic and dovish stereotypes from other executives. Similar to the finding that women in executive power display more hawisk behavior, I expect women rebel military leaders to mimic such behavior. However, I depart from the finding that increased presence of women in the legislature decreases propensities for conflict and violence. Rebel groups combatting the government are stanchly different from legislatures in that armed rebel groups have chosen violence as their method of dissent and pushing for change. Moreover, conflict is a masculine and violent phenomenon where violence is applauded, not compromise. This nature of warfare and the rebel group is not changing when women are included. Rather women are changing their behavior to conform to the violent, masculine needs of the group (Wood, 2008; Hoover Green ,2018; Loken, 2017).

The presence of women rebel military leaders in conjuction with high rates of female frontline combatants should result in leaders more tolerant towards, and in agreement with,

increased OSV that can serve to build a more lethal, cohesive fighting force. This leads to my second hypotheses:

H2: *Rebel groups with women military leaders commit greater levels of OSV when they have high levels of women frontline fighters than when they have no women military leaders or when they have low levels of women frontline fighters.*

4.5 Research Design

I rely on two main datasets to analyze the relationship between women military rebel leaders and OSV: Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion Dataset (Loken and Matfess, 2022) and Uppsala Conflict Data Program Geocoded Events Dataset version 20.1 (Sundberg and Melander, 2013; Högbladh, 2020). The WAAR data includes a total of 22 roles women played across 372 rebel groups from 1946-2015, and the UCDP GED data covers instances of OSV from 1989-2022. The unit of analysis is the rebel group-year and includes 999 potential observations across 187 rebel groups from 1989-2011.[31] The data are structured so that there is a single, time-invariant binary indicator of the presence of women military leaders per group.[32] The OSV variable is a count of civilian fatalities captured per group-conflict-year. In short, the observations match each indicator of women military rebel leaders to every recording of civilian killings committed by the corresponding rebel group in a given year. Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 4.1.[33]

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[31] Although the OSV data extends to 2022 several control variables do not begin until 1989 or extend past 2011. I chose to not include observations where accurate control variables are unavailable. With a sample size of nearly 1,000 observations, I can draw generalizable conclusions.

[32] Time invariant data is typical of both combatant typology and rebel OSV studies. My decision to use the rebel group-year for my unit of analysis mimics similar studies examining rebel demographics and OSV (see Salehyan, Siroky, and Wood 2014; Moore 2019; Doctor 2021).

[33] I eliminate outliers by dropping two observations with over 30,000 OSV fatalities.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Fatalities	999	68.2	289.904	0	5016
Women Leaders	994	0.434	0.496	0	1
Frontline Fighters	927	0.551	0.498	0	1
Central Command	999	.957	0.204	0	1
Forced Recruitment	909	.437	0.496	0	1
Population (logged)	995	17.293	1.552	13.099	20.934
Duration (logged)	999	1.544	.799	0.693	3.664
Democracy	999	0.357	0.479	0	1
Battle Deaths (logged)	999	5.128	1.526	3.258	10.330
Government OSV (logged)	999	2.149	2.206	0	8.324
Lagged Rebel OSV	999	103.193	1354.814	0	30110
Leftist	999	0.284	.451	0	1
Fertility	992	4.416	1.831	1.157	7.772
Resource Exploitation	999	0.602	.490	0	1
Rebel Strength	999	3.471	1.431	1	5
Secessionist Conflict	999	0.319	.466	0	1

4.5.1 Independent Variables

My analyses use two main explanatory variables: *Women Leaders* and *Frontline Fighters.* I chose these variables for several reasons. A large body of research has evaluated women in various leadership positions, but these positions are somewhat removed from armed group decision-making. Examining women in military leadership roles provides a better understanding of women's contribution in defense settings and violent organizations. Similarly, recent studies have begun to focus on women combatants' behavior in rebel groups. Women's presence on the frontline is the best predictor of women in military leadership positions but lack knowledge on how their presence in both can influence rebel group behavior.

My two main explanatory variables, *Women Leaders* and *Frontline Fighters,* come from the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion Dataset (WAAR) (Loken and Matfess, 2022).

WAAR is the most exhaustive dataset capturing women's involvement in 22 roles across 372 rebel groups from 1946-2015. Loken and Matfess (2022) collect information on women's involvement in rebel groups from numerous sources such as: digital archives, international and nongovernmental organizations, regional monitors, local news reports, governmental resource directorates, policy briefs, expert case studies, ethnographic and field research, interviews with rebels, and Google/Google Scholar search engines. WAAR improves upon and expands on information provided by similar datasets on women in rebel groups. The Women in Armed Rebellion Dataset covers 20 fewer years, 50 less groups, and finds no evidence of women's involvement in nearly 70 cases than WAAR (Wood and Thomas, 2017). Similarly, Henshaw (2016) covers fewer groups than WAAR and focuses on women's involvement at the conflict level which complicates evaluations of the group characteristics needed for my analyses. For these reasons, WAAR is most suitable for my study.

To evaluate my hypotheses, I rely on the variables *Women Leaders* and *Frontline Fighters* from the WAAR dataset (Loken and Matfess, 2022). The *Women Leaders* variable is a binary indicator of (1) the presence women as military leaders in a rebel and (0) otherwise. Groups are coded as having women military leaders when they incorporate women into military roles as lieutenants, commanders, generals, or other positions within the military hierarchy (Loken and Matfess, 2022). This variable does not incorporate the presence of women in leadership positions not of military nature. *Frontline Fighters* is a dichotomous variable coded as "0" for groups with little to no presence of women on the frontline (0-5%) and "1" for groups with occasional to high levels of women on the frontline (>5%) (Loken and Matfess, 2022).[34]

[34] I use these cutoff points for the *Frontline Fighters* variable because there are no cases with women military leaders present and without women on the frontline. The model will not estimate using a conventional "present or not present" binary indicator of *Frontline Fighters*.

4.5.2 Dependent Variable

My dependent variable, *Fatalities,* comes from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's Geocoded Events Dataset (GED) and covers all events active conflict years in the world from 1990-2019. (Sundberg and Melander 2013). *Fatalities* provides the annual count of civilian deaths due to rebel-perpetrated OSV- "the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians" (Pettersson, 2022, p. 3). In other words, an event is only coded as instance of OSV when an armed group deliberately and directly targets civilians. Extrajudicial killings and collateral damage are excluded from this measure. Years in which conflicts are ongoing but there are no instances of OSV are coded as having 0 OSV. To calculate and generate the F*atalities* variable, I collapsed the total fatalities owed to OSV by a given rebel group per country year. Standard errors are clustered at the group level.

The GED dataset is optimal in my study for several reasons. It codes all instances of OSV whereas the UCDP OSV dataset only records a group having committed OSV if the total OSV deaths were 25 or more per year. This threshold excludes a large number of cases that may be important in determining the relationship of interest. Furthermore, the UCDP OSV data are aggregated to the group-year level, overlooking groups involved in multiple conflicts across multiple locations and dyads. This poses a problem because dyadic and country specific factors are often important in shaping armed group behavior. My decision to rely on the GED dataset agrees with several studies of OSV (Wood and Kathman, 2013; Fjelde and Hultman, 2013; Fisk, 2018; Mehrl, 2021).

4.5.3 Control Variables

I incorporate several control variables related to women military leaders and OSV. First, I include a set of controls reflecting rebel groups' attributes. I begin with a binary

indicator of *Leftist* beliefs taken from the Foundations of Rebel Group Emergence Dataset (Braithwaite and Cunningham, 2019). Rebel groups espousing a Marxist or left-leaning ideology are most likely to recruit women and have been associated with lower levels of civilian violence (Braithwaite and Ruiz, 2018; Sarwari, 2021). *Resource Exploitation* is taken from the Rebel Contraband Dataset and indicates whether rebel groups engaged in any form of smuggling, theft, and extortion within a given year (Conrad et al., 2018).[35] Groups that obtain funding through resource exploitation rely less on the civilian population for resources and are therefore less incentivized to refrain from carrying out violence against civilians (Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2010; Whitaker, Walsh, and Conrad, 2019). Likewise, because groups that engage in forcible recruitment methods often commit violence against civilians, I control for whether a group ever engaged in *Forced Recruitment* (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Beber and Blattman, 2013; Cohen, 2016b).

Next I rely on data from the Nonstate Actor Dataset control for a series of conflict dynamics that frequently influence armed group characteristics and behavior (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan,. 2013). To account for these dynamics, I include a series of control variables from UCDP. As a conflict endures, groups may witness more nefarious combatant behavior, shift their tactics towards civilians, recruit more women, and adjust their recruitment strategies. Therefore, I control for the logged years of the *Duration* of each conflict (Kalyvas, 2006; Wood, 2010; Manekin, 2013; Wood and Thomas, 2017). Groups that have committed OSV in the previous year are likely to do so in the subsequent year. Similarly, rebels and governments often engage in tit-for-tat violence, and rebels are increasingly likely to commit OSV if the government commits OSV. To account for these patterns of violence, I include a

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[35] Missing observations from the Rebel Contraband Dataset were replaced using the modal value of whether the rebel group engaged in resource exploitation. Groups without observations were unable to produce modal values and were replaced with a 0 for missing values.

one-year lag of *Rebel OSV* and control for the natural log of Government OSV (Downes, 2006; Raleigh and Choi, 2016). Conflicts that are more lethal in general experience more OSV, so I control for the logged *Battle Deaths* per conflict-year (Downes, 2006). I include a control for *Secessionist Conflict* because groups with secessionist aims are less likely to engage in large-scale civilian abuse because it can deter supporters (Wood, 2014). Likewise, rebels' with comparatively more strength relative to the governments may commit less OSV because they can offer better incentives to civilians in return for support (Wood, 2010). I control for ratio of *Rebel Strength* to the government's strength. Studies repeatedly show that groups with centralized command structure commit less violence against civilians because they are able to regulate and discipline rogue combatant behavior and abuse (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Doctor and Willingham, 2022). Therefore, I control for whether or not a group had a centralized or decentralized command structure with the *Central Command* variable.

Finally, I control for a series of conflict state attributes. The first of these is *Fertility* which provides the annual average of live births per woman in the conflict state (Caprioli, 2005; World Bank, 2015). Fertility rates are a common indicator of greater gender equality, respect for women, and it is often associated with the recruitment of women rebels (Thomas and Wood, 2017). *Democracy* is a binary indicator of whether the conflict state is a democracy (Coppedge et al., 2011). Finally, because higher levels of OSV are more possible in increasingly populated areas, I control for the annual logged *Population* of the conflict state (Gleditsch, 2002).

4.5.4 Methods

The nature of my dependent variable as a count of civilian fatalities necessitates a model that considers nonindependence of events and data that is not normally distributed. Therefore, I rely on a negative binomial regression model (Long, 1997; Hilbe, 2011). This

model accounts for both of these circumstances as well as overdispersion of the dependent variable. Because the GED measure of OSV only records *intentional* civilian killings, all zeros can be considered true zeros. Groups who do not commit OSV do so intentionally, and deaths due to collateral damage are not considered OSV. My model choice reflects that of other studies on OSV (Balcells, 2010; Wood, 2010, 2013; Fjedle and Hultman, 2014; Fisk 2018).

4.6 Results

Table 2 presents the results of my hypotheses. To reiterate, H1 states that groups with women in rebel military leadership positions will commit more OSV than groups without women in rebel military leadership positions. Similarly, H2 states that groups with both women in rebel military leadership positions and higher levels of women frontline fighters commit more OSV than groups with lower levels of frontline fighters and groups without women in military leadership positions. Model 1 displays the results of H1 and supports my hypothesis. The coefficient for Women Leaders is positive and statistically significant at the p >.10 level. Having women in military leadership positions is associated with an increase in OSV perpetration. The results in Model 2 lend support to H2. The coefficient for the interaction term is positive and statistically significant at p < .01 level. Rebel groups that have both Women Leaders and higher levels of Frontline Fighters commit more OSV than groups with few frontline fighters and those without women leaders.

Table 4.2: Women Leaders, Frontline Fighters, and OSV

	Model 1	***Model 2***
Women Leaders	0.7910*	-0.7525
	(0.063)	(0.133)
Frontline Fighters	1.0665**	0.7561*
	(0.016)	(0.069)
Women Leaders*Frontline Fighters		1.9099***
		(0.002)

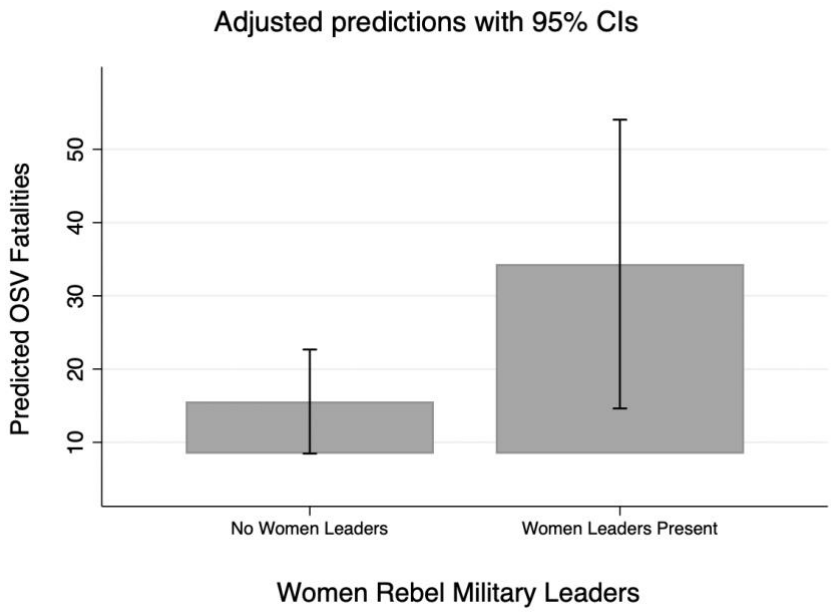
Central Command	-1.5501**	-1.8107**
	(0.031)	(0.016)
Forced Recruitment	-0.5181	-0.5393*
	(0.103)	(0.080)
Population (logged)	0.0919	0.1044
	(0.387)	(0.325)
Duration (logged)	0.4745**	0.4542**
	(0.024)	(0.025)
Democracy	0.4543	0.5607
	(0.297)	(0.196)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.5872***	0.6112***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	-0.0038	-0.0065
	(0.955)	(0.925)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0040***	0.0037**
	(0.010)	(0.014)
Leftist	-1.5002***	-1.6602***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Fertility	0.1401	0.1310
	(0.263)	(0.281)
Resource Exploitation	0.2844	0.2877
	(0.348)	(0.324)
Rebel Strength	-0.2782**	-0.2524**
	(0.012)	(0.020)
Secessionist Conflict	-1.1692***	-1.2764***
	(0.009)	(0.005)
Constant	-0.9539	-0.9483
	(0.690)	(0.675)
/lnalpha	1.7129***	1.7016***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Observations	827	827
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2811	-2808

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

The figures below provide the substantive effects of the results in Table 2. Figure 1 demonstrates the predicted number of OSV fatalities with and without women in military leadership position. On average in a given conflict-year, rebel groups that do not have *Women Leaders* are predicted to kill 16 civilians while those with *Women Leaders* are predicted kill 34 civilians. Figure 2 displays the interactive effects between *Women Leaders* and *Frontline Fighters*. The results indicate for groups without *Women Leaders* and few *Frontline Fighters* will kill

approximately 8 civilians while those with high rates of *Frontline Fighters* will kill 20 civilians on average. Meanwhile for groups that do have *Women Leaders*, those with few *Frontline Fighters* will kill 4 civilians and those with higher levels of *Frontline Fighters* will kill approximately 54 civilians on average.[36] Put differently, when *Women Leaders* are present, moving from few *Frontline Fighters* to numerous *Frontline Fighters* yields a 30% increase in OSV fatalities.

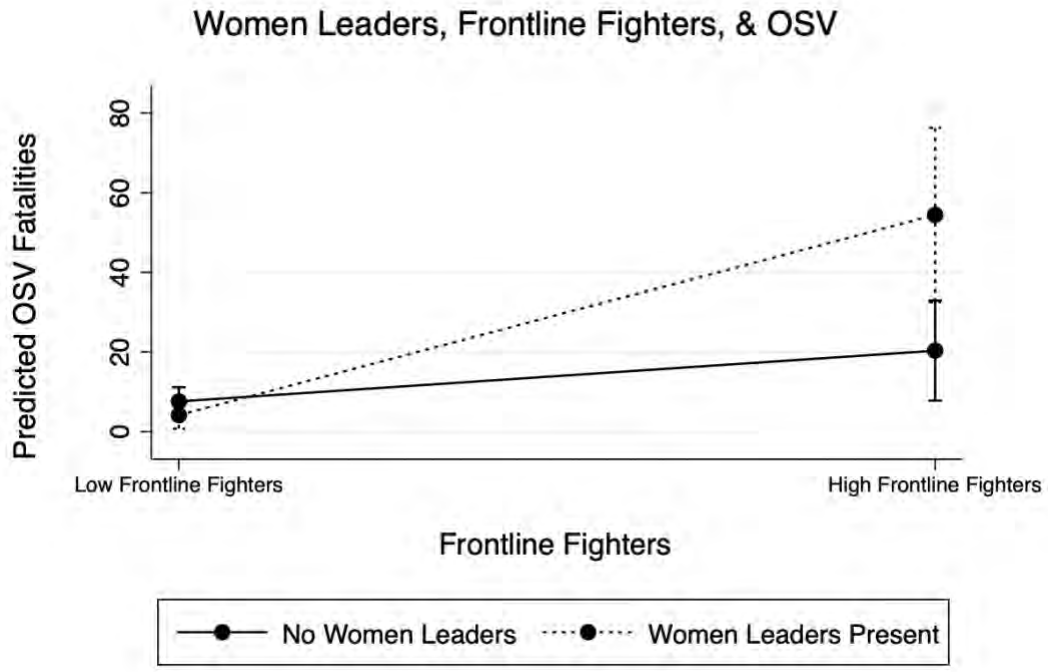
Figure 4.1: Women Leaders and OSV Fatalities



Note: Predicted values of OSV are calculated for groups with and without *Women Leaders*. Control variables are held at their means and modes. Vertical bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

[36] Using 95% CIs generates slightly more variation in OSV fatalities, but the pattern and effect remain.

Figure 4.2: Women Leaders, Frontline Fighters, and OSV Fatalities



Note: Predicted values of OSV are calculated for each combination of *Women Leaders* and *Frontline Fighters*. Control variables are held at their means. Vertical bars denote 90% confidence intervals.

Several of the control variables are important factors here as well. In both models, *Duration, Battle Deaths*, and *Lagged Rebel OSV* are positive and statistically significant. These results are in line with studies showing groups with a history of civilian victimization as well as longer and more intense conflicts frequently see higher levels of OSV (Downes, 2006; Kalyvas, 2006; Manekin, 2013). Contrarily, *Leftist, Central Command, Rebel Strength*, and *Secessionist Conflict* are negative and statistically significant in both models. This reflects reflecting prior findings that groups with Leftist ideologies, stronger command structures, are comparatively stronger than the government, and seek secession or autonomy commit less violence against civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Wood, 2010; Manekin, 2013; Doctor and Willingham, 2021; Sarwari, 2021). Surprisingly, *Forced Recruitment* is negative and statistically significant in Model 2 but not Model 1. It is possible that the effect of forced recruitment is captured in the frontline fighters measure because a degree of violent

socialization between unlike combatants increases with the inclusion of more women combatants. This finding warrants further exploration in future research. *Population, Democracy, Government OSV, Fertility*, and *Resource Exploitation* do not appear to have distinguishable influence in either model.

4.6.1 Discussion

The findings presented in this study speak to explanations of violence as a policy versus a practice. Wood (2018) argues leaders do not necessarily order combatants to carry out sexual violence, but they do not reprimand it either. Instead, leaders are aware of the ongoing violence, but they are unwilling or unable to punish it. As a result, acts of violence against civilians are tolerated and become a common practice among combatants rather than a directed policy. Studies repeatedly find that having a centralized command structure is imperative to discipling and preventing behavior that defies the group's policy towards violence against civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Doctor and Willingham, 2022). Without an adequate command, rogue combatants can commit OSV without fear or repercussion. Although, I am not testing the mechanism of violence as a policy or practice here, there is reason to believe that the OSV here is often not the result of rogue agents. The data indicate there are no cases where women leaders are present in groups with decentralized command structures. Therefore, it may be the case that women military leaders have the ability to discipline OSV but choose not to do so.

Potential concerns may arise due to the time-invariant structure of the data. One such concern is that the relationship of interest is not causal in nature. One possible conjecture is that groups which heavily recruit women lack respect for them, and tend to violate, human rights in general. However, groups that devalue women are unlikely to place them in positions

of relative power like military leadership roles. I attempt to address this concern in the appendix through a series of robustness tests such as: limiting my analysis to groups that do not necessarily espouse gender inclusive ideologies, excluding control variables that may introduce post-treatment bias estimating my model at the dyad level, and using alternative control variables. My results for Model 1 are supported in the first two robustness tests but not the last two indicating these results should be interpreted with caution. Meanwhile the results for Model 2 are supported in all four.

I supplement my models with additional robustness tests in the appendix. These include estimation of the models at the dyadic level and using alternative control variables. Although I find support for both hypotheses in my main models, H1 does not hold up against the additional testing. Therefore, the sole impact of *Women Leaders* on OSV should be interpreted with caution. The results for H2 are largely robust to these additional tests. Given these considerations, we can conclude that the influence of women leaders largely depends on the presence of *Frontline Fighters*.

4.7 Conclusion

The goal of this study was to determine whether and how women in military leadership positions influence rebel group behavior. I argued that groups with women in these roles are associated with higher levels of OSV than groups without women in such roles. In general, women are much less likely than men to given military leadership roles in armed groups, and those that do must be perceived as exceptional. Women have the obligation to oversell their capabilities as a serious, violent combatant in order to be considered equivalent to male combatants, and this is demonstrated through acts of masculinity like violence. When women partake in these acts, it socializes them with other members of the group while simultaneously

proving their abilities and devotion to the group. Women who are promoted to leadership positions have undergone this process themselves and likely see it is justified and effective in producing competent fighters. Therefore, women leaders should be more tolerant and accepting of the group's perpetration of OSV, and OSV should increase. This result is exacerbated with increasing numbers of women frontline fighters because more women are undertaking this violent socialization process. Consequently, having both women in military leadership roles and higher levels of women on the frontline should be associated with even more OSV.

Using the WAAR and GED datasets on women's participation in rebel groups and rebel-perpetrated OSV, I find support for both hypotheses. Rebel groups with women in military leadership roles are associated with higher levels of OSV than groups without women in these roles. Moreover, OSV perpetration is even larger for groups that have both women in military leadership roles and higher rates of women frontline fighters. The results here supplement my previous findings that how women participate in rebel groups is influential in shaping the overall group strategies and behavior. These findings also reinforce those in my previous chapter demonstrating that women frontline fighters are positively associated with OSV.

This study has several implications and contributes to a growing body of literature seeking to learn more about women's behavior in armed groups and conflict settings (Caprioli, 2005; Sjoberg, 2007; Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Loken, 2017; Mehrl, 2022; Loken and Matfess ,2020; 2022). Conventional wisdom views women as mostly victims of conflict, but the results here show that not only are women not solely victims of violence, but they can be responsible for perpetrating violence as well. Women can be victims, combatants, and leaders, and this agency has wide-ranging implications for the overall experiences of civilians in war. Research

that does evaluate women's active participation in rebel groups often fails to distinguish their activities in the group and yields mixed results (Cohen, 2013a, 2013b; Wood and Thomas, 2017; Mehrl, 2022). The findings presented here stress the importance of examining women's influence from varying roles.

This study produces several avenues for future research. First and foremost, the WAAR data generates a single, time invariant indicator for women's involvement across multiple roles within the group. I cannot assess the temporal ordering of events here or if the timing of recruits of leaders' placement makes a difference. Future research would benefit from providing temporal accounts of women's involvement in rebel groups. Second, my variable of interest, Women Leaders, is a binary indicator of women's presence in military leadership positions. Like women frontline fighters, having more women in these leadership positions could have a stronger effect than what is seen here. A measure of the ratio of women to men military leaders could reveal more about the degree to women in these positions can influence the group. This kind of measure could also produce more confidence in the impact of women military leaders than the findings presented in this study. Finally, this study is limited to rebel groups. We still know very little about women's prevalence in state militaries influences OSV and whether they exhibit the same behavior as women rebels. Subsequent research needs to be conducted to determine if these findings generalize to state militaries.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

"Only the dead have seen the end of war."

-Plato

This dissertation began by recognizing the need to understand the mechanisms behind civilian victimization in war and the roles women play. Violence against civilians is not an inevitable consequence of war, but there is method to this madness (Valentino, 2014; Balcells and Stanton, 2021). Additionally, women's plight as merely victims is not immutable, but women can sometimes be, and are, perpetrators of violence against civilians in war (Bloom, 2005; Cohen, 2013a; Thomas and Wood, 2017; Loken and Matfess, 2023). But our knowledge of the nature of this relationship between women and civilian victimization is murky at best. In evaluating nontraditional actors and women's shifting roles in conflict, I set out to provide a clearer understanding.

I began by viewing women's position in conflict, in the conventional manner, as victims of CRSV. In doing so, I examine sexual violence in relation to an unconventional actor— private military contractors. Chapter 2 presents my argument that PMC intervention on behalf of state militaries is generally associated with reduced perpetration of CRSV by those state militaries. States and PMCs alike benefit from abiding by human rights standards; states want to avoid international condemnation while PMCs want to be hired in the future. Violating human rights is costly for both parties, leading them to monitor one another to ensure good behavior. In addition, the GWOT period produced a large number of professionalized warfighters and contractors which in turn raised PMC standards and professionalism, especially for Americans. Using the Private Military Contractors and Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict datasets I find support for my argument. PMC employment by state militaries is

negatively associated with state-perpetrated CRSV. In addition, American PMCs and PMCs in general, employed in the post-Global War on Terror period are associated with lower levels of CRSV. Meanwhile, the absence of PMCs is associated with more CRSV abuse by the state in the post-GWOT period.

Chapters 3 and 4 diverge from the conventional take on women as victims to analyze women's active participation in war using the Women Activities in Armed Rebellion and the Georeferenced Events datasets. Chapter 3 argues that women's impact on OSV is conditional on their roles in the group and therefore evaluates women's involvement as frontline fighters and noncombat outreach personnel. Because war is a gendered phenomenon where violence is condoned, women combatants are socialized to behave accordingly. Women must defy their stereotypes as pacifistic to demonstrate their capacity for violence and devotion to the group. Interestingly enough, the same stereotypes provide women the unique opportunity to be especially lethal when they attack because it is not expected from them. On the other hand, women in outreach roles use nonviolent methods to acquire support for the group. Once again, the perception of women as legitimate, trustworthy, and pacifistic make women in outreach roles effective in gaining support for the group, thereby reducing the need to use violence to civilian support. Stereotypes of women are responsible for groups killing both more and less civilians. The results lend support to my argument, finding that rebel groups with larger shares of women combatants commit higher levels of OSV while groups using women in outreach roles commit less OSV.

Chapter 4 evaluates women with an even greater degree of agency in conflict by focusing on women in military leadership roles. Similar to the arguments presented in chapter 3, I posit that rebel groups with women in military leadership positions should commit more OSV. Women that select into military leadership roles already exhibit masculine and aggressive

traits. Nonetheless, women are often stereotyped as incapable warfighters, and this requires them to "prove themselves" to be considered capable. To do so, women engage in and often tolerate more violence than their male counterparts, and this should ultimately result in greater OSV perpetrated by the rebel group. I extend this hypothesis by arguing that rebel groups with both women military leaders and high levels of women frontline fighters should be especially prone to committing OSV. As the results from chapter 3 illustrate, groups with more women frontline fighters commit higher rates of OSV partially due to episodes of violent socialization. Women in military leadership roles should be more tolerant of this process, and the OSV it generates, and the justification that it produces effective fighters. The combination of women leaders and a higher prevalence of female combatants should result in the greatest level of OSV perpetration. I find support for both hypotheses. But the relationship between women rebel military leaders and higher perpetration of OSV is largely contingent on the prevalence of women combatants.

The findings presented in this dissertation contribute to research on gender, conflict, rebel groups, private military contractors, and civilian victimization in war. The results from chapter 1 contradict much conventional wisdom about PMCs and their behavior in war. Instead of viewing them as strictly "guns for hire", mercenaries, or products of an alleged military industrial complex, my findings suggest they can benefit not only their clients, but also civilians trapped in conflict zones. This study contributes to a burgeoning research agenda on PMCs and provides insight into a grey area of conflict that is often misunderstood by scholars. Chapters 3 and 4 should bring more clarity to research regarding women's participation in armed groups. Prior studies have offered mixed evidence, largely due to findings generated from single case studies or from lack of data on women in rebel groups. The recent development of the WAARD data offer more temporal, spatial, and role coverage of women

rebels (Loken and Matfess, 2023). Because of this, my results on women rebels can be interpreted with more confidence and may explain why previous research has produced mixed findings on women's contribution.

5.1 Policy Implications

This dissertation was motivated by the desire to generate findings that are valuable and informative to policy makers. More than anything, my goal was to produce knowledge that can have real practical significance and, hopefully, lead to policy decisions aimed at protecting civilians during war.

Chapter 2 should especially be of importance to policymakers. Many people, and scholarly works, disapprove of reliance on PMCs and claim they are reprehensible for human rights. But few studies have produced quantifiable results to support or dispel these notions. Chapter 2 not only provides evidence contrary to these perceptions, but the evidence suggests PMC reliance may be a remedy to CRSV. This can be useful for those seeking ways to promote the United Nations Women, Peace, and Security resolution. It is also insightful for defense personnel that must decide the degree to which they should officially, or non-officially, place boots on the ground and the consequences that will ensue.

On the other hand, chapters 3 and 4 provide insight into what may have detrimental outcomes in conflict. The findings suggest that those in defense should avoid viewing women combatants in the stereotypical nonviolent, peaceful manner as it can cost lives. Rather women rebel military leaders and combatants should be viewed as having the capacity to be equally, or even more, violent than their male counterparts. Understanding the gendered dynamics and social interactions within rebel groups is crucial to understanding how this behavior manifests when dealing with civilian populations. Alternatively, having women in noncombat positions

may indicate, somewhat, a remedy for civilian victimization in conflict. The findings here are important for understanding the social mechanisms at play in rebel groups, and they can inform military decision makers and policymakers who interact with rebel groups. However, the policy implications generated in this dissertation should be understood with a few caveats in mind. The findings only speak to rebel groups. They may not be generalizable to state militaries. These results also are not meant to imply normative standards of women's involvement in military groups. I am not suggesting women should or should or not be prohibited in joining armed groups. Rather, my research is only meant to inform the consequences of women's involvement specifically within the context of rebel groups.

5.2 Avenues for Future Research

Finally, this dissertation presents several avenues for future research on gender and conflict, human rights, and armed actors. Chapter 2 can inspire future studies on PMCs working alongside rebel groups to see if the relationship is also associated with decreases in CRSV. Likewise, researchers should consider what characteristics of PMCs are exceedingly important in affecting human rights in conflict zones such as; the origin country of the PMC, whether PMCs hired for non-military roles impact human rights, the gender composition of the contracting company, and PMCs working for nongovernmental organizations.

Chapters 3 and 4 indicate more studies on women's active participation in conflict should not always be aggregated but should consider the nature of women's involvement. Similarly, the degree and nature of women's interaction with locals, domestic, and international actors have different impacts on the group's behavior. We also cannot conclude that the nature of these interactions and relationships hold throughout the conflict. The timing of women's recruitment may be a determining factor for the group's perpetration of OSV. Moreover, we

cannot assume the findings observed here are generalizable to state militaries. Research would benefit from evaluating women's roles in state militaries and how it impacts civilian victimization in conflict.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR CHAPTER 2

Table A1 provides a breakdown of overall PMC employment, the GWOT years, American PMCs, and PMC deployment to states per level of human rights abuses. Tables A2-A8 display the results of my models using alternative measures of CRSV and additional controls. The findings largely remain consistent with those in the main article. Tables A7-A9 present new findings not in the main article and are labeled to indicate relationship the model is estimating. Results largely remain consistent with those presented in my main models. Table A9 includes the results of models estimating relationship between human rights, GWOT, and contractors. The results show that a state's human rights record and the GWOT period alone do not impact CRSV perpetration providing more evidence that PMCs are the driving factor in reducing CRSV.

Table A1: Tabulations of Independent Variables

Model 1	**State PMC Presence**	**No State PMCs**
	406	711
Model 2	**Pre-GWOT PMC**	**Post-GWOT**
No PMC	570	141
PMC	71	335
Model 3	**Non-American/None**	**American PMC**
	771	346
Model 4	**Non-American PMC**	**American PMC**
Pre-GWOT	619	22
Post-GWOT	152	324

Human Rights and PMC Employment

PTS Score	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
PMC	13	15	99	378	206
No PMC	0	2	14	59	331

Table A2. Binary Sexual Violence Measure

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-1.2230***	-0.4798		
	(0.000)	(0.130)		
PMC*GWOT		-1.6564***		
		(0.006)		
GWOT		0.4173		0.4281
		(0.128)		(0.105)
American			-1.4484***	0.0503
			(0.000)	(0.874)
American*GWOT				-2.3988***
				(0.000)
Rebel Violence	1.0373**	0.9529**	0.9024**	0.8429**
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.022)	(0.028)
PTS	0.2533	0.2647	0.2522	0.2460
	(0.239)	(0.210)	(0.218)	(0.238)
Population (logged)	0.0168	0.0194	0.0387	0.0418
	(0.924)	(0.915)	(0.833)	(0.824)
Democracy	-0.4106	-0.4438	-0.4307	-0.4847
	(0.378)	(0.322)	(0.355)	(0.281)
Duration (logged)	0.2591	0.2042	0.2355	0.1530
	(0.156)	(0.254)	(0.194)	(0.403)
PKO Mission	-0.8012**	-0.6310*	-0.7449*	-0.5363
	(0.043)	(0.083)	(0.053)	(0.146)
Proportion of Forces	0.1119	0.1130	0.1234	0.1185
	(0.170)	(0.163)	(0.141)	(0.151)
GDP (logged)	-0.0432	-0.0770	-0.0414	-0.0941
	(0.845)	(0.717)	(0.846)	(0.653)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0252	0.0410	0.0236	0.0396
	(0.799)	(0.683)	(0.812)	(0.696)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.3585*	1.1754*	1.0076	0.9615
	(0.057)	(0.094)	(0.145)	(0.157)
Lagged Violence	2.3889***	2.2974***	2.3944***	2.2674***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	-4.2673	-4.0269	-4.4452	-4.0068
	(0.239)	(0.270)	(0.228)	(0.281)
Observations	1,117	1,117	1,117	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-419.6	-414.8	-420.4	-415.3

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A3. Amnesty International Sexual Violence Measure

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.8268**	-0.1080		
	(0.035)	(0.783)		
PMC*GWOT		-1.4766		
		(0.127)		
GWOT		0.0875		0.0620
		(0.783)		(0.845)
American			-1.6308**	-0.8225*
			(0.017)	(0.097)
American*GWOT				-1.1764
				(0.443)
Rebel Violence	0.5882**	0.4929	0.4170	0.3930
	(0.040)	(0.107)	(0.147)	(0.162)
PTS	0.2695	0.2783*	0.3198**	0.3215**
	(0.100)	(0.081)	(0.037)	(0.034)
Population (logged)	-0.0189	0.0008	0.0122	0.0173
	(0.884)	(0.995)	(0.920)	(0.887)
Democracy	0.6255*	0.5334	0.5364	0.4991
	(0.074)	(0.126)	(0.132)	(0.173)
Duration (logged)	0.1412	0.1088	0.1196	0.0917
	(0.248)	(0.379)	(0.342)	(0.514)
PKO Mission	-1.1614**	-0.9132	-0.9135*	-0.8161
	(0.042)	(0.128)	(0.098)	(0.176)
Proportion of Forces	-0.0725	-0.0596	-0.0626	-0.0591
	(0.343)	(0.427)	(0.408)	(0.426)
GDP (logged)	-0.0490	-0.0403	-0.0177	-0.0237
	(0.777)	(0.817)	(0.913)	(0.888)
Battle Deaths (logged)	-0.0064	-0.0026	-0.0034	-0.0002
	(0.930)	(0.972)	(0.963)	(0.997)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.6159	0.4754	0.3008	0.2927
	(0.352)	(0.437)	(0.619)	(0.633)
Lagged Violence	1.1183***	1.0731***	1.1288***	1.0892***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	2.9759	3.1324	3.5369	3.4988
	(0.298)	(0.271)	(0.201)	(0.216)
/cut2	4.7594*	4.9153*	5.3236*	5.2839*
	(0.099)	(0.089)	(0.057)	(0.066)
/cut3	7.2874**	7.4398**	7.8514***	7.8088***
	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.006)	(0.008)
Observations	1,184	1,184	1,184	1,184
Log pseudo-likelihood	-482	-477.8	-475.7	-474.8

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A4. Human Rights Watch Sexual Violence Measure

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.7236*	0.4983		
	(0.068)	(0.208)		
PMC*GWOT		-2.9350***		
		(0.001)		
GWOT		1.0206**		1.0743**
		(0.040)		(0.027)
American			-1.2033**	0.9008
			(0.012)	(0.148)
American*GWOT				-4.1453***
				(0.001)
Rebel Violence	0.6849***	0.6832**	0.6614***	0.6555**
	(0.008)	(0.019)	(0.009)	(0.023)
PTS	0.1401	0.1325	0.1812	0.1527
	(0.555)	(0.588)	(0.421)	(0.505)
Population (logged)	-0.2000	-0.1465	-0.1357	-0.0610
	(0.324)	(0.521)	(0.520)	(0.776)
Democracy	0.7595*	0.5408	0.6740	0.3813
	(0.083)	(0.222)	(0.120)	(0.394)
Duration (logged)	0.3548*	0.1987	0.3204	0.0847
	(0.074)	(0.317)	(0.109)	(0.646)
PKO Mission	-0.5620	-0.2603	-0.3848	0.0739
	(0.181)	(0.570)	(0.330)	(0.867)
Proportion of Forces	-0.0014	-0.0050	-0.0083	-0.0213
	(0.990)	(0.963)	(0.938)	(0.833)
GDP (logged)	-0.2617	-0.3226**	-0.2425	-0.3348**
	(0.179)	(0.021)	(0.170)	(0.013)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0909	0.1233*	0.0937	0.1375**
	(0.160)	(0.052)	(0.158)	(0.044)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.2672	-0.1895	-0.0982	-0.4617
	(0.759)	(0.813)	(0.911)	(0.500)
Lagged Violence	0.8896***	0.7367***	0.8482***	0.5981**
	(0.000)	(0.005)	(0.000)	(0.010)
/cut1	-1.3139	-1.1186	-0.2043	-0.0485
	(0.730)	(0.773)	(0.956)	(0.990)
/cut2	0.5069	0.7405	1.6214	1.8197
	(0.894)	(0.848)	(0.662)	(0.621)
/cut3	1.6015	1.8396	2.7185	2.9174
	(0.678)	(0.636)	(0.470)	(0.432)
Observations	950	950	950	950
Log pseudo-likelihood	-367.2	-355.1	-364.5	-350.9

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses
*****Model was estimated using PTS State Department scores because Human Rights Watch did not have an adequate number of observations.

Table A5. Sexual Violence Without Lagged Dependent Variable

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-1.2913***	-0.2667		
	(0.005)	(0.407)		
PMC*GWOT		-2.4981***		
		(0.009)		
GWOT		0.7996**		0.7961***
		(0.015)		(0.010)
American			-1.6597***	0.5697
			(0.007)	(0.143)
American*GWOT				-3.8075***
				(0.000)
Rebel Violence	0.2787	0.2696	0.2098	0.1867
	(0.348)	(0.348)	(0.435)	(0.452)
PTS	0.3582*	0.3776*	0.3776*	0.3647*
	(0.096)	(0.083)	(0.061)	(0.084)
Population (logged)	-0.0456	-0.0427	-0.0209	-0.0098
	(0.790)	(0.810)	(0.906)	(0.957)
Democracy	-0.1890	-0.2288	-0.2284	-0.3334
	(0.682)	(0.589)	(0.619)	(0.436)
Duration (logged)	0.3364*	0.2362	0.2943	0.1461
	(0.064)	(0.185)	(0.101)	(0.388)
PKO Mission	-0.9148*	-0.5908	-0.7850	-0.3757
	(0.080)	(0.207)	(0.101)	(0.385)
Proportion of Forces	0.0818	0.0886	0.0980	0.0960
	(0.381)	(0.331)	(0.299)	(0.286)
GDP (logged)	-0.1026	-0.1919	-0.1033	-0.2107
	(0.696)	(0.427)	(0.673)	(0.365)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.1103	0.1300	0.1055	0.1299
	(0.286)	(0.227)	(0.304)	(0.236)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.3294	0.9730	0.9277	0.7709
	(0.173)	(0.275)	(0.310)	(0.362)
/cut1	3.1794	2.5182	3.3946	2.6169
	(0.444)	(0.526)	(0.404)	(0.508)
/cut2	5.0266	4.3931	5.2357	4.4935
	(0.225)	(0.264)	(0.195)	(0.249)
/cut3	6.5173	5.8984	6.7229	5.9933
	(0.130)	(0.151)	(0.109)	(0.141)
Observations	1,117	1,117	1,117	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-640.3	-626.2	-640.3	-623.9

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A6. Lagged Independent Variables

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.8699***	-0.1383		
	(0.003)	(0.683)		
PMC*GWOT		-1.4697***		
		(0.006)		
GWOT		0.1812		-0.1137
		(0.535)		(0.699)
American			-0.9211***	-0.5371
			(0.003)	(0.131)
American*GWOT				-0.5210
				(0.375)
Rebel Violence	0.4457*	0.4197*	0.4081*	0.4018*
	(0.074)	(0.080)	(0.088)	(0.090)
PTS	0.1617	0.1883	0.1622	0.1608
	(0.411)	(0.340)	(0.401)	(0.394)
Population (logged)	0.1898	0.1806	0.1571	0.1683
	(0.337)	(0.361)	(0.417)	(0.390)
Democracy	-0.3263	-0.3582	-0.2802	-0.2912
	(0.406)	(0.359)	(0.473)	(0.454)
Duration (logged)	0.2890	0.2695	0.2807	0.2786
	(0.107)	(0.115)	(0.111)	(0.117)
PKO Mission	-0.7866	-0.5702	-0.9608*	-0.9015*
	(0.114)	(0.208)	(0.056)	(0.061)
Proportion of Forces	0.0414	0.0535	0.0623	0.0599
	(0.619)	(0.529)	(0.442)	(0.461)
GDP (logged)	-0.2061	-0.2097	-0.1803	-0.1748
	(0.272)	(0.258)	(0.336)	(0.372)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0046	0.0028	0.0032	0.0024
	(0.967)	(0.981)	(0.977)	(0.983)
Ethnic Fractionalization	-0.9960	-1.1382	-1.0209	-1.0386
	(0.282)	(0.162)	(0.236)	(0.223)
Lagged Violence	1.7876***	1.7725***	1.7963***	1.7940***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	4.6166	4.5758	4.3233	4.5144
	(0.243)	(0.252)	(0.267)	(0.260)
/cut2	6.7467*	6.7083*	6.4545*	6.6410*
	(0.083)	(0.087)	(0.092)	(0.093)
/cut3	8.4326**	8.4118**	8.1212**	8.3036**
	(0.037)	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.043)
Observations	1,117	1,117	1,117	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-582.5	-577.9	-584.9	-584.4

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A7. Forced Recruitment

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.9550***	-0.2793		
	(0.003)	(0.324)		
PMC*GWOT		-1.6878***		
		(0.005)		
GWOT		0.5243*		0.5103*
		(0.066)		(0.067)
American			-1.3219***	-0.1830
			(0.001)	(0.537)
American*GWOT				-2.1294***
				(0.002)
Forced Recruitment	0.7175***	0.6225**	0.7454***	0.6668**
	(0.009)	(0.028)	(0.005)	(0.016)
Rebel Violence	0.3342	0.3297	0.2716	0.2562
	(0.193)	(0.192)	(0.267)	(0.273)
PTS	0.1988	0.2175	0.2164	0.2153
	(0.385)	(0.349)	(0.325)	(0.347)
Population (logged)	0.1899	0.1781	0.2178	0.2066
	(0.357)	(0.406)	(0.319)	(0.362)
Democracy	-0.2823	-0.3096	-0.3188	-0.3517
	(0.471)	(0.436)	(0.423)	(0.383)
Duration (logged)	0.2690	0.2049	0.2413	0.1489
	(0.158)	(0.288)	(0.195)	(0.433)
PKO Mission	-0.6019	-0.4305	-0.4965	-0.2856
	(0.186)	(0.318)	(0.243)	(0.508)
Proportion of Forces	0.0726	0.0746	0.0808	0.0762
	(0.323)	(0.334)	(0.298)	(0.337)
GDP (logged)	-0.1047	-0.1640	-0.0918	-0.1646
	(0.579)	(0.380)	(0.603)	(0.359)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0368	0.0521	0.0395	0.0521
	(0.753)	(0.661)	(0.733)	(0.661)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.0340	0.8086	0.6927	0.5627
	(0.183)	(0.286)	(0.365)	(0.450)
Lagged Violence	1.7666***	1.6742***	1.7671***	1.6560***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	6.6870*	5.9735	7.1186*	6.1979
	(0.096)	(0.153)	(0.082)	(0.150)
/cut2	8.8335**	8.1281**	9.2622**	8.3474**
	(0.025)	(0.047)	(0.021)	(0.048)
/cut3	10.5019**	9.8251**	10.9314***	10.0364**
	(0.011)	(0.022)	(0.009)	(0.022)
Observations	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049
Log pseudo-likelihood	-532.8	-527.3	-531.2	-526.4

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A8. Additional Variables

	Model 1 State PMC Presence	***Model 2*** GWOT & PMC Presence	***Model 3*** US vs. None/Non-US PMCs	***Model 4*** GWOT & US PMCs
PMC Government	-0.9373***	-0.3213		
	(0.005)	(0.326)		
PMC*GWOT		-1.5086***		
		(0.008)		
GWOT		0.5703*		0.5639**
		(0.052)		(0.047)
American			-1.1599***	0.0238
			(0.002)	(0.941)
American*GWOT				-2.1040***
				(0.002)
Rebel Violence	0.3635	0.3623	0.3151	0.2999
	(0.144)	(0.142)	(0.176)	(0.183)
PTS	0.1920	0.2000	0.2037	0.2022
	(0.305)	(0.285)	(0.246)	(0.259)
Population (logged)	0.1824	0.1762	0.2050	0.1986
	(0.213)	(0.240)	(0.181)	(0.205)
Democracy	-0.1410	-0.1920	-0.1732	-0.2320
	(0.752)	(0.659)	(0.700)	(0.599)
Duration (logged)	0.2422	0.1663	0.2166	0.1159
	(0.198)	(0.373)	(0.239)	(0.536)
PKO Mission	-0.6891*	-0.5889	-0.6458	-0.4782
	(0.084)	(0.142)	(0.103)	(0.247)
Rebel Strength	0.0612	0.0516	0.0707	0.0668
	(0.626)	(0.687)	(0.567)	(0.593)
GDP (logged)	-0.1353	-0.1747	-0.1094	-0.1743
	(0.477)	(0.375)	(0.549)	(0.364)
Battle Deaths (logged)	-0.0325	-0.0166	-0.0371	-0.0209
	(0.794)	(0.895)	(0.767)	(0.870)
Ethnic Fractionalization	0.5894	0.4165	0.3510	0.2426
	(0.443)	(0.587)	(0.630)	(0.742)
Central Command	-0.3068	-0.2385	-0.2722	-0.2194
	(0.560)	(0.659)	(0.607)	(0.689)
Resources	0.4013	0.3460	0.3671	0.3453
	(0.116)	(0.177)	(0.138)	(0.169)
Lagged Violence	1.6989***	1.6375***	1.7045***	1.6120***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	4.6195	4.2914	5.1527*	4.5710
	(0.117)	(0.175)	(0.087)	(0.152)
/cut2	6.8080**	6.4875**	7.3309**	6.7599**
	(0.023)	(0.043)	(0.016)	(0.036)
/cut3	8.5016***	8.2065**	9.0176***	8.4671***
	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.004)	(0.010)
Observations	1,157	1,157	1,157	1,157
Log pseudo-likelihood	-587.2	-582	-587.3	-581.6

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A9: Additional Tests

	Model 1 PMCs and Human Rights	***Model 2*** Human Rights	***Model 3*** Pre/Post GWOT
PMC Government		1.5227	
		(0.322)	
GWOT			-0.2414
			(0.405)
PMC Government*PTS		-0.6006	
		(0.100)	
PTS	0.1481	0.1646	0.3250
	(0.451)	(0.380)	(0.103)
Rebel Violence	0.3956*	0.3738	0.2931
	(0.094)	(0.116)	(0.229)
Population (logged)	0.0577	0.0688	0.0714
	(0.761)	(0.712)	(0.683)
Democracy	-0.1982	-0.2475	-0.3423
	(0.639)	(0.555)	(0.409)
Duration (logged)	0.2688	0.2803*	0.2470
	(0.120)	(0.099)	(0.142)
PKO Mission	-1.1929**	-1.0924**	-0.6201
	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.163)
Proportion of Forces	0.0854	0.0928	0.0816
	(0.272)	(0.222)	(0.275)
GDP (logged)	-0.1294	-0.0977	-0.0647
	(0.558)	(0.676)	(0.737)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0029	0.0075	0.0523
	(0.979)	(0.945)	(0.633)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.0672	1.0963	1.1025
	(0.156)	(0.148)	(0.103)
Lagged Violence	1.7956***	1.8036***	1.7159***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
/cut1	3.7037	4.2126	5.1273
	(0.336)	(0.287)	(0.138)
/cut2	5.8368	6.3420	7.2833**
	(0.126)	(0.107)	(0.033)
/cut3	7.4597*	7.9594*	8.9519**
	(0.061)	(0.052)	(0.013)
Observations	1,117	1,117	1,117
Log pseudo-likelihood	-588.9	-588.1	-575.5

Dependent Variable is Prevalence of Sexual Violence by State Actors
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

APPENDIX 2. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR CHAPTER 3

I provide several robustness tests in the following pages by including additional variables in the models, performing the analysis with the full *Frontline Fighters* variable, and using a single time stamp for groups. Ideally, I could use more causal modeling techniques like matching, but I lose most observations and am therefore unable to estimate the models.

In Table A1 I provide cross tabulations of the distribution of *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombat Outreach* roles in rebel groups. This shows that groups utilize women in both roles, and they are not mutually exclusive. Table A2 provides the predicted OSV fatalities for each combination of *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombat Outreach* using the results for the categorical indicator of *Frontline Fighters* displayed in Model 4 in the main paper. Figure A1 presents the substantive effects for Model 4 in the main article. In Table A3 I recreate the models in the main paper using the full *Frontline Fighters* measure. Table A4 uses several different control variables from the main paper. *Rebel Strength* is replaced by the rebel's *Fighting Capacity* relative to the government, *Secessionist Conflict* with *Territorial Conflict*, *Fertility* with women's *Labor Force* ratio, and *Leftist* groups with *Islamic* groups. In Table A5, I estimate my main model using additional variables to account for whether groups had a *Political Wing* or used *Forced Recruitment* in a given year. In Model 3 I include only the groups who have a *Political Wing*.. Table A6 presents the interactive effects of the main independent variables. The results indicate that there does not appear to be an interactive relationship between *Frontline Fighters* and *Noncombat Outreach*. When both are present, the need to violently coerce civilian support is reduced, but the need for violent socialization remains, exhibiting a small but insignificant effect on civilian fatalities. Table A7 focuses at the dyad, providing a single observation for all groups. Here, I take the cumulative number of *OSV Fatalities* and *Battle Deaths*, the full conflict *Duration*, the mean of *Fertility, Population*, and *Rebel Strength*, and the mode of *Democracy, Resource Exploitation,*

Central Command, and *Secessionist Conflict*. My results hold throughout all models in Tables A3-A7 providing more confidence in my findings.

Table A1: Cross-Tabulations

Frontline Fighters

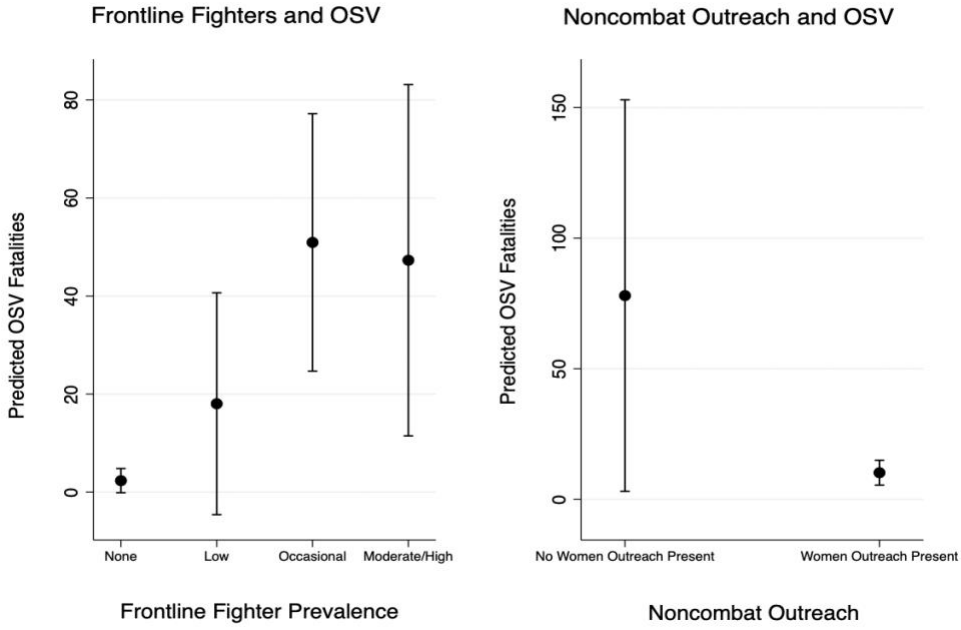
		None	Low	Occasional	Moderate/High
Noncombat Outreach	**None**	178	30	31	10
	Present	79	128	234	231

Table A2: Predicted Fatality Counts

Frontline Fighters

		None	Low	Occasional	Moderate/High
Noncombat Outreach	**None**	10	79	224	208
	Present	1	10	29	27

Figure A1: Frontline Fighters, Noncombat Outreach, and OSV



Note: Figure presents substantive effects from Model 4. Predicted values of OSV are calculated at each level of Frontline Fighters on the left and for groups with and without women in Outreach roles on the right. Control variables are held at their means. Vertical bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

Table A3: Full Frontline Fighters Measure

	Model 1
Frontline Fighters	0.5509***
	(0.002)
Noncombat Outreach	-0.8849**
	(0.031)
Central Command	-0.8877**
	(0.011)
Population (logged)	0.1045
	(0.349)
Duration (logged)	0.3865
	(0.107)
Democracy	0.2797
	(0.514)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.7115***
	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	0.0182
	(0.787)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0051***
	(0.003)
Leftist	-1.1507***
	(0.007)
Fertility	0.2227*
	(0.054)
Resource Exploitation	0.4971
	(0.126)
Rebel Strength	-0.1465
	(0.185)
Secessionist Conflict	-0.5692
	(0.136)
/lnalpha	-3.3313
	(0.144)
Constant	1.8264***
	(0.000)
Observations	921
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2986

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A4: Alternate Controls

	Model 1
Frontline Fighters	0.5983***
	(0.005)
Noncombat Outreach	-1.1394**
	(0.013)
Central Command	-1.0432***
	(0.008)
Population (logged)	0.1739
	(0.253)
Duration (logged)	0.3541*
	(0.097)
Democracy	0.2817
	(0.596)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.7479***
	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	0.0516
	(0.470)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0048***
	(0.001)
Religious	1.2180***
	(0.007)
Labor Force	0.0238
	(0.175)
Resource Exploitation	-0.2512
	(0.409)
Fighting Capacity	0.5463**
	(0.035)
Territorial Conflict	-0.3059
	(0.499)
/lnalpha	-6.9102**
	(0.039)
Constant	1.7425***
	(0.000)
Observations	862
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2803

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A5: Forced Recruitment and Political Wing

	Model 1	***Model 2***	***Model 3***
Frontline Fighters	0.7528***	0.9586***	2.1012***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Noncombat Outreach	-0.8842**	-1.1521***	-2.0499**
	(0.028)	(0.010)	(0.019)
Forced Recruitment	-0.5514*	-0.7095*	
	(0.076)	(0.081)	
Political Wing		-0.9076***	
		(0.007)	
Central Command	-0.9703***	0.1691	-0.2628
	(0.003)	(0.115)	(0.618)
Population (logged)	-0.0225	0.2901	0.4158**
	(0.840)	(0.218)	(0.048)
Duration (logged)	0.2664	0.3221	-0.0051
	(0.230)	(0.440)	(0.989)
Democracy	0.4439	0.7183***	1.1578
	(0.297)	(0.000)	(0.195)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.6477***	-0.0088	1.2519***
	(0.000)	(0.897)	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	-0.0365	0.0052***	0.2659***
	(0.571)	(0.004)	(0.010)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0046***	-0.9070*	0.0037
	(0.005)	(0.059)	(0.259)
Leftist	-0.9789**	0.2276*	-0.8859
	(0.012)	(0.054)	(0.186)
Fertility	0.2146*	0.3264	0.7970***
	(0.070)	(0.328)	(0.000)
Resource Exploitation	0.5991*	-0.2067*	0.4676
	(0.054)	(0.064)	(0.601)
Rebel Strength	-0.1683	-0.7204*	-0.7004**
	(0.105)	(0.058)	(0.012)
Secessionist Conflict	-0.6519*	-4.1505*	-0.1648
	(0.092)	(0.069)	(0.779)
/lnalpha	1.7078***	1.7791***	-15.6768***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Constant	-0.5098		1.4698***
	(0.824)	919	(0.000)
		-2970	
Observations	842	0.9586***	370
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2862	(0.000)	-1074

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A6: Interactive Effect

	Model 1
Frontline Fighters	0.8863***
	(0.000)
Noncombat Outreach	-1.1398*
	(0.088)
Frontline Fighters* Noncombat Outreach	-0.0516
	(0.875)
Central Command	-0.8652***
	(0.008)
Population (logged)	0.1037
	(0.351)
Duration (logged)	0.3851*
	(0.100)
Democracy	0.2972
	(0.487)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.6875***
	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	0.0017
	(0.979)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0050***
	(0.005)
Leftist	-1.2382***
	(0.003)
Fertility	0.1752
	(0.137)
Resource Exploitation	0.5535*
	(0.076)
Rebel Strength	-0.1518
	(0.149)
Secessionist Conflict	-0.7051*
	(0.063)
Constant	-3.1398
	(0.171)
/lnalpha	1.7935***
	(0.000)
Observations	921
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2975

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A7: Dyadic Analysis

	Model 1
Frontline Fighters	1.5699***
	(0.000)
Noncombat Outreach	-1.8183*
	(0.083)
Central Command	0.1834
	(0.801)
Population	0.2543
	(0.250)
Duration	0.1601**
	(0.033)
Democracy	-0.0841
	(0.914)
Battle Deaths	0.0001*
	(0.072)
Government	0.0004
	(0.374)
Lagged Rebel OSV	-3.3035***
	(0.000)
Leftist	0.0639
	(0.777)
Fertility	1.5576*
	(0.050)
Resource Exploitation	0.2099
	(0.369)
Rebel Strength	-0.5443
	(0.497)
/lnalpha	2.4609***
	(0.000)
Constant	-3.5334
	(0.426)
Observations	178
Log pseudo-likelihood	-595.6

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

APPENDIX 3. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR CHAPTER 4

I provide several robustness checks in the following pages by analyzing groups without Leftist ideologies, including additional variables in the models, estimating my models without the conflict dynamics control variables, and using a group level unit of analysis. Ideally, I could use more causal modeling techniques like matching, but I lose most observations and am therefore unable to estimate the models.

In Table A1 I omit the following variables in my model: *Battle Deaths, Duration, Forced Recruitment, Government OSV, Lagged Rebel OSV,* and *Rebel Strength*. These variables are excluded because they capture specific dynamics of the conflict which may introduce post-treatment bias. My results in Table A1 remain consistent with those in my main models. In Table A2 I attempt to address potential selection concerns. I estimate my model only using groups that do not espouse *Leftist* ideologies since *Leftist* groups are more likely to recruit women and typically commit less violence against civilians (Sarwari 2021). In doing so, this model is meant to mitigate concerns that women are only selecting into groups with certain ideologies or patterns of violence. Again, my results remain consistent with my expectations. Table A3 uses several different control variables from the main paper. *Rebel Strength* is replaced by the rebel's *Fighting Capacity* relative to the government, *Secessionist Conflict* with *Territorial Conflict*, *Fertility* with women's *Labor Force* ratio, and *Leftist* groups with *Islamic* groups. The results remain in the expected duration, but only Model 2 achieves statistical significance. Table A4 presents results from a model estimated with the dyad as the unit of analysis as opposed to the dyad-year, providing a single observation for all groups. Here, I take the cumulative number of *OSV Fatalities* and *Battle Deaths*, the full conflict *Duration*, the mean of *Fertility, Population*, and *Rebel Strength*, and the mode of *Democracy, Resource Exploitation, Central Command*, and *Secessionist*

Conflict. The results in Models 1 and 2 are both positive, but neither reaches conventional levels of statistical significance here. However, this nonfinding may be due in part to the reduced number of observations as well as the lack of variation in much of the conflict data.

Table A1: Estimating Model without Conflict Dynamics Control Variables

	Model 1	***Model 2***
Women Leaders	0.9557*	-0.6414
	(0.074)	(0.158)
Frontline Fighters	1.7162***	1.5305***
	(0.001)	(0.003)
Women Leaders*Frontline Fighters		1.8992***
		(0.004)
Central Command	-0.6826	-0.7018
	(0.318)	(0.284)
Population (logged)	0.1034	0.1091
	(0.399)	(0.370)
Democracy (logged)	-0.4702	-0.3522
	(0.319)	(0.441)
Leftist	-1.9147***	-2.1101***
	(0.001)	(0.000)
Fertility	0.0128	0.0146
	(0.925)	(0.912)
Resource Exploitation	1.6049***	1.6011***
	(0.002)	(0.001)
Secessionist Conflict	-1.5049***	-1.5814***
	(0.002)	(0.001)
Constant	1.2019	1.1554
	(0.597)	(0.604)
/lnalpha	2.0259***	2.0174***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Observations	893	893
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2961	-2958

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A2: Selecting Non-Leftist Groups

	Model 1	***Model 2***
Women Leaders	0.9300*	-0.8117
	(0.071)	(0.209)
Frontline Fighters	1.0766*	0.6675
	(0.066)	(0.194)
Women Leaders*Frontline Fighters		2.2056***
		(0.007)
Central Command	-2.3824***	-2.7819***
	(0.002)	(0.001)
Forced Recruitment	-1.0092***	-1.0028***
	(0.007)	(0.004)
Population (logged)	0.0771	0.1099
	(0.626)	(0.489)
Duration (logged)	0.6489***	0.6234***
	(0.009)	(0.008)
Democracy	1.1443**	1.3027**
	(0.039)	(0.012)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.5208***	0.5770***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	0.1312*	0.1246*
	(0.072)	(0.094)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0025***	0.0022***
	(0.003)	(0.006)
Fertility	0.0234	0.0210
	(0.869)	(0.878)
Resource Exploitation	-0.1630	-0.1362
	(0.577)	(0.620)
Rebel Strength	-0.3208**	-0.2965**
	(0.033)	(0.033)
Secessionist Conflict	-1.5162**	-1.6640***
	(0.015)	(0.005)
Constant	0.9136	0.5296
	(0.765)	(0.859)
/lnalpha	1.9251***	1.9076***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Observations	583	583
Log pseudo-likelihood	-1825	-1822

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A3: Alternative Measures

	Model 1	***Model 2***
Women Leaders	0.1924	-1.1057**
	(0.608)	(0.018)
Frontline Fighters	1.0507**	0.6933
		(0.157)
Women Leaders*Frontline Fighters		1.6402**
		(0.013)
Central Command	-1.2816*	-1.6622**
	(0.092)	(0.041)
Forced Recruitment	-0.4673	-0.5250
	(0.158)	(0.100)
Population (logged)	0.0692	0.0987
	(0.683)	(0.547)
Duration (logged)	0.2848	0.3173
	(0.168)	(0.116)
Democracy	0.6244	0.6274
	(0.280)	(0.273)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.5488***	0.5821***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Government OSV (logged)	-0.0067	0.0125
	(0.928)	(0.868)
Lagged Rebel OSV	0.0036***	0.0032***
	(0.003)	(0.006)
Islamic	1.2193**	1.4111**
	(0.034)	(0.015)
Labor Force	0.0025	0.0072
	(0.887)	(0.669)
Resource Exploitation	-0.4555	-0.5004*
	(0.136)	(0.095)
Fighting Capacity	0.4638*	0.4747*
	(0.075)	(0.054)
Territorial Conflict	-0.9301*	-0.8789*
	(0.058)	(0.075)
Constant	-2.2843	-2.8215
	(0.527)	(0.416)
/lnalpha	1.6771***	1.6675***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Observations	772	772
Log pseudo-likelihood	-2646	-2643

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

Table A4: Dyadic Analysis

	Model 1	***Model 2***
Women Leaders	0.9195	-1.9947
	(0.415)	(0.389)
Frontline Fighters	2.0722**	1.8368*
	(0.033)	(0.050)
Women Leaders*Frontline Fighters		3.2314
		(0.202)
Central Command	-0.4941	-0.5526
	(0.776)	(0.748)
Forced Recruitment	-2.2516***	-2.3259***
	(0.003)	(0.002)
Population (logged)	-0.0605	-0.0855
	(0.810)	(0.739)
Duration (logged)	0.1383*	0.1382*
	(0.068)	(0.071)
Democracy	0.5289	0.6032
	(0.575)	(0.522)
Battle Deaths (logged)	0.0000	0.0000
	(0.632)	(0.674)
Government OSV (logged)	0.0002	0.0002
	(0.441)	(0.467)
Lagged Rebel OSV	-3.1331***	-3.2359***
	(0.004)	(0.003)
Leftist	0.4315*	0.4159*
	(0.077)	(0.088)
Fertility	2.1214**	2.1667**
	(0.033)	(0.028)
Resource Exploitation	0.0936	0.1318
	(0.694)	(0.581)
Rebel Strength	-1.3843	-1.4021
	(0.115)	(0.111)
Secessionist Conflict	2.1872	2.6963
	(0.694)	(0.631)
Constant	2.2451***	2.2343***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
/lnalpha		
	141	141
	-524.7	-524.1
Observations	0.9195	-1.9947
Log pseudo-likelihood	(0.415)	(0.389)

Dependent Variable is Civilian Fatalities
*** p<0.01 ** p<0.05 *p<.1
p values reported in parentheses

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