

**Commitment and Counterinsurgency:
Essays on Domestic Politics and Patterns of Violence in Wars of Occupation**

by

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For Julia, Graham, and Clara

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Abstract

The papers of this dissertation explore two dimensions of wars of occupation. The first paper concerns the outcomes of such wars. It proposes a theory of democratic accountability that links the level of casualties suffered by an occupying force to its leadership's decision to withdraw from the contested territory. I argue that war casualties act as the cost that drives patterns of domestic support in democratic states. Political elites seeking electoral gain will give meaning to those casualties, frequently arguing that the benefits that might come with continued fighting will not justify those costs, and that such wars are not necessary for the state's survival. I suggest that once these divisions occur at the elite level, it becomes very difficult to maintain support among the population. This leads to the finding that while democracies may not win or lose any less than autocracies, they consistently abandon them at significantly lower levels of casualties. In the second paper, I use an experimental survey to determine if news of American casualties or elite opinion drives attitudes about the war in Afghanistan. Existing experiments in this area typically portray elite support as split along traditional partisan lines, and support or opposition among the subjects is usually driven by their partisan attachments. But this approach rarely reflects reality, where elite foreign policy and security opinions frequently cut across partisan divisions. The findings reveal that news of American casualties has little independent effect on attitudes towards the Afghanistan conflict. Instead, overall support for the conflict only declines when elite opinions in response to those deaths cut across standard partisan divisions. The final paper pivots to a discussion of the dynamics of violence in these wars. Here, I examine

whether the factors that were effective in reducing attacks against counterinsurgents in Iraq had the same effect on patterns of selective and indiscriminate violence against civilians. I find that greater American troop density in a given district is associated with declines in targeted attacks on Iraqi civilians, but this has no effect on the rate of indiscriminate attacks.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Between 2006 and 2008, I served on the staff of Senator Barbara Boxer, handling foreign policy and defense issues. Most of my work involved assisting the senator in her capacity as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, conducting oversight of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That experience serves as the backdrop for this dissertation, and some of my observations from that time motivate the questions it addresses.

Fundamentally, I was inspired, and frustrated, by the lack of an adequate explanation as to why these counterinsurgency wars conducted abroad were so difficult. The common refrain about Iraq was that there were “no good options,” and when it came to Afghanistan, the United States and its NATO allies would somehow “muddle through” it. During this period, military leaders and planners looked to the well of history and past experience for any lessons that could be learned and put to use, as other global powers have also struggled when fighting so-called “small wars” in territories abroad. They studied the work of counterinsurgency practitioners such as David Galula, whose 1964 *Counterinsurgency Warfare* was reissued after being out of print for years.¹ But in addition to looking at the work of these counterinsurgents, contemporary strategists also sought out some of history’s most famous insurgents – T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia), Vladimir Lenin, Mao Tse-Tung, and Che Guevara. Those searching to create a realistic,

¹ Most recently published in 2006. Other older books being re-issued include Alastair Horne’s *A Savage War of Peace* (1978, 2006) and Robert Thompson’s *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (1966, 1978, 2005).

actionable, and effective counterinsurgency doctrine also probed case studies of conflicts including the Philippine Insurrection, Malaya Emergency, Arab Revolt, Spanish Civil War, and the Troubles of Northern Ireland.

In the years since I left Washington for Ann Arbor, violence against American forces declined dramatically in Iraq, but that country has clearly not achieved the stability policymakers had hoped it would. In Afghanistan, American forces continue to “muddle through,” with few people holding any expectations that its government could manage on its own for very long. After so much time, effort, money, and blood, the question still remains: why is counterinsurgency abroad so difficult?

The answer that emerges through the essays in this dissertation involves the dynamics of domestic politics and public opinion within the occupying state as much as it does the dynamics of war within the occupied state. Existing research into the outcomes of these kinds of wars has acknowledged the importance of domestic support (e.g., Mack 1975, Edelstein 2004, Simpson 2010), suggesting that it is difficult to win them before it runs out. But this loose assertion drawn in the existing literature is lacking in concrete details. What exactly is the process by which domestic popular support evaporates? Further, this idea that the loss in support back home leads to adverse outcomes has taken on a conventional wisdom-like quality, but none of these efforts actually demonstrate a connection between the factors that might lead to declines in support and ultimate war outcomes.

The first two papers of this dissertation aim to fill these gaps. Chapter 2 concerns the outcomes of counterinsurgency wars conducted overseas. It is motivated by Lyall’s (2010) recent finding that despite this conventional wisdom, democracies are no more likely to lose counterinsurgency wars than their autocratic counterparts. It proposes a theory of democratic

accountability that links the level of casualties suffered by an occupying force to its leadership's decision to withdraw from the contested territory. I argue that war casualties act as the cost that drives patterns of domestic support in democratic states. Political elites seeking electoral gain will give meaning to those casualties, frequently arguing that the benefits that might come with continued fighting will not justify those costs, and that such wars are not necessary for the state's survival. I suggest that once these divisions occur at the elite level, it becomes very difficult to maintain support among the population. To maintain their positions as elected officials, leaders responsible for the war must change course and withdraw or they will be replaced by leaders who will. This leads to the finding that while democracies may not win or lose any less than autocracies, as Lyall finds, they consistently abandon them at significantly lower levels of casualties.

Chapter 2 finds a link between casualties and war outcomes, but does not concretely identify the mechanism leading to a loss of public support. Chapter 3 uses an experimental research design to determine if news of American casualties or elite opinion drives attitudes about the war in Afghanistan. This is not the first effort to uncover the relationship between casualties, opinion, and support for conflict; indeed, American boots were still on the ground in Southeast Asia when Mueller (1971, 1973) first argued that logged American casualties were inversely related to public support for the war in Vietnam. Where this study differs, however, is in the portrayal of elite opinion. Existing experiments in this area typically portray elite support as split along traditional partisan lines, and support or opposition among the subjects is usually driven by their partisan attachments. But this approach rarely reflects reality, where elite foreign policy and security opinions frequently cut across partisan divisions. Both Republicans and Democrats have 'hawks,' who view military power as a necessary tool for preserving American

interests in the 21st century, and ‘doves,’ who argue that America’s has been too quick in the post-9/11 world to rely on military action, and doing so has led to some disastrous consequences. The findings reveal that news of American casualties has little independent effect on attitudes towards the Afghanistan conflict. Instead, overall support for the conflict only declines when elite opinions in response to those deaths cut across standard partisan divisions.

At first glance, the final paper of the dissertation is a substantial departure from the first two. Whereas the earlier papers were broadly concerned with war outcomes from the perspective of the occupying state, Chapter 4 applies to those who are most impacted by these conflicts – the people living in these contested and war-ravaged territories. In an effort to determine what “works,” the United States military has collected exceptionally large amounts of sub-national data from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and has made it available to social scientists. But I respectfully suggest that these scholars have largely taken a short-sighted view of what “working” actually means, focusing almost entirely on the factors that lead to a decline in violent attacks against counterinsurgent forces (e.g. Condra and Shapiro 2012; Shaver and Shapiro 2015; Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011; Berman et al 2013). This understandably reflects the concern over casualties detailed in the two preceding chapters, but rarely is counterinsurgent-insurgent violence the only kind of violence that occurs in these contexts. Indeed, Kalyvas notes that intrastate conflicts such as these are “likely to open a Pandora’s Box of violence” (2006:20).

The violence and instability that continues to plague Iraq demonstrates that the absence of such violence cannot be taken as evidence that the war has been a success. Understanding the dynamics of civilian violence in these conflicts allows researchers to enter into a much more broad and, perhaps more meaningful, discussion of what is needed for social and political order to re-emerge in these societies. States take on these counterinsurgencies campaigns and the

occupations under which they occur because they have particular policy goals that require them. And they presumably want the benefits from those policies to continue, regardless of whether they plan to remain in the territory or turn it over to an allied domestic authority.

Therefore, Chapter 4 relaxes the assumption that victory in these contexts is measured solely by the elimination of violence targeting counterinsurgents, and instead conceptualizes victory as the establishment of a self-enforcing social order that reflects the occupation's policy goals. In this extended chapter, which could easily be broken up into its own series of papers, I seek to determine whether or not the factors that were effective in reducing attacks against counterinsurgents in Iraq – increasing troop density accompanied by targeted public goods spending – had the same effect throughout the rest of the conflict space. Specifically, I evaluate their effect on patterns of selective and indiscriminate violence against civilians in the various regions of Iraq. At the same time, Iraqis did not leave their fate entirely to the American effort, as political actors throughout the country also worked to reduce the violence that had taken hold of their lives, and I evaluate these efforts as well. I find greater American troop density in a given district is associated with declines in targeted attacks on Iraqi civilians, but this has no effect on the rate of indiscriminate attacks. Further, public goods investments have no significant effect on either form of violence. Additionally, the emergence of the Sons of Iraq produced declines in both types of violence, while the ceasefire ordered by Muqtada al Sadr in the summer of 2007 is associated with reduced levels of targeted violence.

The first two chapters stand individually on their own, but together, they contribute to our understanding of the relationship between public opinion and domestic political institutions at home and military operations overseas. Specifically, they show when and how casualties impact support within democratic societies for wars of occupation, and how that support in turn impacts

the outcomes of such conflicts. The final substantive chapter sheds light on what has to this point been an understudied area of the burgeoning literature of conflict dynamics from the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, the study of violence experienced by civilians allows us to move beyond commonly accepted understandings of what we mean by 'victory' in these wars and more fully appreciate the problems and limitations of waging war abroad.

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Chapter 2

Casualties, Regime Type, and the Outcomes of Wars of Occupation²

Introduction

Conventional wisdom among military scholars and policymakers has long maintained that democracies are poorly-suited to engage in counterinsurgency campaigns and that doing so is a prescription for foreign policy difficulty, if not outright disaster (Mack 1975; Horne 2006; Merom 2003; Jentleson 1992; Feaver and Gelpi 2004; Arreguín-Toft 2001, 2005; Galula 2006; US Army 2007). The argument is simple: to successfully coerce an insurgency into laying down its arms and accepting the incumbent's authority requires an acceptance of the costs of fighting and a willingness to use highly repressive violence. Democratic publics are believed to be fundamentally uncomfortable with both of these. As costs increase, the public withdraws its support, which compels its electorally-minded leaders to abandon the effort before the insurgency can be defeated and their goals met. And democratic leaders, so the thinking goes, will not allow their forces to employ extreme levels and methods of violence, which would violate their public's (or the international community's) beliefs regarding human rights and the

² This paper was first published online at *Conflict Management and Peace Science* on March 11, 2015.

proper conduct of war (Merom 2003). Such normative restraint prevents democracies from decisively defeating their opponents, which in turn, allows for the costs to continue to accrue.

However, in a recent large-n study of counterinsurgency campaigns from the past 200 years, Lyall (2010) directly challenges this claim, finding no relationship between regime type and outcomes in these wars. Indeed, Table 2.1 suggests the relationship between democracy and losing is minimal. In the 202 counterinsurgencies fought by nondemocracies between 1800 and 2005, 107 of them emerged victorious, a success rate of 53%. Somewhat surprisingly, and in contrast to the arguments surrounding the difficulties that confront them, democracies actually outperform their autocratic counterparts, achieving victory 55% of the time by winning 46 of 84 conflicts.

Table 2.1. Outcomes of Counterinsurgency Wars by Regime Type

	<i>All Counterinsurgency Wars</i>			<i>Counterinsurgency Wars Abroad</i>		
	<i>Nondemocracy</i>	<i>Democracy</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Nondemocracy</i>	<i>Democracy</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Win</i>	107	46	153	39	25	64
<i>Draw</i>	36	19	55	2	7	9
<i>Loss</i>	59	19	78	25	16	41
<i>Total</i>	202	84	286	66	48	114

Table 2.1 also shows the success rates if we just look at those conflicts taking place in territories overseas. As Lyall (2010:182) notes, most democracies conducting counterinsurgent campaigns are doing so as occupying forces, as they tend not to face insurgent rebellions at home. We can see that while nondemocracies win about 59% of the time (39 of 66) in counterinsurgency wars abroad, democracies win slightly over half of such campaigns (25 of 48), or 52%. It is clear that democracies do not perform as well in these conflicts as they do in interstate wars, where they win about 93% of the time (Reiter and Stam 2002:29); however, we

certainly cannot conclude that defeat is a preordained outcome. In light of the conventional wisdom, these findings are rather puzzling, leading us to wonder what, if any, is the relationship between regime type and the outcomes of these wars.

This paper strives to develop some degree of understanding of this relationship. Specifically, I identify the conditions under which democracies will be more likely than other regime types to abandon these counterinsurgency wars abroad. To do so, I return to the notion of costs, but I do so by theoretically identifying which costs matter most to democracies – casualties – and develop a statistical model that takes those costs into account by interacting them with regime type. Occupying forces, regardless of their regime type, can potentially leave at any time, and they win such wars when they either convince the insurgent enemy that they have no intention of leaving before they accomplish their goals, and, thus, resistance is futile, or they kill off anyone who is willing to fight. This requires a willingness to pay the costs of staying in the territory, and frequently that means a willingness to incur casualties. I argue that when democratic states lose, meaning they abandon the territory before fully suppressing violent opposition and achieving whatever aims they may have, their electorally-minded leaders choose to do so because the level of casualties they have incurred surpasses a threshold that their publics deem acceptable. Insurgents, therefore, are motivated to keep fighting despite experiencing their own mounting costs, fully aware that their ability, not to win militarily, but at least to inflict casualties brings them one step closer to the departure of the occupier and victory. This stands in contrast to autocratic states involved in counterinsurgency campaigns overseas. Leaders in such states are largely unconstrained by the views and concerns of their populations, and, thus, do not fear removal from office through electoral loss due to high levels of casualties. We should then

expect these types of regimes to be much more willing to accept higher casualties before withdrawing than their democratic counterparts.

I test the claim that democracies have a lower tolerance for casualties than autocratic regimes in counterinsurgency wars overseas against a dataset of such conflicts between 1800 and 2005. I restrict my universe of cases to counterinsurgencies conducted overseas for two reasons, one theoretical and the other for reasons related to policy. As just suggested and as I will discuss in greater detail below, wars of occupation constitute a distinct category of civil war and insurgency in that the incumbent counterinsurgent can leave the territory at any time. This possibility of exit does not exist for indigenous incumbents, and thus, we require a distinct theory to explain when and why occupiers might give up the fight and go home. Second, democratic states typically select into wars that they can and do win (Reiter and Stam 2002:29). But their relative lack of success in counterinsurgency campaigns abroad suggests that it may be useful from a policy perspective to identify the factors associated with defeat so that they can perhaps be avoided or mitigated.

I also examine the potential validity of competing mechanisms linking regime type to conflict outcomes. In particular, I assess the relationship between the duration of these conflicts and regime type, as democracies may be more likely to withdraw as government commitment and public attention turns away from the war to other issues, either at home or abroad. If other crises emerge that demand attention or the public is no longer interested in a conflict or its outcome, there may be little incentive for continuing it. The statistical results, however, strongly suggest that rather than being separated by differing thresholds of duration, regime types are distinct in the level of casualties they are generally willing to accept. This finding is largely robust to several alternative measures of regime type and several model specifications.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. I begin by discussing the connection between casualties and democracy in greater detail, paying particularly close attention to how casualties become salient in democratic societies. Next, I briefly offer alternative hypotheses and discuss their potential theoretical shortcomings. Following from this, I present the data and empirical strategy, explaining how the interaction of regime type with casualties is needed to accurately assess the theory. I then report the results, which suggest that regimes where leaders are accountable to mass publics do, indeed, withdraw from these conflicts at significantly lower levels of casualties than those where leaders answer only to smaller groups of political elites. I conclude by stressing the need for future work to further explore the relationship between costs and regime type and I suggest that democratic leaders should think hard about the prospects for success when putting troops in harm's way.

Why Casualties Matter

Casualties are a cost of conflict, but I begin this section with a brief step back to discuss how states conducting counterinsurgency abroad are likely to view the general notion of costs differently than an indigenous counterinsurgent force. Leaders who select into counterinsurgency wars abroad, or the occupations where they occur, may view them as imperative to their own political survival, but the survival of the state usually is not in question. Nevertheless, such a leader will seek to demonstrate not just his own, but his entire state's dedication to victory and the attainment of whatever objectives brought it to the territory in the first place, whether it be to acquire raw natural resources, secure policy concessions, or install and protect a favored leader. They will frequently do so through statements of resolve. For example, following the passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in August 1964, Lyndon Johnson stated, "Let no one doubt that we

have the resources and we have the will to follow this course as long as it may take us”

(Patterson 2012:24). Similarly, in 2003, George Bush argued:

Enemies of freedom are making a desperate stand there [Iraq] -- and there they must be defeated. This will take time and require sacrifice. Yet we will do what is necessary, we will spend what is necessary, to achieve this essential victory in the war on terror, to promote freedom and to make our own nation more secure (Bush, September 3, 2003).

These statements and countless others are efforts to signal to a variety of audiences, from domestic populations at home to the insurgents and populations abroad, that the occupier is no different than an indigenous incumbent fighting an internal challenger. These latter leaders do not have any trouble convincing their challengers that they are committed to remaining in the territory, as defeat would spell the end of their tenure in power and may even result in some sort of extreme punishment (e.g., imprisonment or execution) (Lake and Baum 2001:594). As such, they have no option but to fight on regardless of the costs.

Costs, however, do influence the decision-making calculus of an occupier: such a state can simply leave the territory if they get too high. Scholars have located the motivations for insurgent action in a variety of other sources, from the desire to acquire selective and communal incentives (Olsen 1965; Goodwin and Skocpol 1989; Stoll 1993; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Mueller 2000; Weinstein 2007; Kalyvas 2006) to a need to survive against what is thought to be certain death or enslavement (Mack 1975; Simpson 2010), as well as the desire to exact revenge (Tishkov 2004:142; Hashim 2006:99-104; Anderson 2005:46-47; Wood 2003:18-19; Lyall 2009) or seek protection (Leites and Wolf 1970:112-18; Mason and Krane 1989; Goodwin 2001; Kalyvas 2006:151-59, Kalyvas and Kocher 2007:183). These factors potentially enable insurgents to overcome any collective action problems that might limit an individual's willingness to participate in risky behavior such as rebellion. In confronting a domestic

incumbent, these motivations must sustain a rebel group all the way to military victory, but in the case of a challenge to an occupying force, they need only to exist to allow the group to continue to extract some sort of costs to the point where the occupier is no longer willing to maintain its presence.

I have discussed costs to this point in rather general terms. We can imagine that they might fall into two general categories, financial and human. Financial costs would obviously include those required to send fighting forces to the territory. In some instances the state may have to design and construct the equipment needed to transport trained troops and their equipment, and once in theatre, these troops need to be paid, fed, and clothed while the equipment must be cleaned and maintained. On top of the costs of bringing troops and equipment to the territory, there are the added costs of maintaining the gains made through the capturing of territory. The “clear and hold” sequence requires the occupier to pay the costs of garrisoning potentially remote or hostile regions, which can also be very costly from a logistical standpoint.

Jacobsen writes of the situation in Iraq prior to the 1920 Revolt:

These posts [garrisons throughout the country] were not always readily supported or even supplied reliably....The outposts, too weak to defend themselves and too immobile to tour the countryside or reinforce other sites, drew criticism from home. However, in the political climate that obtained both in Iraq and in the region as a whole, withdrawal of forces anywhere suggested that the British were about to evacuate the entire country (1991:324).

Such financial costs are certainly significant, but they are not the only costs of conducting counterinsurgency. Troops are killed and injured in the course of these campaigns. The asymmetric nature of guerrilla warfare (Arreguín-Toft 2001) means that front lines disappear and conventional battles become less frequent, although they certainly do exist. Insurgent actors adapt to employ technologies (e.g., improvised explosive devices) and tactics (e.g., suicide

bombings) that can kill uniformed service personnel wherever they are located, whether it be when they are on patrol, travelling in convoys, or eating in mess halls.

The Centrality of Casualties to Democracies

While all states incur costs through the course of conflict, who bears the brunt of those costs can vary. In democracies, leaders decide how resources at their disposal collected from the population are to be allocated across competing priorities, and upon doing so, the public then renders a decision through an election as to whether those resources were allocated in a way that reflects their interests. Relative to the financial costs, which can be obscured or delayed through budgeting mechanisms, battle deaths are a much more immediate and tangible cost that must be borne by democratic publics. News outlets will announce the names of the fallen, flags are flown at half-staff, memorials are erected, and entire towns might attend a servicemember's funeral. Furthermore, enhanced media freedom within democracies also means that insurgents may attempt to carry out spectacular attacks likely to attract the attention of citizens in the occupying country.

With the widespread dissemination of these images through open and free media, a democratic public does not always need the assistance of opposing domestic elites to know that deaths are occurring. But these elites can play a role in letting a democratic public know if those sacrifices are worthwhile and what the patterns of violence might suggest about the eventual outcome of the conflict. Both Baum and Groeling (2010) and Berinsky (2007) find that opposing political elites will potentially foster foreign policy interest within the public through vocal dissent, and Schultz (1998:832) notes that this usually occurs when those opponents of the incumbent detect the possibility of electoral gain from doing so. Many of these conflicts may

start out with near-consensus among elites regarding the need to emerge victorious, although it is unclear if such agreement is a result of true beliefs, groupthink, or fears over being labeled as unpatriotic during what is known to be a brief “rally around the flag” effect (Mueller 1970, 1973; Brody and Shapiro 1989; Brody 1991; Jordan and Page 1992; Lian and Oneal 1993; Parker 1995; Oneal, Lian, and Joyner 1996). However, the electoral incentives Schultz (1998:832) identifies may lead opposition leaders to abandon the argument that the state’s immediate security or survival are threatened.³ Once this elite consensus breaks down, it then becomes very difficult for a leader to convince the public that the human cost is worth it (Burk 1999:60), as media coverage becomes more critical in response to the elite dissention (Zaller 1994). These elites and the public who they have engaged through their dissent also can use casualty patterns to give meaning to current casualty rates (Gartner 2008) and to approximate future costs (Gartner and Segura 2005; Nisbett and Ross 1980).⁴

The resulting shift in public opinion can be quite dramatic. In July of 2003, two months prior to President Bush’s speech noted above, a USA Today/Gallup Poll included the question, “In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Iraq, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq, or not?” Twenty-seven percent of respondents said that the United States “made a mistake,” while seventy-two percent said, “did not make a

³It is here where we perhaps see the difference in the records for democracies in interstate wars and counterinsurgencies abroad. In interstate war, democratic elites are likely to remain unified in their belief in the need for the conflict, even in spite of the casualties that accrue, as victory is seen as crucial for the security and survival of the state. See Schultz (1998, 2001) for an extended discussion of the role opposing elites in democratic societies play in crisis bargaining and conflict.

⁴Merom (2003) makes a somewhat similar argument to account for why domestic support declines. While he acknowledges the role of force casualties, his primary argument is that the middle class and its elected representatives are unwilling to allow their armed forces to engage in the brutal methods that accompany these counterinsurgent campaigns, leading them into protracted conflicts where they are effectively constrained from doing what it takes to win. However, many of these conflicts are marked by extreme violence from the start, much of which the public is aware, and it is unclear that this supposed discomfort is causally related to the decline in support. Future research may want to more fully investigate this argument.

mistake” (PollingReport.com). When the question was asked for the last time in this poll in July of 2007, sixty-two percent of respondents said that the invasion was a mistake, while just thirty-six percent stated that it was not (PollingReport.com).

As elite messages from the opposition erode support for the conflict (Gartner and Segura 1998; Mueller 1973) and the leaders responsible for it (Gartner and Segura 2000), those leaders must either respond to those shifting preferences or face the electoral consequences. This logic has underpinned many existing studies that show casualties influence the outcomes of elections to multiple branches of government within the United States (Carson, et. al. 2001; Gartner, et. al. 2004; Karol and Miguel 2007; Voeten and Brewer 2006) and their overall effect on leader tenure (Bueno de Mesquita, et. al. 2003).

However, it is not a foregone conclusion that occupiers will always suffer casualties at levels that shift public support for the conflict downward. A technological advantage might allow the occupier to incapacitate insurgents while largely staying protected from harm. For example, the arrival of military aircraft in the middle of Britain’s 1920 conflict in Iraq allowed it to kill insurgents with minimal human risk. Royal Air Force Commander Arthur Harris noted:

They [i.e., the Arabs and the Kurds] now know what real bombing means, in casualties and damage; they now know that within 45 minutes a full sized village... can be practically wiped out and a third of its inhabitants killed or injured by four or five machines which offer them no real target, no opportunity for glory as warriors, no effective means of escape, and little chance of retaliation or loot such as an infantry column would afford them in producing a similar result (from Tanaka 2010:21).

Following the deployment of airplanes, the British were able to maintain control of the region at minimal human or financial cost into the next decade. Local inhabitants would still occasionally target British assets, but the use of air power allowed for those attacks to be dealt with swiftly and harshly, which lessened their frequency and lethality.

Similarly, an insurgent group inspired by the possibility of an occupier's exit and defeat can only succeed if it possesses the capability to extract costs. If they do not have the means to carry out attacks that would make an occupier's continued presence untenable, it is unlikely to have any effect on the domestic audience's concerns over the course of the occupation. For example, in the 1906 Zulu Rebellion against the British in modern day South Africa, local tribesmen armed only with seven guns and the rest, spears and shields, were no match for the rifles and cannon of British soldiers (Thompson 2003:546). Insurgents do not need to be able to win militarily, but they must at least possess a minimum capacity to extract costs, and, as this example suggests, that is not always the case. These strategies suggest that significant casualties in a conflict are not a given. But when democratic states are unable to adopt strategies and operations that weaken the likelihood of suffering such casualties, the theory suggests that leaders responsible for the conflict come under increasing pressure to withdraw, ceding control back to their indigenous opponents.

By contrast, autocratic regimes largely do not possess the institutional mechanisms that allow for casualties to shape outcomes in the same way they do in democracies. To be sure, if a state suffers casualties to the point where it can no longer effectively fight or control territory, it is likely to ultimately lose. But this is likely the result of poor battlefield performance, not public discontent that compels a shift in policy. Rather, autocracies generally lack meaningful media freedom, which suggests that their publics may not even know the extent of the casualties being incurred. Also, the absence of visible and vocal elite opposition prevents them from acquiring any sort of context in which to place those casualties. Finally, even if the public were aware of the casualties the state was suffering, the lack of competitive elections would leave those individuals opposed to further involvement from having the opportunity to voice their desire for

a change in policy. Therefore, we would expect that relative to democracies, autocracies will be more willing to accept higher levels of casualties before withdrawing in defeat from counterinsurgency wars abroad. More formally:

Hypothesis 1: Democratic regimes are likely to withdraw from counterinsurgency wars overseas at lower levels of casualties than autocratic regimes.

Alternative Explanations

We can imagine, however, that democratic states might also withdraw from counterinsurgency campaigns overseas for a number of other reasons. Here, I focus on two plausible alternative explanations offered in the existing literature. The first is that democratic publics come to no longer believe in the prospects of winning. Feaver and Gelpi (2004) and Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005-06) argue that the public's belief in the likelihood of victory, however individuals choose to define it, outweighs all other considerations. If success is viewed as unlikely, a democratic public becomes less willing to support the conflict, which, in turn, forces the leadership of the state to end the conflict. Unfortunately, testing the validity of this mechanism requires the use of experimental surveys over a period of time, as Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005-06) did with public opinion surveys during the early periods of the Iraq War, and so I will set it aside for further research.

Nevertheless, Berinsky and Druckman (2007:134) give us reason to be skeptical of the logic that underpins such a claim. They raise the possibility that the relationship between support for war and belief in its success may run in the opposite direction from Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler's (2005-06) argument: "Similarly, just as the observed correlation between vote choice and economic perceptions is a result of voters bringing their economic assessments in line with their political judgments, the causal arrow between perceived success and latent generalized

support for war could run from the latter to the former, rather than vice versa...(134).” Indeed, in 2004 at a time of high partisan division with respect to support for the Iraq War, Berinsky (2007) found that 85 percent of Republicans and only 51 percent of Democrats thought that the conflict would be successful, suggesting that underlying partisan preferences may be driving both support for a conflict and belief in its success (Druckman and Berinsky 2007:134).

The other causal argument found in the literature involves the duration of the conflict and can be tested with available data. Reiter and Stam (2002) and Bennett and Stam (1998) find that the likelihood of victory for democracies in interstate war declines with time. As war persists, not only are human and financial costs accruing, but other crises and events both at home and abroad may reshape how the public views the war and its perceived necessity. Economic crises at home or new security threats abroad may arise that reduce the public’s demand for an ongoing conflict, which then leads decision-makers to reevaluate the need for continuing it, likely resulting in withdrawal as ongoing involvement no longer possesses any electoral value. An autocracy, on the other hand, may be more immune from such concerns regarding the duration of the war for the same reason it might be insulated from the public’s aversion to casualties: it is not accountable to the public and so its beliefs and opinions largely do not matter. These conjectures produce the following hypothesis for testing:

Hypothesis 2: Democracies are likely to withdraw from counterinsurgency wars overseas earlier than autocratic regimes.

However, we have reason to be skeptical of this hypothesis, as well. Whereas casualties may impact the public and not necessarily the elite policymakers in autocratic societies, time likely impacts both groups through two potential pathways. First, like democratic leaders, autocrats must pursue evolving agendas overseas and at home in their effort to remain in power,

which means that their attention spans may be limited. Just as a public's attention can shift, so, too, can that of an autocratic leader, and Goemans (2000) suggests that they are unlikely to pay a price for abandoning the conflict, as he finds that dictators are unlikely to lose power or suffer other punishments for losing wars.⁵ The second explanation for why autocratic states might be just as likely as democracies to lose these wars as time goes on involves challenges to their leadership. Relevant political elites who are in a position to challenge the leader who oversees the conflict may grow frustrated with the ongoing diversion of resources from their own preferred priorities, producing a potential challenge to his authority. If the leader is replaced through such a challenge, we would then expect the new leader to withdraw from the conflict, as his supporters are not tied to or invested in its success. The former pathway, changes in the leader's priorities, is likely to be present in institutional arrangements where would-be challengers possess little ability or incentive to organize, while the latter, regime change, will likely occur under configurations where organization is possible and the punishments for failed challenges are not sufficient enough to deter such efforts. However, regardless of which is operating, we have reason to believe that there should be little difference between the effects of a counterinsurgency war's duration across regime types. Such a null finding would mirror earlier research that has found no link between regime type and the duration of civil wars (Lyal 2010; Collier, Hoeffler and Soderbom 2004; de Rouen, Jr. and Sobek 2004; Fearon 2004).

This section discusses three potential mechanisms underpinning the relationship between democratic regime type and loss in counterinsurgency wars. The first involves numbers of deaths among the occupier's forces. As these increase, democratic publics turn against the idea of ongoing involvement, forcing their leaders to withdraw in defeat, abandoning whatever aims

⁵ Instead, Goemans (2000) finds that only leaders of mixed regimes are likely to suffer loss of office, as well as additional punishments, for losing conflicts.

they may have had. Rather than a concern over casualties, the second mechanism surrounds the public's sense of whether success is achievable. When democratic publics no longer believe in the possibility of victory, they withdraw their support. Finally, the third potential mechanism is time. As the duration of the conflict increases, democratic regimes will be less willing to maintain their involvement due to the declining salience of the war or the emergence of other crises that demand the public's attention. In the next section, I outline the research strategy to adjudicate between two of these three plausible explanations.

Data and Empirical Strategy

To evaluate the role of regime type in counterinsurgency campaigns abroad, I begin with a dataset of the 114 cases of occupation between 1800 and 2005 based off of data collected by Lyall and Wilson (2009a).⁶ Lyall and Wilson code a state “as an external occupier if its military forces crossed an internationally recognized border in order to suppress an insurgency” (2009b:4). To enter the dataset, a conflict had to meet two primary criteria. First, it must have experienced a minimum of 1,000 battle deaths, with at least 100 casualties on each side of the conflict. Also, the insurgency, which Lyall defines as “a violent, often protracted struggle by nonstate actors to obtain political objectives such as independence, greater autonomy, or the subversion of existing political authority” (2010:175), must employ guerrilla warfare, a strategy that “(1) uses small, mobile groups to inflict punishment through hit-and-run strikes while avoiding direct battle when possible and (2) seeks to win the allegiance of at least some portion of the noncombatant population” (2010:175).

⁶ I have made a number of changes to the original coding of cases by Lyall and Wilson (2009a). Information regarding those changes, which are focused on the number of casualties threshold and whether an incumbent was an occupying force, are contained in the supplementary appendix at www.matthewswells.com.

Dependent Variable

Conflict outcomes are operationalized in two ways, both of which come from Lyall and Wilson (2009a). The first is an ordered win-draw-loss variable. A *win* occurs when the incumbent defeats the insurgency through military force, either remaining in the territory without granting any insurgent demands or leaving after it has secured the policy objectives the occupation was intended to secure. An outcome is coded as a *loss* when the incumbent occupier gives up control of the territory prior to military victory and the insurgent group and its supporters either assume control or go on to fight indigenous supporters of the occupier for it. A *draw* occurs when the occupier concedes to some, but not all of the insurgents' demands. This means that the occupier remains in the territory, but grants the opposition some measure of regional autonomy or self-governance. In the 114 cases, there are 64 incumbent wins, 41 losses, and 9 draws. I also use a dichotomous win-loss variable that drops the 9 draws.

Explanatory Variables

The model requires two primary explanators to evaluate Hypothesis 1, regime type and casualties. Lyall and Wilson state that “militarily ineffectual rebels can... still win politically if they are able to influence the incumbent’s domestic scene...” (2009a:72). I argue that for democracies, such influence primarily comes through the taking of casualties through the forms of irregular warfare noted earlier. The theory suggests that regime type on its own does not sufficiently explain why certain states win or lose counterinsurgency wars overseas. Rather, it is the combination of democratic governance *and* the level of casualties that serve as the proper explanation. As such, we need a model that observes the interaction of the two.

As is convention in international relations, *democracy* is a binary variable that assigns all states with a Polity2 score of ≥ 7 in the Polity IV Dataset (Marshall and Jaggers 2008) with a 1; all others receive a 0. Polity2 ranges from -10, the most totalitarian regimes, to 10, which is generally given to the most consolidated democracies. There are 48 democracies and 66 nondemocracies in the dataset.

The second explanatory variable, *casualty ratio*, will be interacted with *democracy*. The casualty ratio variable captures the number of occupying forces killed during the course of a conflict over the total number of occupying forces who fought in the territory. I use a ratio, as opposed to logged casualties, because the denominator contextualizes the casualties incurred across conflicts. For example, ten battle deaths reveal little information or meaning regarding prospects for success, unless it is accompanied by some indication of the larger war effort. If these ten deaths were suffered by a force of 100 in one conflict, it would contain a different meaning for an engaged domestic audience than if they were suffered by a force of 1,000 in another. For information on occupier battle deaths, I consulted several datasets and historical accounts of these conflicts, including the Correlates of War (Sarkees and Wayman 2010) and Clodfelter (2002). Data on force size comes largely from Friedman (2011), as well as Clodfelter (2002) and other qualitative sources. The data collected represents the best estimates for casualties and force size available for the occupying state, and while I was able to collect data regarding the occupier's force size and casualties for many of the wars, 70 in total, much of this data remains unknown, unsubstantiated, or incomplete.⁷

⁷ It is important to note that occupying forces frequently used local troops to fight in their campaigns abroad, particularly during the colonial era. These troops should not be included in the total force size or total casualties because the theory argues that domestic publics care about their own forces and does not address how they might feel about foreign troops fighting on their behalf. Therefore, when possible, I have made an effort to differentiate force size and casualties attributed directly to the occupying power from the total number of those who fought and died on their side in a given conflict. For example, Sepoys

To evaluate Hypothesis 2, which posits that democracies are likely to abandon counterinsurgency wars abroad earlier than autocracies, I interact the length of the war with regime type. Taken from Lyall and Wilson (2009a), *duration* is operationalized by the natural log of the number of months the war lasted.

Control Variables

In order to properly identify the causal effects of these interactions, it is important to account for some other factors that might be correlated with them or the outcomes of these conflicts. First, highly mechanized militaries are thought to be especially vulnerable to defeat by insurgents. Lyall and Wilson (2009a) argue that military technology developed to win conventional interstate wars, such as tanks, armored personnel carriers, etc., actually make forces less capable in the conduct of counterinsurgency because they prevent troops from interacting with the local population, which is seen as key to success in counterinsurgency. Lyall and Wilson (2009a) operationalize the level of mechanization as the ratio of soldiers per motorized vehicle, which is taken in the year prior to the war. *Mechanization* carries five values; 1 to 4 based on the level of mechanization and 0 for all conflicts prior to 1917, which is commonly viewed as the beginning of the mechanized era (Lyall and Wilson 2009a:74).

Second, *support* from a third party is believed to increase an insurgent group's chances of winning against an incumbent force, as such support frequently means access to weapons, funding, recruits, and sanctuary (e.g., Regan 2002; Record 2007; Salehyan 2008). An observation receives a 2 if the insurgency received both material aid and sanctuary from a third

fought alongside the British in many of its campaigns in the Indian Subcontinent; however, the sources frequently distinguish between the two when providing information regarding how many troops participated or were killed.

party, a 1 if it obtained only one type of aid, and a 0 if it did not receive any third party assistance. The data is taken from Lyall and Wilson (2009a).

Third, as a state's power increases, so should its likelihood of victory. Stronger countries should be able to adapt and manage the costs of counterinsurgency campaigns better than smaller, weaker states. I follow Lyall (2010) and measure *power* using the Correlates of War's Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) (Sarkees and Wayman 2010) from the year prior to the onset of violence, which captures a state's share of global economic and military power.⁸

Fourth, the ruggedness of a territory's terrain has been found to be significantly associated with rebel victory, as insurgents will frequently use remote, mountainous areas as sanctuary from incumbent forces, who typically control the large, urban centers (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Galula 2006:23-25). I borrow from Lyall and Wilson (2009a), measuring *terrain* as the average altitude, in meters, of five different locations within the territory experiencing the conflict.

Finally, I discussed earlier the added costs of shipping soldiers and equipment long distances. One can imagine it is much easier from a logistical standpoint to fight a counterinsurgency next door than on the other side of the world (Bueno de Mesquita 1981). Therefore, to account for the possibility that occupier success declines with *distance*, I include a measure of the logged kilometer distance between the occupier's capital city and the occupied territory (Lyall and Wilson 2009a). Table 2.2 contains the descriptive statistics for these variables, which will be tested using logistic regression.

⁸ In addition, I also run the model with the logged total number of the incumbent's military personnel. While not indicative of the number of forces within occupied territory, it does convey some information about the general power of the occupying state. The results are consistent with the original model and can be found in the online supplementary appendix.

Table 2.2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
<i>Win/Draw/Loss</i>	114	1.202	0.942	0	2
<i>Win/Loss</i>	105	0.61	0.49	0	1
<i>Democracy (Pol2\geq7)</i>	114	0.421	0.496	0	1
<i>Casualty Ratio</i>	70	0.155	0.196	0.004	0.97
<i>Duration (Logged mos.)</i>	114	3.257	1.275	0.347	5.911
<i>Mechanization</i>	114	1.14	1.43	0	4
<i>External Support</i>	114	0.447	0.692	0	2
<i>Power (ln(100*cinc))</i>	114	1.9	1.266	-1.329	3.515
<i>Terrain</i>	114	5.804	1.431	0	8.497
<i>Distance</i>	114	8.238	1.106	1	9.843

Results

Table 2.3 reports the statistical results of the models that test these hypotheses. Models 1 and 2 display the regression results for the win/draw/loss and win/loss models without the interactions of *democracy* with *casualty ratio* and *duration*, while Models 3 and 4 show the results with those interactions. We see in the first two models that while increasing casualty ratios lead to a decreased likelihood of victory, regime type has no significant independent effect on the outcomes of these wars, nor does duration of the conflict.

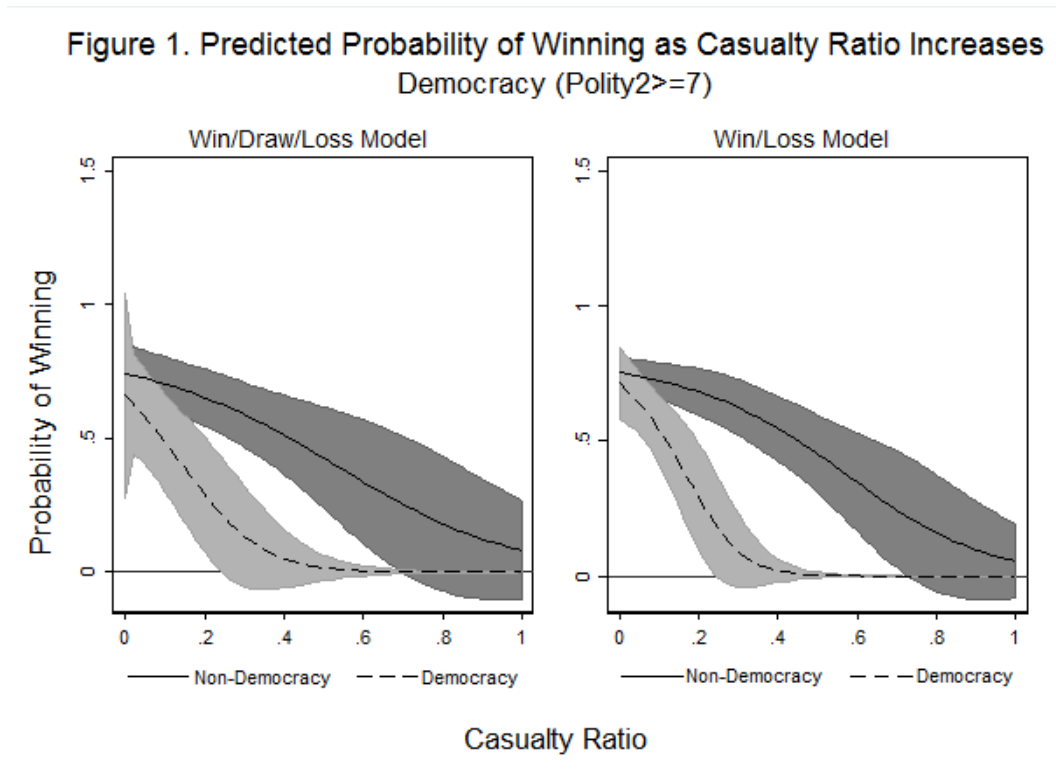
Table 2.3. Regime Type and the Outcomes of Counterinsurgency Wars Abroad

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	<i>Win/Draw/Loss</i>	<i>Win/Loss</i>	<i>Win/Draw/Loss</i>	<i>Win/Loss</i>
	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>
	<i>(Std. Error)</i>	<i>(Std. Error)</i>	<i>(Std. Error)</i>	<i>(Std. Error)</i>
<i>Democracy</i>	-0.738 (1.01)	-1.223 (1.481)	-0.247 (4.348)	0.303 (3.131)
<i>Casualty Ratio (CR)</i>	-5.662*** (1.925)	-7.306** (2.827)	-4.843*** (1.869)	-6.6*** (2.521)
<i>Democracy*CR</i>			-6.943 (4.511)	-10.473*** (2.185)
<i>Duration</i>	0.02 (0.433)	0.264 (0.412)	-0.023 (0.304)	0.228 (0.284)
<i>Democracy*Duration</i>			0.037 (1.022)	-0.205 (0.701)
<i>Mechanization</i>	-0.473* (0.243)	-0.411 (0.361)	-0.527** (0.22)	-0.421 (0.291)
<i>External Support</i>	-1.961** (0.854)	-3.484** (1.704)	-1.782** (0.815)	-3.548** (1.417)
<i>Power</i>	0.207 (0.328)	0.502* (0.268)	0.235 (0.292)	0.578** (0.27)
<i>Terrain</i>	0.061 (0.176)	0.035 (0.162)	0.032 (0.146)	-0.028 (0.211)
<i>Distance</i>	-0.049 (0.131)	0.266 (0.391)	-0.04 (0.122)	0.306 (0.443)
<i>Cutpoints/ Constant</i>	-3.062 -2.431	-0.488 (2.112)	-3.078 -2.439	-0.643 (1.918)
<i>N (clusters)</i>	70(14)	65(13)	70(14)	65(13)
<i>R²</i>	0.3784	0.5725	0.3867	0.5826

P≤0.1*; P≤0.05**; P≤0.01***

However, interpreting coefficients of interaction terms in logit models is somewhat difficult, and so Figures 2.1 and 2.2 provide a graphical interpretation of the results of Hypothesis 1 found in Models 3 and 4. They depict the predicted probabilities of winning for the different regime types as their casualty ratios increase, with .95 confidence and holding all other variables constant at their means.

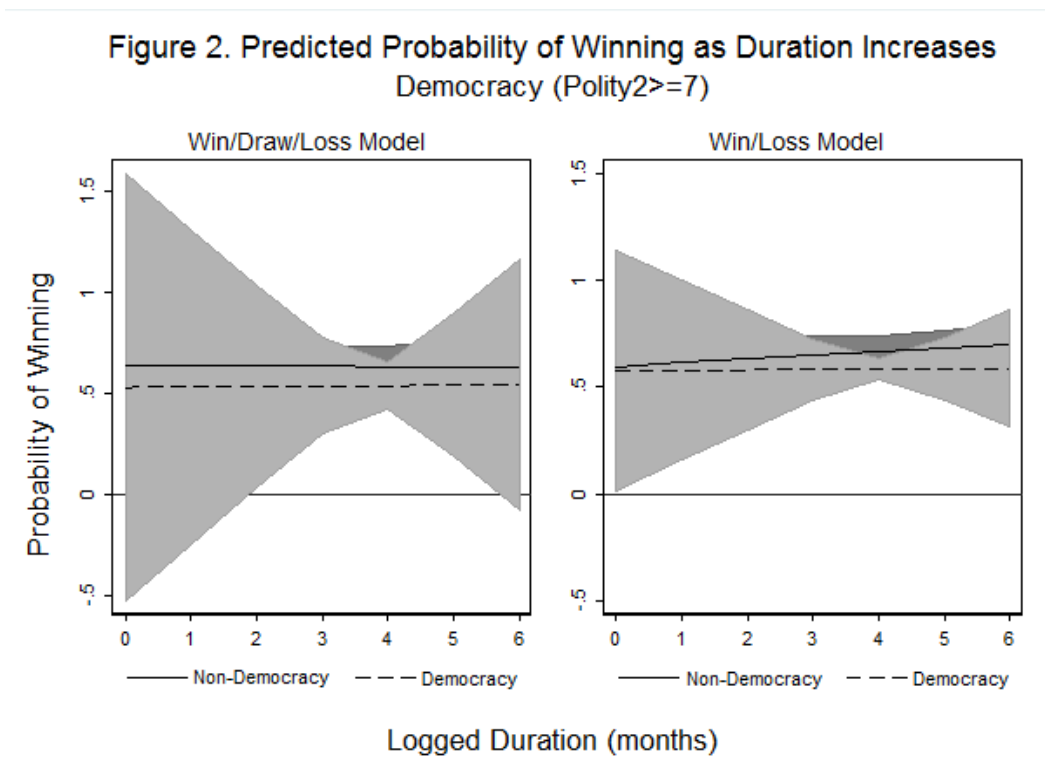
Figure 2.1. Predicted Probability of Winning as Casualty Ratio Increases



In both graphs, we can clearly see that democratic states become much more likely to withdraw at lower casualty thresholds relative to their autocratic counterparts, meaning that Hypothesis 1 is supported. It is worth noting here that while the coefficient on the interaction term in Model 3 is insignificant, this is due to the fact that a large portion of the casualty ratios, approximately 50% of them, are less than 7%. At this low threshold, we cannot say with a great deal of confidence that regime types act all that differently. However, as casualty ratios begin to increase, we can see that separation between regime types becomes much more clear. The left panel (Model 3) suggests that democracies are statistically differentiated from nondemocracies once the casualty ratio approaches just under 20%. Also, their chances of winning fall below 50% once the casualty ratio reaches between 5% and 20%. Nondemocracies, in contrast, do not fall below a 50% probability of winning until their casualty ratio reaches between 25% and 75%.

In the right panel, the win/loss model (Model 4), a similar pattern emerges. Democratic counterinsurgents become statistically more likely than autocratic forces to withdraw with a casualty ratio of around 15% and their chances of winning fall below 50% when they incur a casualty ratio between 10% and 25%. As was the case in the full win/draw/loss model, autocracies show much less sensitivity to casualties, as they do not fall below a 50% chance of winning until suffering somewhere between 30% and 65% casualties.

Figure 2.2. Predicted Probability of Winning as Duration Increases



In contrast, Figure 2.2, which relates to Hypothesis 2 as tested in Models 3 and 4, illustrates the predicted probabilities of winning for democracies and autocracies as conflict duration increases, again with .95 confidence and holding all other variables constant at their means. In both panels, we are unable to discern any meaningful difference between democratic and autocratic occupiers in terms of their likelihood of victory as duration increases. From these

two graphs, we can conclude that the effect of regime type is unlikely to be conditional on the duration of the counterinsurgency war, meaning that we can reject Hypothesis 2.⁹

To return to Table 2.3, we can also assess the significance of the remaining variables discussed above. In both interaction models and as was the case in the non-interaction models, we see that independent of casualties, regime type possesses no statistically significant effect on the outcomes of these wars, a finding consistent with Lyall's (2010) results. Conversely, casualty ratios play a significant stand-alone role in determining outcomes. As the ratio increases, a state becomes less likely to win, regardless of regime type. Finally, the only significant control variable that finds statistical support in all four models is external support; as it increases, so, too, does the likelihood of defeat. Increasing levels of mechanization also lead to an increase in the likelihood of defeat, although this finding only achieves statistical significance in the full win/draw/loss models.

Robustness Checks

In addition to these tests using both the trichotomous win/draw/loss and dichotomous win/loss outcome variables, I also conduct a series of robustness checks. The results are presented in the online appendix to this paper and only briefly summarized here. I first run the model with a number of alternative measures of regime type. The first, *W*, captures the size of the occupying state's winning coalition and is a five-point scale taken from Bueno de Mesquita

⁹ As an alternative test, I further follow Lyall (2010:187) and also run a Weibull hazard regression model of all outcomes, as well as a restricted set of only defeats. The results, which can be found in the online supplementary appendix, further demonstrate that the interaction of democracy and casualty ratio has no significant effect on the duration of all conflicts, regardless of the outcome, as well as those conflicts where the occupier lost.

et al (2003).¹⁰ The second alternative operationalization, audience cost capacity (ACC), is a four-point scale taken from Uzonyi, Souva, and Golder (2012) and captures two key components of Polity's democracy measure, the availability of challengers to the leader and the cost of mobilizing against him. I also use two alternative measures of democracy used by Lyall (2010) in his earlier analysis. I include the full continuous 21-point Polity2 scale (*Polity2*), which captures relative levels of democracy. Lyall also includes Geddes' (2003; Weeks 2008) regime typology, and codes this alternative measure of democracy (*alternative demo*) as a binary variable that generates 49 observations being assigned a 1, while those coded as nondemocratic receive a 0. Second, I include a number of additional controls, including those for new states, the occupying state's population, as well as conflicts occurring during World War II and the Cold War. The findings of all of these models, except for the Geddes alternative coding of democracies, are consistent with results presented in Table 2.3 and Figures 1 and 2. Finally, to demonstrate that these findings are not due strictly to the changes in coding from the original Lyall and Wilson (2009a) data set, I also test these models using their original coding scheme, which results in a slightly different universe of cases. The results remain consistent and are contained in the appendix.

Potential Concerns

While the results clearly demonstrate that democracies behave differently in these conflicts than autocracies, three issues may be cause for concern. First, one might be concerned that the missing casualty ratio data is not missing at random but in some sort of systematic fashion, leading to biased estimates. Forty-four of the 114 conflicts in the data set are lacking

¹⁰ See Bueno de Mesquita et al (2003) for a full description of Selectorate Theory, as the size of a leader's winning coalition is a central component.

either the number of casualties, force size, or both. One can imagine that certain regime types or occupiers would be less willing or able to either report or disclose these data. In particular, record-keeping in older conflicts may not be as complete as it is in modern war, and closed autocracies may be disinclined to release these statistics, particularly if they find themselves on the losing side.

An analysis of the data, however, suggests that such systematic biases are unlikely to be present in this case. Of the forty-four cases where at least one of the two elements of the casualty ratio are missing (casualties or force size), twenty-two were conflicts that took place prior to World War I, while twenty-two occurred after its onset, suggesting that the period in which a conflict took place has little bearing on whether or not data for it are available. Conflicts conducted by autocratic states account for twenty-five of these cases, which at first glance, might suggest the possibility of bias. However, eight of these took place during World War II, and we can imagine that determining whether these occupying troops were present and dying in fighting the insurgencies rather than through the course of the larger conflict is difficult, if not impossible. Further, these occupiers – Germany, Italy and Japan – lost these occupations due to a factor exogenous to the occupations themselves: they lost World War II.¹¹ Absent these eight cases, we have seventeen cases of missing data coming from autocratic occupations and nineteen coming from those conducted by democracies. This suggests that such a bias is unlikely to be present.

¹¹ The sources do provide counts for force size and casualties in a number of occupations that took place during World War II, such as the German occupation of France, the Warsaw Uprising, and the Japanese occupation of parts of China. However, counts were unavailable for the German occupations of portions of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Albania, Greece, and Italy; Italian occupation of Albania; and Japanese occupation of Malaysia and the Philippines. As noted earlier, I control for World War II in Section I of the online appendix and the results do not change.

Also, one might be concerned that the suffering of casualties does not cause losing but that it is the definition of losing. This may be true when we think of warfare more generally, but in the case of counterinsurgency, and occupation more specifically, this is unlikely to be the case. Recall that according to the definition offered above, occupations are efforts to combat insurgencies, which involve guerrilla warfare and indirect tactics, as defined by Lyall (2010:175). Further, it is also important to remember that the occupier's decision to withdraw, while coded as a loss, is not necessarily a signal of its inability to continue to fight, hold territory, and perhaps even inflict further damage to the insurgency. As suggested above, these insurgencies do not need to win battles, only maintain the capacity to extract costs. This may mean that they "lose" every direct engagement, but the casualties they inflict, while perhaps limited in comparison to their own, may still be enough to influence the occupier's decision to withdraw. Accordingly, Table 3.2 notes that the mean casualty ratio for these conflicts is .155, and this fairly low threshold suggests that a state's decision to withdraw from an occupation is not predicated on its (in)ability to keep fighting.¹²

The final concern is one of selection; that democracies select into different types of wars than autocracies and that this is what drives the observed results. Specifically, they might select into wars that will not require significant casualties (See Valentino, Huth, and Croco 2010). Indeed, we can imagine that policymakers are acutely aware that domestic populations have the potential to grow weary of the fight should casualties get too high. While it is undoubtedly the case that democracies engage in these conflicts with the assumption that casualties will be kept

¹² However, the findings illustrated in Figure 2.1 suggest that autocrats may indeed stop fighting because they have lost on the battlefield. Also, two cases do have exceptionally large casualty ratios. The First British-Afghan War (1838-1842) and the War of Dominican Restoration (1863-1865) saw incumbent casualty ratios of .97 and .93 for the British and Spanish, respectively. To assess the possibility that these two cases are driving the results, I drop them from the analysis. The results, which can be found in the appendix, remain unchanged.

to a minimum, accompanying that expectation, however, is the belief that the campaign will also end in victory. But the findings show that while the occupations in which they engage do not result in high casualties, it is not because they always win them. Rather, it is because they will frequently depart, or lose, before those casualties can mount to extreme levels or even those experienced by nondemocracies. Thus, while many democratic leaders may believe that they are selecting into different types of occupations (i.e., those that are clearly winnable at minimal cost), the findings suggest that a number of them are actually selecting into occupations that would require far greater casualties than their publics are willing to tolerate, which would lessen our concerns about this particular selection effect.

Conclusion

This paper provides the first cross-national, quantitative evidence of democracies' increased sensitivity to casualties in counterinsurgency campaigns. Seeking electoral advantage, opposing elites capitalize on the media's coverage of the growing death toll and argue that the war is unnecessary for state security and not in the national interest. In turn, the electorate demands that their leaders change course to end these conflicts or they will elect leaders who will. Knowing this, insurgents do not need to win militarily, only demonstrate their ongoing ability to extract these costs from the occupying democratic state.

The results shown in this paper do not necessarily indicate when those elites will make the decision to break ranks and engage in public opposition; rather, they suggest the thresholds where that opposition leads to a change in war policy and the decision to withdraw from the territory, which constitutes a loss in the conflict.¹³ Specifically, the data suggest that democracies

¹³ This result can come about either through the installation of newly-elected leaders or by the leaders who are responsible for the conflict's ongoing prosecution.

become more likely to withdraw than their autocratic counterparts when they reach a casualty ratio between 15% and 20%, and their chance of victory falls below 50% at casualty ratios beginning between 5% and 25%, depending on the model specification. This contrasts with autocrats, who do not fall below this threshold until achieving a ratio of between 25% and 75%.

Contrary to existing findings in interstate war (Bennett and Stam 1998), it does not appear that democracies are sensitive to time in these conflicts. In light of the results with respect to casualties, this result makes sense. Casualties may accrue at a very slow rate, which may decrease the salience of the conflict among the public. If the public stops paying close attention because few people are dying, one might think it may lead leaders to withdraw from it, as there is little to gain from continuing it. But, as is suggested by the data, it appears that the opposite is true. Leaders respond to this lack of attention by continuing the war because there is fairly little to lose. If we look at the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan, we can perhaps see this logic at work. American casualties in Afghanistan have accounted for less than half of those that took place in Iraq. This might explain why public opposition to ongoing involvement in Iraq led to American withdrawal after eight years, while operations in Afghanistan have continued for over a dozen years.

These findings suggest a number of avenues for future research. The focus in this paper has been on the sensitivity of regimes to one particular type of cost. However, states, particularly nondemocracies, may be vulnerable to other forms of cost, namely financial. Nondemocratic leaders frequently must satisfy a coalition of other elites to remain in office (Geddes 1999, 2003; Bueno de Mesquita, et. al., 1999, 2003; Haber 2006), and conducting such wars can exhaust a state's financial resources and divert them from the priorities of members of that coalition. This,

in turn, may result in a challenge to the leadership, which, if successful, would bring about a withdrawal. Future work will want to assess this possibility.

Also, the results of this paper suggest that democratic leaders should be aware of their publics' sensitivity to casualties when considering such campaigns. Yet, they still select into these wars where the margins in terms of the public's willingness to accept casualties are rather slim, and may frequently dismiss the possibility that casualties may be significant. Future research will want to tease out why leaders appear to discount the possibility of high casualty levels in the beginning of these conflicts only to take them seriously later on and subsequently change course.

Finally, the argument made here prioritizes structural determinants of outcomes rather than events on the ground and the "how" of fighting. However, scholars and practitioners are also engaged in a vigorous debate over the merits of population-centric "hearts and minds" warfare vis-à-vis those of brute force and conventional power.¹⁴ Using fine-grained data from Afghanistan and Iraq, scholars have sought to identify what strategies and operations "work" in reducing insurgent violence (Berman et. al., 2013; Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011; Berman, et. al. 2011), but they have yet to connect those efforts to final outcomes. If it is true that democracies enhance their prospects for winning simply by reducing casualties, ongoing scholarship and theory may want to focus on identifying which strategies yielding a reduction in casualties in a particular location over a particular period of time are sustainable over the long term.

However, both categories of counterinsurgency strategy – brute force and "hearts and minds" – will likely require that an occupying force incur casualties. Those deaths may engender sufficient opposition within the domestic population back home such that leaders will be forced

¹⁴ See Gentile (2009) for an overview of this debate, which has been ongoing since the Vietnam War.

to withdraw before that stability can be achieved. Therefore, democratic leaders may want to reconsider the aims of these campaigns abroad. If casualties are required to achieve the policy goal of the leader, the evidence suggests that the goal may be unattainable before the public demands the occupation come to an end. Instead, policymakers should perhaps focus on achieving policy goals that may take time but do not require casualties. For example, independent of their normative implications, drone strikes along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border allow the United States to carry out one of its primary goals stemming from the original mission into Afghanistan, which was to disrupt the ability of terrorist groups to organize and plan attacks. The drone program does not allow for the United States to have as much a say in the politics of the Afghan state, but, as the findings of this paper imply, the people of the United States may believe that those dynamics, and others like them in other parts of the world, have little to do with their own security and survival.

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Chapter 3

Following the Leaders?: War Support When Elites are United and Divided¹⁵

Introduction

How do Americans, who are generally far removed from theaters of war, construct their attitudes about military conflicts overseas? On one hand, scholars of international relations have argued that news from the battlefield, primarily about casualties, shapes attitudes about a military operation. Others, however, view the use of military force in the same light as other policy areas, suggesting that the attitudes of partisan elites inform individual opinions. At the same time, a parallel debate has also emerged that explores the related question of whether individuals update their attitudes in response to either of these cues, or whether they only pay attention to news that confirms their existing beliefs.

Recent experimental work (e.g., Gelpi 2010; Berinsky 2007) has sought to tease out these competing hypotheses along both dimensions. We complement these studies by introducing what we believe to be an important characteristic of elite opinion regarding military operations that has so far been absent. In particular, we examine how the public responds when elite opinion, either in support or opposition to the conflict, cuts across partisan lines. Both parties - Democrats

¹⁵ I thank Timothy Ryan, with whom I collaborated on the design of the experiment and discussed the results. I use the pronoun “we” throughout because following my dissertation defense, he will come on board as a co-author of the paper and will contribute to any further revisions prior to sending it out for review and publication.

and Republicans – contain ‘hawks’ who view military power as a vital tool for preserving and protecting American interests overseas in a post-9/11 world and ‘doves’ who believe that the United States has been too quick to rely on force and doing so has had disastrous effects on America’s image and interests abroad. It is worthwhile, then, to examine how people might make sense of this information when formulating their own opinions. Do they take any cues at all from it? Do they respond differently when elite support for a conflict cross-cuts versus when both parties have prominent supporters and opponents of a particular conflict?

To understand how cross-cutting elite opinion influences support for the use of military force, we present an experimental survey regarding the war in Afghanistan on a national sample of the American public that manipulates whether elites appear divided, or united, and examine how support for the conflict responds. We find that news of American casualties does not influence overall attitudes, but elite opinions do. However, this only happens when the line between elite support and opposition cuts across standard partisan divisions, leading to a drop in support. Additionally, we find that despite this overall effect, individuals from both major political parties do not respond significantly to news of American casualties or elite opinion. Only independents, who lack discernable partisan attachments, respond directly to news of casualties with increased opposition. Also, these independents appear unmoved by the elite divisions that motivate the overall effect, but they withdraw their support when elites from both parties advocate further military action.

We also address a second issue of debate in existing work. Berinsky and Druckman (2007) argued that an influential study by Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (hereafter, GFR) (2005/2006) erred in treating belief in a conflict’s ultimate success as a determinant of one’s level of support for it. Instead, they argue that both are signs of latent partisan identification, and

that to properly address this possibility, it is important to for researchers to employ multiple indicators that might capture these two variables rather than one, as GFR do. In keeping with this suggestion, we directly measure support and success with a battery of complementary questions for each. In contrast to the concerns of Berinsky and Druckman (2007), we find that the two concepts – belief in success and support – are not reflective of the same underlying (partisan) predispositions.

We begin by briefly reviewing the state of knowledge regarding the formation of attitudes towards military operations.

Public Opinion and the Use of Force

Following Mueller's (1971, 1973) influential work linking American military casualties to public support for the Vietnam and Korean Wars, scholars began to reconsider the longstanding assumption that American opinions on the use of military force lacked any consistent grounding or structure. In the decades since, a debate has taken shape between those who believe that those opinions are informed primarily by news from the war theater, specifically news of American casualties, and those who maintain that the statements and views expressed by partisan elites regarding the conflict provide the basis for the public's attitudes. The former camp has argued that these casualties represent a cost that is then compared with the gains likely to come from continued fighting (Mueller 1971, 1973, 2005; Gartner and Segura 1998; Larson 2000; Gartner 2008), the importance of the mission (Jentleson 1992; Jentleson and Britton 1998), or the likelihood of success (Feaver and Gelpi 2004; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005/2006, 2009; Gelpi, Reifler, and Feaver 2007; Kull and Ramsay 2001). At the same time, others have provided further nuance to the casualty tolerance argument, arguing that it is not the cumulative count of

casualties that matter. Rather, opinions change if the casualties that one hears about are local (Althaus and Coe 2011; Gartner 2004; Gartner and Segura 2000) and recent (Althaus, Bramlett, and Gimpel 2012), as such deaths are likely to “provide highly salient signals about current and future costs” to impacted communities (Gartner and Segura 2008: 96).

In contrast, the latter school maintains that these arguments ignore the dominance of partisanship in all areas of politics, including foreign policy and war (Zaller and Feldman 1992; Zaller 1992; Bartels 2002; Berinsky and Druckman 2007; Berinsky 2007). Iyengar and Kinder (1987), Krosnick and Kinder (1990), Mendelberg (2001), and Druckman and Holmes (2004) all demonstrate that individual attitudes are primed by elites, and a number of other efforts have shown how narrative frames can shape these attitudes (Iyengar and Simon 1993; Allen, et. al. 1994; Hermann, Tetlock, and Visser 1999; Aday, Cluverius, and Livingston 2005; Boettcher and Cobb 2006; Berinsky and Kinder 2006).

This debate addresses the issue of what information, or cues, matter in the formation of attitudes regarding war: news of war dead or news from the political arena. But Gelpi (2010) recognized a second unsettled question: how does the content of the information shape the response to it? In other words, do individuals respond to new information – either about American casualties or elite opinion – with a change in attitude or do they reject it and maintain their existing beliefs? Known as “motivated processing,” the tendency to discount or reject cues that conflict with existing opinions in favor of those that provide confirmation (Lord, Ross, and Lepper 1979; Taber and Lodge 2006) has long been associated with partisan or party identification (Abramowitz 1978; Bartels 2002; Lenz 2006; Achen and Bartels 2006). Under this logic, individuals should rarely change their opinions when introduced to news about events or

elites, unless is to update their attitudes so that they match those of partisan figures with whom they identify.

As Gelpi (2010:90-91) notes, cues coming from both events and political elites abound within the contemporary political-media environment, and myriad experimental options exist for teasing out the conditions under which individuals might respond to either events or elites, or perhaps reject these cues altogether. In Gelpi's study and others like it (e.g., Berinsky 2007) partisan cues are present and reflect the assumption that Democrats and Republicans hold policy preferences and attitudes that are clearly distinct from one another. In reality, however, views on the use of military force and foreign policy more broadly frequently can cut across traditional partisan divisions, as both parties now contain their respective 'hawks' – those who view military power as a necessary and vital tool for ensuring America's security in a post 9/11 world – and 'doves' – those who believe that American has become overly-reliant on military capabilities, often with unintended negative consequences. For example, Senators John McCain and Rand Paul are both prominent Republicans, but they hold very different views regarding the role of the military, with the former being a strong advocate for intervention in many parts of the world and the latter frequently voicing restraint. On the Democratic side, members of the Obama administration wrangled over the proper response to the Syrian civil war, as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton argued that President Obama erred in his decision not to provide weapons and training to the moderate Syrian opposition, which placed her more in line with Senator McCain than her boss. Her position contrasts with that of another prominent Democrat, Elizabeth Warren, who drew eyebrows with her vote against a continuing resolution in Congress explicitly because it directed funding to those opposition forces (Vinik 2014).

Expectations

This discussion prompts a series of open questions concerning American casualties, elite opinion, and support for conflict. Under what conditions does news of American deaths affect opinion? When presented with such news and cross-cutting elite attitudes simultaneously, do those elite cues matter, and if so, how? And finally, do all individuals react to each of these cues in the same way, regardless of their partisan affiliations?

Concerning the effect of American casualties on attitudes about conflict, we anticipate most respondents will not respond to such news by altering their level of support, regardless of their political attachments.¹⁶ We do not believe that members of either political party will be moved by one report of unsettling news, particularly if it is unclear as to which party “owns” a particular conflict. As discussed below, this experiment concerns the war in Afghanistan, which has been prosecuted by Republican and Democratic administrations, and has been more or less supported by elites of both parties. However, we do expect independents to react negatively and withdraw their support upon hearing news of American deaths, as they are not bound to the attachments that can prevent partisans from receiving such news and updating their positions.

Our next set of expectations relate to the conditional effects of cross-cutting elite opinion. Here, it is perhaps a bit more difficult to develop *a priori* expectations, particularly when elites are divided. If elites of the same party who generally agree on a broader array of non-security issues do not agree about the proper course of action in a conflict and instead find themselves in agreement with some members of the other party, with both support and opposition cutting across partisan lines, we can imagine that partisans will struggle to connect whatever attachments they may hold to the confounding information before them. As such, they can react in one of two

¹⁶ While we detail the findings of other measures outlined below, the expectations we discuss here pertain only to support for conflict.

ways, either by reducing their support or ignoring this information and falling back on whatever prior beliefs they held about the conflict. We predict that partisan respondents will be more likely to simply ignore such cues. When elite co-partisans disagree, this sends an unclear signal to an individual of the same party which ultimately offers little concrete information about which way (i.e., support or oppose) they should react, and so they will resort to their prior, existing beliefs.

While partisans may be confused by cross-cutting elite divisions, we do not expect the same of pure independents. Dennis (1988) notes that independents come in a variety of forms, from those who believe parties no longer represent voters' interests or see no difference between parties to those who maintain independence so as to be able to make unbiased decisions. Regardless of which category they fall into, independents who learn that partisans are not getting along are likely to respond by thinking such a dynamic represents nothing new, and so we expect that they will not respond in any significant manner.

When elite support for conflict exists within and across both parties, arguments by Larson (1996, 2000), Berinsky (2007), Berinsky and Druckman (2007), and Gelpi (2010) suggest that overall public support should increase in response. In isolation, we agree that news that political elites are on the same page would lead people to respond by increasing their own support. However, when combined with news of American deaths, we anticipate a freezing effect, as those casualties will prevent the consensus that exists from producing a significant change in support among respondents in both parties. Instead, we suggest that any inclination to increase one's support is tempered by the reality that more individuals are likely to die as a consequence of the war continuing.

But we again hold different expectations of independents. As discussed, independents are likely to discount the messages of elites, but here, we expect that instead of simply rejecting or

ignoring consensus support among elites in response to news of Americans killed, these respondents will actually go a step farther and reduce their support. The expression of unflinching support for the conflict by partisan elites may arouse a sense of anger and frustration by those who already don't trust the parties to faithfully represent their interests, and as a result, they believe that continuing prosecution of the conflict should not be entrusted to those elites.

Research Design

To evaluate the validity of these claims, we conducted an experimental survey on a national sample of Americans regarding their attitudes toward the war in Afghanistan. The conflict in Afghanistan was chosen as the context for the experiment because it represents a “hard case” for testing the idea that people’s attitudes might change in response to single pieces of information from the conflict or political elites. The United States has been fighting in Afghanistan for over thirteen years, and as such, opinions have had ample opportunity to solidify. Also, and in contrast to the Iraq War, it is a conflict where partisan divisions among elites have been difficult to discern (as opposed to a case such as Iraq), as presidential administrations of both parties have maintained what amounts to essentially the same policy.¹⁷

The survey was carried out by Survey Sampling International (SSI). SSI maintains a diverse national panel of research subjects through targeted recruitment in various online communities, and our sample compared favorably with a U.S. Census benchmark in several demographic dimensions (see Supporting Information). The study was fielded from January 7 to January 13, 2015 and contained 603 subjects.

¹⁷ This contrasts with Gelpi’s (2010) experimental study regarding opinion toward the Iraq War, where, despite the early bipartisan support, it was clear that Republicans “owned” that conflict and Democrats opposed it. This led to strong partisan effects, which we test for here, but do not anticipate.

Experiment

Respondents began by completing a brief questionnaire that included measurements of political identification using the standard 7-point measure. They were then asked to read a recent news story which delivered a 2 X 2 manipulation of who was killed by a bomb (American military personnel or Afghan civilians) and whether American political leaders were united or divided in response. To manage the possibility that some of the participants, who are paid by SSI for each survey they complete, may have not given the story more than a passing glance in an effort to complete as many surveys as possible, we drop from the analysis those who spent less than ten seconds on the page of the survey that displayed it. We believe that ten seconds is an appropriate cut-off, as spending more than that amount of time on the page suggests that the subject engaged with the story beyond the headline or the first couple of lines. Sixty-five participants spent less than ten seconds, reducing our sample by just over ten percent to 538.

The title of the news story was “Killing of [American Troops/Afghan Civilians] Underlines [Unity/Divisions] Among U.S. Leaders.” As indicated here, the first treatment related to news of a casualty event from Afghanistan. In all cases, respondents read a story about a hidden bomb exploding in a crowded Kabul market on a Saturday morning (see Supporting Information). The first condition, which we use as the base condition, states that the attack killed eleven Afghan civilians who were shopping in the market. In the second condition, only American servicemembers – seven soldiers and four Marines – died in the bombing (*American*). Our intention in presenting news of casualties in both treatments was to hold constant the information that a bombing had taken place that resulted in people dying. In this respect, such a design is perhaps more conservative than one where no deaths are reported in the base treatment. Were we instead to randomize American deaths and no deaths at all, we would expect a much

larger effect than we do here, where respondents might still react to the deaths of Afghan civilians, although not at the level approaching the reaction to the American deaths. On the other hand, some may worry that presenting news of American casualties would not change attitudes at all. To ensure that it does, we conducted an experiment on a separate sample where subjects read similar news stories of Afghan and American casualties, but without partisan cues of any kind. We found a significant effect of the American casualty manipulation, and we present these results in the Supporting Information.

The second treatment concerns news of elite opinion. In the first condition, respondents read that political elites responded to the bombing and the deaths with a united front (*Unified*). It reads:

The attack stood out for the unified response it evoked from American political leaders, with almost all saying that the attack called for a renewed commitment to suppressing the insurgency in Afghanistan.

Responses were consistent across partisan lines. Secretary of State John Kerry, a Democrat, took a hard line, saying the United States “will never back down in the face of such evil.” Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat who some have encouraged to run for president in 2016, echoed this resolve, calling destroying the Taliban a “Number 1 priority.”

Republican politicians were of a similar mindset. Senator John McCain said that the United States “must accept our share of the responsibility to stop” terrorism. Senator Rand Paul, the Kentucky Republican considering a run at the presidency in 2016, also responded by saying that the United States has no choice but to destroy the Taliban militarily.

The second condition presents elite opinion in response to the marketplace bombing as fractured (*Divided*):

The attack stood out for the divided response it evoked from American political leaders, with some saying the attack calls for a renewed commitment to suppressing the insurgency in Afghanistan, and others arguing that it underscored the need for America to decrease its presence there.

Responses scrambled typical partisan lines. Secretary of State John Kerry, a Democrat, took a hard line, saying the United States “will never back down in the

face of such evil.” Jim Webb, a Democrat who is considering a presidential run in 2016, did not back down from his conviction that American foreign policy requires more “prudence” and “restraint.”

Republican politicians were divided, too. Senator John McCain said that the United States “must accept our share of responsibility to stop” terrorism. Senator Rand Paul, in contrast, called for a more “moderate” foreign policy “where we’re not always at war.”

These treatments introduce news of American casualties from Afghanistan, as well as elite reactions to those casualties. Respondents’ attitudes towards the conflict may be shaped by one or both of these factors, or by neither, instead being largely informed by existing attitudes that may be informed by partisan attachments or other prior beliefs. Next, we discuss the various attitudes we measured.

Measures

Following the treatment, respondents then read a series of questions intended to capture their attitudes about the conflict in Afghanistan. The primary dependent variable in the study is the public’s level of support for continuing American military efforts in Afghanistan. Mueller (1973) first recognized the difficulty in accurately measuring public support for war. In particular, he discovered that how questions were worded could play a large role in the types of responses given. To manage this, he and others (Burk 1999; Eichenberg 2005; Berinsky and Druckman 2007) have advocated the use of similarly worded questions. Therefore, rather than rely solely on one question, *Support* is a 0 to 1 scaled composite variable using the mean response by an individual to a series of five standard five-point questions.¹⁸ For example, in addition to asking respondents, “Do you support the use of U.S. military force in Afghanistan, or do you oppose it?” we also asked how much they agree or disagree with statements such as, “The U.S. should

¹⁸ The Cronbach’s alpha for the *support* battery = 0.89, suggesting high internal correlation among responses to these five questions.

immediately withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan.” (We report all question wordings in the Supporting Information.)

We also measure respondents’ belief in the likelihood of *success*, again with a scaled composite variable using three questions that provide various potential interpretations of what success might actually mean, and these are also included in the Supporting Information.¹⁹

Previous research has debated the relationship between support for a conflict and a belief in its ultimate success. Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005/2006, 2009) argue that expectations of success are a critical factor in determining support for a conflict, while Berinsky and Druckman (2007) suggest the two kinds of questions measure the same thing. In their view, support for a conflict and a belief in its success are both potentially driven by a third factor – the individual’s partisan predisposition (2007: 133). We adjudicate between these competing arguments below.

A number of studies have linked casualties to election outcomes for multiple branches of government (Carson et al. 2001; Gartner et al. 2004; Karol and Miguel 2007; Voeten and Brewer 2006). To get a sense of how new information about casualties and cross-cutting elite opinion might affect broader political evaluations, we include two additional dependent variables. We first wanted to examine general approval of how Barack Obama is handling his job as president (*Obama*). But since we were concerned that opinions about a president who has been in office for seven years might be too deeply ingrained in partisanship, we also asked about support for a congressional candidate (*candidate*) whose platform includes increased military involvement in Afghanistan.

Results

¹⁹ Here, the Cronbach’s alpha = 0.84, again suggesting high internal correlation among the responses to these three questions.

Before discussing the findings concerning our theoretical expectations from the experiment, we begin by addressing the relationship between *support* and *success*. While Berinsky and Druckman note that “[t]he core construct in any study of public opinion and war must be support for that war” (2007: 129), they maintain that one’s partisan identification likely influences both of these, and that success is an indicator of support rather than a cause, as Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler suggest (2005/2006) (134-135). Table 3.1 provides a matrix of the correlations between the different measures of these two variables in our sample. We can see that the *support* measures “hang together” quite well, with 0.5884 being the lowest correlation between any two of the five questions. The same is true for the three *success* questions, with the lowest correlation being 0.6075. On the other hand, the highest correlation between any *support* question and any *success* question is 0.4983. Taken together, we have evidence that these concepts are indeed distinct and that belief in a conflict’s likelihood of success is not an indicator of either latent support for the conflict or partisan attachments.

Table 3.1. Measures of Support and Success

Measure	Support 1	Support 2	Support 3	Support 4	Support 5	Success 1	Success 2	Success 3
Support 1	1.0000							
Support 2	0.6571	1.0000						
Support 3	0.5884	0.7929	1.0000					
Support 4	0.5943	0.7629	0.8060	1.0000				
Support 5	0.6086	0.6730	0.6256	0.6423	1.0000			
Success 1	0.4038	0.4276	0.3176	0.3415	0.4983	1.0000		
Success 2	0.2361	0.2868	0.1646	0.2023	0.3121	0.6573	1.0000	
Success 3	0.2271	0.3000	0.1826	0.2119	0.3347	0.6075	0.6695	1.0000

In moving to the effect of the experimental treatments, we first investigated the factors that contribute to support. The mean level of support across the sample for the Afghanistan conflict on the 0 to 1 scale was 0.51, suggesting that respondents were rather ambivalent overall.

Table 3.2 looks at the determinants of that support. As will be the case with all of the results presented, a positive coefficient indicates increasing opposition, while a negative coefficient suggests opposition decreases (i.e., support increases). The variable we want to highlight here is *Party ID*, which shows that support increases, or opposition decreases, as respondents increasingly identify with the Republican Party.²⁰

Table 3.2. Observational Determinants of Support for Afghanistan War

	<i>Support</i>
Follow Politics	-0.192*** (0.041)
Party ID	-0.178*** (0.035)
Race	
Black	0.014 (0.032)
Asian	-0.001 (0.051)
Other	-0.008 (0.045)
Education	
Diploma	0.001 (0.081)
Some College	-0.035 (0.08)
BA	-0.002 (0.081)
Grad Degree	-0.038 (0.084)
Age	-0.001* (0.001)
Constant	0.776*** (0.087)

²⁰ When broken down into partisan categories, the level of opposition among Democrats and independents was 0.55 and Republican support was 0.41. (Again, a higher number means increased opposition and lower support.) A t-test reveals that Democrats and Republicans are statistically distinct from each other in their levels of support, as $p=0.0005$.

N	536
R-squared	0.1076
<hr/>	
*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01	

The Effect of Casualties

To determine the effect of news of American casualties compared to Afghan deaths on respondents' attitudes regarding the conflict in Afghanistan, we estimated the following:

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 American + \varepsilon$$

Table 3.3 shows the effect on support for the conflict and beliefs about success. From the first three columns, we see that American deaths did not have a statistically significant impact on *support* across the sample overall or among those possessing partisan attachments (i.e., those who identified as having some attachment to the Democratic or Republican parties), as was predicted. This finding contrasts with the results of the study briefly discussed above where partisan cues are absent and news of American casualties do impact levels of support. This raises the possibility that the mere mention of partisan considerations freezes the effect of casualties, leading most respondents, or at least those who identify with one of the major political parties, to look to elsewhere for some direction on how to interpret news of American casualties *if other cues are available*. While not significant, it is worth noting that the coefficient concerning Democratic respondents is negative, suggesting that support increased among Democratic respondents who read news of American casualties.

Table 3.3. Effect of American Casualties on Attitudes towards Afghanistan War

<i>Effect among...</i>	<i>Support</i>				<i>Success</i>			
	All respondents	0.023 (0.021)				-0.005 (0.02)		
Republicans	0.023 (0.035)				-0.022 (0.033)			
Democrats	-0.025 (0.034)				-0.013 (0.034)			
Independents	0.087** (0.037)				0.024 (0.037)			
Constant	0.499*** (0.015)	0.394*** (0.025)	0.565*** (0.024)	0.051*** (0.025)	0.559*** (0.014)	0.591*** (0.023)	0.549*** (0.025)	0.054*** (0.025)
N	538	154	219	165	538	154	219	165
R-squared	0.0022	0.0028	0.0025	0.0338	0.0001	0.0030	0.0006	0.0026

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Pure independents in the sample, however, act differently. Regardless of their own motivations, or what elite treatment they received, these respondents do react to news of American deaths. Here, such casualties are associated with a statistically significant increase in opposition to the conflict in Afghanistan, which matches our prediction.

Moving to the second measure in the table, we see no evidence that American casualties significantly altered respondents' beliefs in the likelihood of *success*, regardless of their partisan identification or lack thereof. At first glance, the lack of an effect for both *support* and *success* would appear to corroborate Berinsky and Druckman's (2007) assertion that both are linked to partisan considerations, rather than American casualties. But if it partisan attachments drive perceptions of *success*, we might expect that the signs on the coefficients for the two parties would be in opposite directions, as they are with *support*. Instead, we see that, although the results lack conventional significance, respondents in both parties actually become more positive

about the prospects of success. This suggests that respondents, regardless of party, are unlikely to view one event in Afghanistan as diagnostic of the entire effort. Also, because pure independents' attitudes regarding success are not swayed by casualties either, we are given reason to believe that the ingredients of such opinions may extend beyond partisan attachments, as others have suggested (Abramowitz 1978; Bartels 2002; Lenz 2006; Achen and Bartels 2006), to broader beliefs about the efficacy of military force, specific knowledge regarding Afghanistan's history, terrain, or population, or any other number of factors. Of course, it might also be the case that the thirteen years of ongoing conflict may shape those opinions, as well.

Table 3.4. Effect of American Casualties on General Political Attitudes

<i>Effect among...</i>	<i>Obama</i>				<i>Candidate</i>			
	All respondents	0.013 (0.031)				0.021 (0.023)		
Republicans		0.02 (0.038)				0.023 (0.04)		
Democrats			-0.031 (0.041)				-0.027 (0.037)	
Independents				0.027 (0.051)				0.082** (0.041)
Constant	0.426*** (0.022)	0.138*** (0.027)	0.663*** (0.03)	0.4*** (0.025)	0.586*** (0.016)	0.584*** (0.02)	0.657*** (0.027)	0.592*** (0.027)
N	538	154	219	165	538	373	216	165
R-squared	0.0004	0.0018	0.0026	0.0017	0.0015	0.0000	0.0026	0.0241

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Table 3.4 shows the effect of news of American casualties on broader political considerations. In the first set of columns, we see that this news did not have any significant impact on respondents' approval of President Obama. Indeed, this is not surprising, as he has

been in office for seven years, and much like beliefs about *success*, news of a single casualty event should not move the meter of approval among all respondents all that much. When we move to the opinions regarding the Congressional *candidate* who supports increasing involvement in Afghanistan, we see results similar to those of *support*, as respondents overall and partisans do not alter their views of the candidate, while independents are increasingly likely to reduce their support. This is most likely due to the ability of independents to make judgments of political candidates based on policy positions without having to overcome any of their own preexisting political attachments. Finally, and consistent with the earlier finding regarding support for the conflict, approval of President Obama and support for the Congressional candidate experienced increases among Democrats who read news of American casualties, but again, the effect lacks conventional levels of statistical significance.

The Interactive Effects of Cross-Cutting Elite Opinion

To determine how attitudes depend on the configuration of cross-cutting elite opinion and the respondent's partisanship, we estimated an interactive model for partisans and independents:

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 American + \beta_2 Divided + \beta_3 American \times Divided + \varepsilon$$

Because interactive results are difficult to interpret, we calculate the marginal effects of these combinations and present these results below, while presenting the full models in the Supporting Information.

Table 3.5. Marginal Effect of American Deaths on Attitudes toward Afghanistan War

<i>Effect among...</i>	<i>Support</i>		<i>Success</i>	
	<i>Elites are...</i>			
	<i>United</i>	<i>Divided</i>	<i>United</i>	<i>Divided</i>
All respondents	-0.004 (0.03)	0.051* (0.03)	0.001 (0.029)	-0.011 (0.029)
Republicans	-0.037 (0.051)	0.077 (0.049)	-0.041 (0.048)	-0.005 (0.046)
Democrats	-0.066 (0.047)	0.017 (0.047)	-0.017 (0.049)	-0.009 (0.049)
Independents	0.117** (0.05)	0.056 (0.053)	0.063 (0.051)	-0.02 (0.054)

*p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<.01

Table 3.5 reports the marginal effect of the divided and unified elite treatments when respondents are exposed to news of American casualties. Among all respondents, we see a statistically significant increase in opposition when elite opinion is scrambled across conventional partisan lines, but no discernable effect when there is consensus among elites of all political stripes that the war must continue. However, when we look just at partisan identifiers, they do not appear to be significantly impacted by either elite configuration, as we anticipated.²¹ When elites are divided, the lack of significant change in support among Democrats and Republicans suggests our expectation that such confusion leads them to fall back on existing, perhaps, partisan, beliefs may be correct. Likewise, independents do not appear to be moved by cross-cutting divisions, either. The lack of a significant result here provides confirmation of our

²¹ This provides further evidence against the notion that *success* and *support* capture underlying partisan attachments. Democrats and Republicans have nearly the same reaction in terms of beliefs about success, regardless of the elite treatment, which is consistent with the main effect of the American casualty treatment on success.

belief that they would not be surprised by such a dynamic, and are thus less likely to change their level of support as a result.

When exposed to the unified elite treatment, partisan respondents again appear unmoved. While we cannot say for certain that this is due to a muting or freezing effect of casualties, it is certainly suggestive. This finding obtains despite the connections drawn from earlier work (Larson 1996, 2000; Berinsky 2007; Berinsky and Druckman 2007; and Gelpi 2010) between bipartisan elite consensus and public support. Independents, following our expectation, do react strongly upon reading news that partisan elites on both sides of the political aisle remain supportive of the conflict despite the deaths of American service personnel, as opposition increases significantly among this group.

Table 3.6. Marginal Effect of American Deaths on General Political Attitudes

<i>Effect among...</i>	<i>Obama</i>		<i>Candidate</i>	
	<i>Elites are...</i>			
	<i>United</i>	<i>Divided</i>	<i>United</i>	<i>Divided</i>
All respondents	0.003 (0.044)	0.024 (0.044)	0.002 (0.033)	0.041 (0.033)
Republicans	0.092* (0.055)	-0.044 (0.052)	0.000 (0.059)	0.043 (0.056)
Democrats	-0.089 (0.058)	0.028 (0.059)	-0.043 (0.052)	-0.013 (0.053)
Independents	0.019 (0.07)	0.038 (0.074)	0.077 (0.056)	0.092 (0.059)

*p<.1 **p<.05 ***p<.01

In Table 3.6, we see the marginal effects of the two elite conditions on respondents' views of President Obama and the unnamed Congressional candidate. Approval of President Obama

remains largely unchanged under the divided condition in the full sample, an unsurprising result when we again consider the fact that the treatment is just one news story from one policy area over the seven years of his administration. When we look at the effect on partisans, we see no significant effects either, although the directions of the two coefficients are somewhat surprising, as Republican opposition decreases while Democratic support declines. Independents do not shift their views of the president in any significant way, either, a result that is consistent with our expectations about support for the conflict.

When looking at the effect of the unified condition, we again observe the absence of any significant changes in opinion among all respondents. However, approval of the President declined at a statistically significant level among Republicans. This result is surprising, as we would expect that if all elites appear to be on board with the current policy, there would be no reason to ‘blame’ the president for the American deaths. At the same time, approval among Democrats increases when elites are unified, and while the result does not achieve conventional levels of significance, the p-value of 0.129 is certainly suggestive of a effect. This finding is less surprising, as Democratic partisans might interpret such consensus as a positive signal that the president’s war policy is the right one, which might lead them increase their support for him. Independents, once again, do not appear to alter their views when subjected to this treatment; their minds about the president appear to be made up.

With respect to the Congressional candidate, elite divisions do not have any significant effect on evaluations when looking at the entire sample or when restricted to partisans. Again, this muddled signal appears to be discarded by Republicans and Democrats alike, although one can note that the direction of the two parties’ reactions is different, although not a significant level. Independents, similarly, show no significant change in support of the candidate, but the

0.122 p-value on the positive coefficient suggests that the candidate's support for further involvement does lead to reduced approval.

Finally, we turn to the effect of the unified treatment on support for the candidate for Congress. Overall, unified elite support for maintaining operations in Afghanistan had no real measurable effect on the candidate who advocated for the same. When looking only at Republicans and Democrats, we also see that they were not swayed to increase their support for the candidate despite the elite signal that they, too, shared such a policy position. Non-partisan independents here act in a fashion similar to when they received the divided condition, with lowered support that is at a statistically insignificant, but certainly substantively suggestive level ($p=0.169$).

Discussion and Conclusion

How do Americans develop their attitudes towards war? The existing literature has suggested that individual beliefs are informed either by news about deaths from the conflict or by the attitudes of partisan elites. In this paper we presented an experiment where cues from both are present, but instead of presenting elites as divided by party, we portray them as split along a 'hawk' and 'dove' dimension that cuts across conventional boundaries. We find that news of casualties from Afghanistan only impacts support among nonpartisan independents, whose opposition to the conflict increases. Further, we find that elite responses to American deaths do, in fact, matter, but only in very limited circumstances. When supporters and dissenters fall along both sides of the partisan divide, the results suggest that members of the public tend to oppose the conflict, as well. If elites across the political spectrum are unified in support of the conflict, however, we see no significant evidence that support among the public also increases. Instead,

we find that only pure independents react to news of a unified and supportive elite class; and they react by reducing their own level of support for the conflict.

In addition to determining the effect on support for the Afghanistan War, we also explored the effect of casualties and cross-cutting elite opinion on attitudes about eventual *success*. Berinsky and Druckman (2007) maintained that both of these measures capture latent partisan attachments. Our results indicate that this is not the case, as Democrats and Republicans hold comparable (static) views of *success* when exposed to news of American casualties. Also, independents' attitudes about *success* are static as well, suggesting that factors other than partisan attitudes can inform beliefs about the likelihood of eventual victory.

To understand how these cues can play into broader political considerations, including potential decisions at the ballot box, we also examine their effect on opinions about President Obama and a candidate for Congress who advocated maintaining American involvement in Afghanistan. Here, attitudes tend to remain constant across the various treatments. In other words, Americans' views of the president are likely to be informed by many factors well beyond news of a single casualty event from Afghanistan, and voters are likely to look beyond this single issue when making a decision about candidates for office.²² Independents, however, divert from this trend, as they appear less willing to vote for the pro-war candidate, a result that is statistically significant when looking at the main effect of casualties and strongly suggestive when looking at the conditional effects of elite opinions.

These findings further unpack how attitudes about conflict develop among the electorate. The current political environment is highly partisan, and attitudes about any number of policies are frequently colored by attachments to party. Indeed, the Iraq War serves as once such example

²² The exception to this is the effect of the unified treatment on Republican attitudes towards President Obama, where approval declined.

where support and opposition were highly linked with party. However, the Afghanistan War demonstrates that attitudes can cut across partisan lines, as President Obama has maintained the policies of President Bush, despite minimal support for the war among Democratic voters and persistent Republican backing for ongoing involvement. While this study concerns the war in Afghanistan, it is not the only foreign policy or security issue where elite attitudes are scrambled, giving our analysis broader applicability. Ongoing elite debates about the proper course of action concerning the Syrian civil war and the Islamic State, efforts to contain Iran's nuclear program, and even the United States' détente with Cuba are all marked by dividing lines that are not readily apparent.

This research opens up additional questions for scholars. First, it is worth investigating the factors that produce cross-cutting fractures of elite opinion. Iraq and Afghanistan were both wars of occupation and insurgency, but only the latter experienced significant cross-cutting divisions. Similarly, Lyndon Johnson conducted the Vietnam War, but the focal point of opposition to the war was Senator J. William Fulbright, a fellow Democrat. By contrast, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, American participation in World War II saw limited organized opposition at the elite level. Identifying the conditions that lead to elite breakdown is potentially a first step in understanding why wars of occupation end sometimes end prior to the policy goals being achieved.

Additionally, this experiment represented a difficult test for both of the new information hypotheses because the war in Afghanistan has lasted for so long, which more than likely has allowed attitudes within the mass public to become reasonably fixed. But one can just as easily imagine an experimental design where the shoe is on the other foot. A hard test for the motivated processing hypothesis might involve a case where the conflict is new and opinions, both at the

elite and individual are still unsettled. Such would likely be the case with a potential operation against the Islamic State in Iraq or Syria. As noted, elite opinion in this area cuts across partisan lines, and with a limited amount of time upon which to form an opinion, one can imagine that casualties might be the only clear information with which individuals could form an opinion.

We conclude with a note about potential implications for our broader understanding of conflict outcomes and duration, and for policy. If casualties generally do not shape attitudes about a conflict (except among independents), advocates of an aggressive war policy may have a freer hand in maintaining it, which could lead to longer wars. However, if elites respond to those casualties differently and disagree over whether the conflict is prudent policy, and they frequently have electoral incentives to do so (see Schultz 2001), it appears that public support declines in response. In other words, these initial findings suggest that scrambled elite disagreements over the direction of war policy, which are likely given the institutional configuration of the American political system, may be responsible for the loss of support and eventual withdrawal of forces, rather than the casualties themselves. Given this, policymakers and war planners who are concerned about maintaining support for a war until the policy goals motivating it are achieved will perhaps want to consider how to proceed in light of what may be gradual but inevitable opposition.

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Supporting Information for Chapter 3

Following the Leaders?:

War Support When Elites are United and Divided

1. Sample Characteristics

Table 3.7. Sample Characteristics of Survey Sample

	SSI Sample	Census (2013)
White	74.6%	77.7%
Black	13.3	13.2
Asian	5.1	5.3
Other	7.0	3.8
No Diploma	1.5%	12.6%
HS Diploma	24.7	29.5
Some College	32.0	28.9
BA	29.0	18.7
Grad degree	12.8	10.2
Male	48.9%	49.2%
Female	51.1	50.8
20-29	20.7%	18.9%
30-39	16.9	17.4
40-49	17.1	18.7
50-59	18.1	18.9
60+	24.7	26.1

Killing of American Troops Underlines Unity Among U.S. Leaders

KABUL, Afghanistan – A bomb hidden in a rickshaw exploded Saturday morning, killing eleven American troops. By afternoon, the Taliban had claimed responsibility for the attack, citing the continued presence of foreign troops on Afghan soil as the motivation.

The attack stood out for the unified response it evoked from American political leaders, with almost all saying that the attack called for a renewed commitment to suppressing the insurgency in Afghanistan.

Responses were consistent across partisan lines. Secretary of State John Kerry, a Democrat, took a hard line, saying the United States “will never back down in the face of such evil.” Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat who some have encouraged to run for president in 2016, echoed this resolve, calling destroying the Taliban a “Number 1 priority.”

Republican politicians were of a similar mindset. Senator John McCain said that the United States “must accept our share of the responsibility to stop” terrorism. Senator Rand Paul, the Kentucky Republican considering a run at the presidency in 2016, also responded by saying that the United States has no choice but to destroy the Taliban militarily.

The eleven individuals killed were all American servicemembers—seven from the Army, the rest Marines—who were shopping in a local bazaar. Coalition troops from Germany, Bulgaria, and Romania were also in the bazaar when the bomb exploded, as were a number of Afghan civilians. However, given where the bomb happened to be positioned, only the Americans were killed.

Killing of American Troops Underlines Divisions Among U.S. Leaders

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Responses scrambled typical partisan lines. Secretary of State John Kerry, a Democrat, took a hard line, saying the United States “will never back down in the face of such evil.” Jim Webb, a Democrat who is considering a presidential run in 2016, did not back down from his conviction that American foreign policy requires more “prudence” and “restraint.”

Republican politicians were divided, too. Senator John McCain said that the United States “must accept our share of the responsibility to stop” terrorism. Senator Rand Paul, in contrast, called for a more “moderate” foreign policy “where we’re not always at war.”

The eleven individuals killed were all American servicemembers—seven from the Army, the rest Marines—who were shopping in a local bazaar. Coalition troops from Germany, Bulgaria, and Romania were also in the bazaar when the bomb exploded, as were a number of Afghan civilians. However, given where the bomb happened to be positioned, only the Americans were killed.

Killing of Afghan Civilians Underlines Unity Among U.S. Leaders

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3. Measures of Support

Do you support the use of U.S. military force in Afghanistan, or do you oppose it?
[Strongly oppose, Oppose, Neither favor nor oppose, Favor, Strongly Favor]

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

The U.S. is making a mistake by keeping troops in Afghanistan.
[Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]

The U.S. should immediately withdraw all of its troops from Afghanistan.
[Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]

Keeping U.S. troops in Afghanistan does more harm than good.
[Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]

The war in Afghanistan is worth fighting.
[Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]

4. Measures of Success

Which statement comes closest to your views?
[Ultimately, the US is [very/somewhat/not very/not at all] likely to succeed in Afghanistan.]

Under its current approach, how likely is the United States to achieve each of the following objectives?

Thwart insurgent activities in Afghanistan.
[Almost certain, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely]

Install a stable democratic government in Afghanistan.
[Almost certain, Very likely, Somewhat likely, Not very likely, Not at all likely]

5. Second Experiment

To address potential concerns that news of American casualties might not have an effect on support for conflict, we conducted a second experiment that still varies Afghan and American casualties, but does not include or manipulate elite opinion. Instead, it manipulates the vividness of the description of the bombing in the market. It also included a control condition that detailed an unrelated news story that described the use of sonar to locate a steamship that sank in San Francisco Bay in 1888. As the results here show, the American casualty treatment (*American*) had a highly statistically significant effect on support for the Afghanistan conflict.

Table 3.8. Effect of American Casualties on War Support, Second Experiment

	<i>Support</i>
American	0.15*** (0.055)
Constant	1.104*** (0.036)
N	1120
R-squared	0.0065

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

6. Marginal Effects Models

Table 3.9. Marginal Effect of Divided to Unified Elite Condition on War Support

	<u>All Respondents</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Independents</u>
American	0.051* (0.030)	0.077 (0.049)	0.017 (0.047)	0.056 (0.053)
Unified	0.008 (0.030)	0.044 (0.050)	-0.029 (0.048)	0.002 (0.050)
American × Unified	-0.056 (0.042)	-0.114 (0.071)	-0.082 (0.067)	0.061 (0.073)
Constant	0.495*** (0.021)	0.374*** (0.034)	0.580*** (0.034)	0.511*** (0.037)
N	538	154	219	165
R-squared	0.007	0.021	0.031	0.042

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Table 3.10. Marginal Effect of Divided to Unified Elite Condition on Beliefs of Success

	<i>All Respondents</i>	<i>Republicans</i>	<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Independents</i>
American	-0.011 (0.029)	-0.005 (0.046)	-0.009 (0.049)	-0.020 (0.054)
Unified	-0.032 (0.028)	-0.010 (0.047)	-0.030 (0.050)	-0.047 (0.050)
American × Unified	0.012 (0.040)	-0.036 (0.066)	-0.008 (0.069)	0.083 (0.074)
Constant	0.575*** (0.020)	0.596*** (0.032)	0.564*** (0.035)	0.569*** (0.037)
N	538	154	219	165
R-squared	0.003	0.010	0.005	0.011

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Table 3.11. Marginal Effect of Divided to Unified Elite Condition on Obama Approval

	<i>All Respondents</i>	<i>Republicans</i>	<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Independents</i>
American	0.024 (0.044)	-0.044 (0.052)	0.028 (0.059)	0.038 (0.074)
Unified	0.022 (0.043)	-0.075 (0.053)	0.058 (0.060)	0.034 (0.069)
American × Unified	-0.021 (0.062)	0.136* (0.076)	-0.117 (0.083)	-0.018 (0.102)
Constant	0.414*** (0.031)	0.173*** (0.036)	0.635*** (0.042)	0.381*** (0.051)
N	538	154	219	165
R-squared	0.001	0.023	0.012	0.003

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Table 3.12. Marginal Effect of Divided to Unified Elite Condition on Candidate Approval

	<i>All Respondents</i>	<i>Republicans</i>	<i>Democrats</i>	<i>Independents</i>
American	0.041 (0.033)	0.043 (0.056)	-0.013 (0.053)	0.092 (0.059)
Unified	0.021 (0.033)	0.024 (0.057)	-0.036 (0.054)	0.064 (0.055)
American × Unified	-0.039 (0.047)	-0.043 (0.081)	-0.030 (0.074)	-0.015 (0.082)
Constant	0.576*** (0.024)	0.476*** (0.039)	0.675*** (0.039)	0.556*** (0.041)
N	534	153	216	165
R-squared	0.003	0.004	0.012	0.036

*p<.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Chapter 4

Patterns of Selective and Indiscriminate Violence against Civilians in Iraq

Introduction

On May 24, 2007, *The Washington Post* ran a front-page story, “Morgue Data Show Increase in Sectarian Killings in Iraq.” The story reports that during the first three weeks of May, 321 unidentified corpses, many showing signs of torture, had been discovered across Baghdad. It was expected that at that rate, May’s total would more than double the 182 bodies discovered in April. This increase came fourteen weeks into the new security plan that would come to be known as “The Surge,” which saw the insertion of additional troops into the country and widespread implementation of the “clear, hold, and build” strategy defined by substantial public goods provision and a more visible troop presence. In early March, just a month into the new plan, American officials were claiming progress in the effort to reduce these types of killings, as the State Department’s Iraq coordinator stated that such attacks were “down over the past 60 days to the lowest level since early spring of last year. And that’s a good thing.” But just as these execution-style killings were once again on the increase, mass attacks were increasing in frequency as well. Specifically, in the three months prior to The Surge, readers learn that 821 people were killed in eleven mass bombings (e.g., suicide car bombings), and that in the three months after, at least 1,098 had been killed at least twenty such attacks.

The violence described takes two forms. The primary focus is on the bodies found throughout Baghdad that were brought to the city's morgues. The victims of selective violence, these individuals were presumably tortured and killed by those who believed their loyalties were on the other side of the sectarian divide. The attacks that killed large numbers of people in marketplaces and other public spaces, on the other hand, reflect an indiscriminate approach, where those who are killed – and their individual loyalties – are unlikely to be known to the perpetrator. Scholars have devoted significant effort to identifying the conditions that lead violent actors to use these two different forms of violence. They are both efforts to control the population and prevent defections to the other side of the conflict. But at the same time, they have different consequences. Violent actors would prefer to use selective violence, as it carries a reduced risk of alienating the larger population that they hope to control since it allows for defectors to be punished but without the attenuating breakdowns in social order that can accompany large scale violent attacks.

Even though a violent actor seeking to exert lasting, meaningful control would prefer to use selective violence, the ability to do so is frequently hampered by a thorny identification problem. It is simply quite difficult to sort the friend from the enemy. In these contexts, the ability to identify those who (want to) defect and give their support to the opposing side depends heavily on the willingness of other individuals within the community to provide intelligence regarding the identities of those defectors. Existing theory argues that an individual's willingness to collaborate with a particular side is likely to increase as that side's control over an area increases, which led Kalyvas (2006) to develop a model of control and collaboration that allows scholars to predict the type of violence that is likely to be observed in a given area based on an actor's degree of control within it. Where an actor holds total control, the model predicts limited

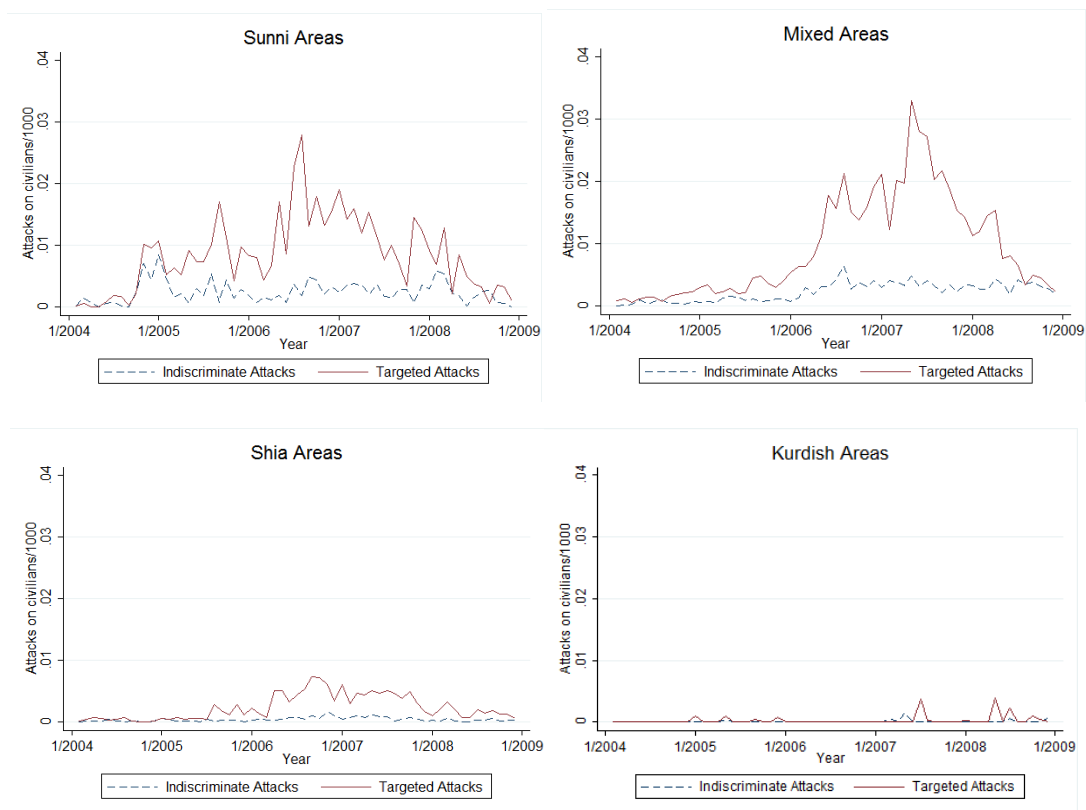
violence of any kind, while in areas of incomplete control, we would expect the dominant actor to primarily rely on selective violence. Finally, in areas where neither side can claim control, the model predicts little violence of any kind.

This paper brings the matter of selective and indiscriminate violence against civilians to the case of the Iraq War. Existing discussions about the Iraq War have tended to do one of three things: treat all violence as a monolithic phenomenon and cast all attacks on counterinsurgents and civilians into a single bucket (Biddle, Friedman and Shapiro 2012), examine the violence experienced by civilians only when it impacts insurgent-incumbent violence (Condra and Shapiro 2012; Shaver and Shapiro 2015), or ignore it altogether (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011; Berman et al 2013). However, understanding the dynamics of civilian violence allows us to move beyond these efforts which inform and improve counterinsurgency policy to a much more broad discussion of how social and political order re-emerged in Iraq. In doing so, and as the ongoing instability in that country would suggest is necessary, it forces us to (re)consider what victory looks like within the context of wars of occupation. In other words, in beginning to look at the disorder experienced by civilians in these conflicts, we must relax the assumption that victory can be defined by nothing more than stopping violence targeting an incumbent force. As will be discussed, Iraq suffered from numerous conflicts beyond that which involved the occupation, and it is perhaps a fault with both existing academic research and policy thinking that in addressing that source or pattern of violence, everything else will simply follow suit.

After the initial invasion and removal of Saddam Hussein from power by American forces in 2003, the country experienced at least seven violent conflicts. In addition to the Sunni insurgency fighting the United States, there was the sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shia, Shia militias combating the United States, the conflict between rival Shia militias, the

intra-sectarian strife between Sunni tribes and insurgents known as the Anbar Awakening, the conflict between Arabs and Kurds in the northern part of the country, and violence between criminal gangs and rogue militias.²³ These produced the patterns of violence depicted in Figure 4.1.²⁴

Figure 4.1. Rates of Indiscriminate and Targeted Violence per Month in Iraq (2004-2008)



These patterns show variation not just across the different regions, but also within them over time. We can see that civilians living in the Sunni and mixed areas experienced the most

²³ Kalyvas and Kocher cite all of these (2007:186) except for the US-Shia conflict and the Anbar Awakening, which grew large and noticeable after that article's publication.

²⁴ A district is considered to be dominated by one of the three primary ethnic groups if an ethnically-aligned political party gathered over 60% of the vote share at the governorate level in the 2005 elections and no other ethnic group's party or set of parties garnered over 10% of the vote.

violence. In some respects, this might not be surprising, as the mixed areas were where Sunni and Shia militias engaged in their sectarian conflict, while the insurgency dedicated to expelling American forces was concentrated in the Sunni areas. Conversely, we see that Kurdish areas remained relatively calm throughout, and Shia areas experienced slightly more violence, but not anywhere near that which was recorded in the Sunni or mixed areas.²⁵ Importantly, we also see that the Sunni areas experienced large-scale violence much sooner than the other areas.

As the *Post* article suggests, the relevant political actors sought to exert control over the territory at different times. The goal of this chapter is to develop some sense of the relationship, both theoretically and empirically, between the actions of American and Iraqi actors and the patterns of violence shown above. Did The Surge, which in some respects acted as an exogenous shock to the conflict environment, reduce selective violence in the regions where it was put into effect? What effect, if any, did its constituent parts of increased troop levels and public goods provision, have on patterns of violence experienced by civilians, and what inferences can we draw from those relationships about the mechanism of civilian collaboration first articulated by Kalyvas (2006)?

While the answers to these questions might provide some clarity for policy questions in America, domestic actors and the decisions they made certainly shaped – and responded to – these patterns, as well, and untangling such dynamics will also contribute to our collective understanding of civil wars. I will focus here on two sets of such actors and steps they took to reclaim or maintain control in certain portions of the country: the decisions by Sunni tribal leaders to switch allegiances away from the insurgency and to the side of the American occupation in 2006-2007 and the August 2007 decision by Shiite militia leader Muqtada al Sadr

²⁵ It is important to note that the violence included in this analysis does not include any incidents which involved American or coalition forces. Rather, it only contains that in which civilians were targeted by local actors, although the identities of those local actors are unknown.

to call a ceasefire in the conflicts with both the Sunni population and American forces. While we can draw few meaningful conclusions from the regional analyses due to the problems associated with some very small sample sizes, the data at the nationwide level suggest that increasing American troop density, but not increased development investments or the combination of the two, is associated with a significant decline in targeted violence against civilians. At the same time, the decision by the Sunni tribes to turn against the insurgency produced a significant decline in both targeted and indiscriminate violence and al Sadr's ceasefire led to a decline in targeted violence.

The chapter proceeds as follows. I first provide a brief review of Kalyvas's original control and collaboration model, as well as other existing arguments seeking to explain patterns of civilian violence. I then return to each of the four regions and provide a series of arguments regarding the relationship between the actions of American and Iraqi actors and the patterns of violence within them.²⁶ Next, I discuss the modeling approach to test the arguments. Fourth, I present and discuss the results from the statistical analysis. The final section concludes with broader implications for our understanding of this important but still understudied class of conflict.

Violence against Civilians

In Kalyvas' original model, a conflict space is defined as a "regime of fragmented sovereignty" (2006:173) that exists across five different zones. Zones 1 and 5 are the areas of total control by the incumbent and the challenger, respectively. In these zones, the controlling actor should not

²⁶ While each actor operated different regions, I introduce it only once with a full description. For the subsequent regions where the actor was present, I discuss the violence in that region and present the hypotheses, but I do not repeat the full theoretical account behind them. For example, the Sons of Iraq receive a full treatment in the Sunni region discussion, but in the mixed regions, where the SOI were also present, I briefly describe how they were present and, unless specifically stated otherwise, offer the same hypotheses.

have to resort to violence, either selective or indiscriminate, to punish defections, as they are expected to be nearly non-existent. In Zones 2 and 4, where those same actors hold control, albeit more fragmented than in 1 and 5, the theory predicts that they will rely on selective violence, as individuals are incentivized to denounce (i.e., provide incumbents with information regarding defections). In Zone 3, neither side holds control and so there should be no denunciations, and thus, no selective violence. With respect to indiscriminate violence, the theory predicts that both political actors will want to avoid alienating the population, and so there should be limited instances of it in Zone 3 as well. In Zones 2 and 4, we would expect the rival actor to use indiscriminate violence in these areas, based on the fact that they are operating with limited information in those areas. Should rival actors attempt to employ any attacks in the zones under total control of the other, the theory predicts that such violence would be indiscriminate for the same reason, as they are operating in territory where very few individuals, if any, would be willing to assist them.

The model's first test beyond the original case of the Greek Civil War was on patterns of violence in the Vietnam War (Kalyvas and Kocher 2009), and it provided further evidence of its validity, as the Vietcong were shown to employ selective violence in areas it had primary, but not dominant control. Conversely, South Vietnamese and US forces were found to rely on indiscriminate violence in those areas under Vietcong dominance. While still confirming the use of selective violence in areas under a group's control, Vargas's (2009) analysis of violence in a Colombian town revealed some anomalies that did not fit the theory, as paramilitary groups also used selective violence in areas under rebel control, and vice versa. Additionally, rebels were also able to use selective violence in zones of relative parity. To explain these surprising findings, Vargas suggests that rebels used methods other than murder (e.g., kidnappings, theft,

etc.) to foster compliance and that the paramilitaries relied on defectors, rather than civilians for intelligence, which allowed them to avoid the need to resort to indiscriminate killing of civilians. Other research has suggested that control does not predict the type of violence an actor employs, but rather *shifts* in control force actors to use different strategies in an effort to regain or maintain control that appears to be slipping away (Ziemke 2008). Relatedly, others have attributed civilian violence to competition among violent groups, as Metelis (2008) argues that the emergence of a rival faction can lead an actor to resort to increasingly coercive methods in areas it had previously controlled without competition. Similarly, Hultman (2008) and Eck and Hultman (2007) suggest that if control begins to slip away, actors may resort to widespread indiscriminate violence to demonstrate the inability of the competing actor to effectively provide security. This has been found to be particularly relevant in the cases where democracies are the incumbents, as the population can hold it accountable for such security failures (Hultman 2012). Along these lines, others have suggested that certain structural constraints shape the patterns of violence that occurs. For example, Salehyan, Siroky, and Reed (2014) show that rebels who are sponsored by a democratic external power are limited in their ability to use indiscriminate violence due to the discomfort with such operations within the sponsor's electorate. Another constraint that might also give rise to particular patterns of violence is the availability of resources needed by the competing groups. Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) and Weinstein (2007) suggest that groups who have access to substantial resources not held by the population will be less likely to employ widespread indiscriminate violence, while Wood, Kathman, and Gent (2012) link the concept of resources to shifts in the balance of power in the conflict by suggesting that as an actor loses ground, its access to resources becomes limited, which in turn, forces it to resort to more widespread civilian violence.

These efforts suggest a common theme consistent with Kalyvas's basic model: as actors competing for power find it slipping away in the course of the conflict, they are likely to respond by increasingly relying on the indiscriminate application of violence against civilians as the willingness of those civilians to provide information to them declines. But, as Bhavnani, Miodownik, and Choi point out, such studies "stop short of explicitly examining how the number of political actors and asymmetric capabilities affect the dynamics of defection and denunciation" (2011:138). To address this gap, they develop an agent-based model where three political actors of varying capabilities are competing for the support (and assistance) of the civilian population. Using data from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they test the model's predictions, finding that an actor with larger capabilities is able to employ selective violence in areas under incomplete control by the weaker actors because "of its greater access to local information (vision) and killing capacity" (Bhavnani, Miodownik, and Choi 2011:143). At the same time, such an actor does not have to rely on selective violence in areas under its own control because civilians in such areas lack any incentives to defect to the weaker side, again due to its strong information-gathering and killing capacities.

Bhavnani, Miodownik, and Choi (2011) follow Kalyvas (2006) and break Israel and the Palestinian territories into five zones based on political boundaries, where land inside the Green Line falls under complete Israeli control, occupied territory where Israel provides security and administration is under incomplete Israeli control, and zones of parity are where Israel provides security and Palestinians provide civic administration. On the other side, areas where Palestinians have weak security control and Israel controls the flow of goods and people were designated as areas of incomplete Palestinian control, and all of Gaza was coded as being under complete Palestinian control.

While these decisions may make some sense, Kalyvas argues that if “a rival actor can effectively muster superior military resources..., geography will tend to trump popular preferences in producing control” (2006:132). Because Israel has limited the ability of Palestinians to develop their own autonomous security force and can quickly fill a security vacuum if it so chooses, one has to wonder if it is perhaps more accurate to suggest that while Palestinians hold *de jure* control over the West Bank and Gaza, *de facto* control rests with Israel. Similar problems exist in the Iraq case, as well, and in the next section, I suggest an alternative way of categorizing territory in Iraq that still permits us to identify the relationship between the political actors and the different types of violence that occurred.

Counterinsurgency, Local Actors, & Selective and Indiscriminate Civilian Violence in Iraq

In this section, I build off existing insights in an effort to explain the relationship between certain actions by various political actors and the patterns of violence that were observed in Iraq. One of the first tasks in explaining such dynamics across the different regions of Iraq is to properly identify those regions. As discussed, designating zones of control along the lines of previous research is difficult to do and requires some arbitrary decisions that might not accurately capture what it means to exert control.

Following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, security responsibility was officially handled at the provincial level by the United States and its allies before being turned over to Iraqi authorities when they had met certain benchmarks in training and effectiveness. However, classifying the whole country as being under American control at the outset would be problematic for several reasons. First, it would leave no zones under any control of the United States’ opponents. Second, it would be difficult to credibly claim that areas such as Sadr City or

all of Anbar province were under United States control throughout the conflict. Consider, for example, the city of Fallujah, which was in Anbar province but was under *de facto* insurgent control until concentrated efforts by American forces to take the city took place in 2004. Third, by and large, the occupation did not ever rely on indiscriminate violence such as the bombings of civilians in order to gain compliance. To be sure, coalition forces sometimes targeted civilians, but those incidents typically looked more like arrest and detention or the destruction of property. Finally, making such designations would prioritize the conflict between the American occupation and those set on expelling it over all the other conflicts that were taking place.

In an effort to avoid these issues, I follow Berman, Shapiro, and Felter (2011) and classify Iraq's regions according to their ethnic composition: Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish. This approach makes sense, as I am not so much interested in explaining the relationship between control and violence, but rather the effect of a particular strategic or operational decision on violence in a district, regardless of which actor controlled it according to some arbitrary coding decision. Importantly, this approach also allows us to see how the deployment of those strategies and operations varied across different ethno-sectarian communities and understand the extent to which those decisions may have been driven by existing violence.

What did the American security strategies and operations look like? Prior to the January 2007 surge, they were characterized by “force protection via mounted patrols; deployment in large, fortified bases, and operations in large formations without sustained informal contact with the population” (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012:22). Such a mechanized force structure, according to Lyall and Wilson, was “built for direct battle” and came to prominence as a result of industrialization and World War I, when a “new ‘modern’ system of military organization, one premised on the substitution of machines for soldiers to increase mobility and survivability on

contemporary battlefields” (2009:68) took hold.²⁷ From 2004 to 2007, George Casey served as the Commanding General of Coalition forces, and in addition to maintaining this force structure where American forces played a limited role, he focused on developing Iraqi force capacity (Biddle, Friedman and Shapiro 2012).

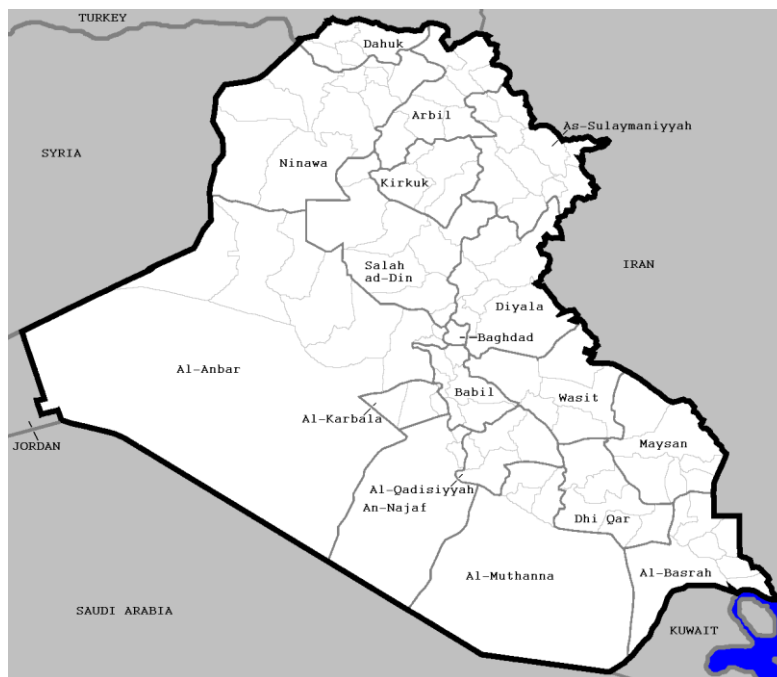
As the entrenched insurgency began to frustrate military commanders, politicians, and the American public, pressure mounted for President Bush to withdraw American forces in late 2006. However, in January of 2007, he ordered a temporary but substantial increase in troops and a change in strategy. The Surge was the label applied to both the deployment of five additional brigades (20,000-30,000 troops) into the country and the broad implementation of a new strategy articulated in Field Manual 3-24, which, in contrast to what was in place previously, places increased emphasis “on influencing ‘human factors,’ for example, the population’s tolerance for insurgent activities, by combining benign measures such as economic reconstruction with carefully targeted strikes against violent actors” (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011:768). In contrast to that which was in place during the previous period, such a strategy was characterized by smaller bases integrated into the surrounding community and dismounted patrols, as well as a substantial number of public goods projects intended to create goodwill and improve the local economy, which would then lead the civilian beneficiaries of these developments to share intelligence regarding the identities of insurgent actors. It is important to keep in mind here, though, that while this strategy would have the immediate goal of providing social order, its ultimate purpose was to eliminate the attacks that targeted counterinsurgents. Indeed, Berman, Shapiro, and Felter acknowledge that the provision of services to the community is meant not to

²⁷ It should be noted that not all who comment on such issues view the military’s structure in such rigid terms. For example, Gentile (2009: 5) emphasizes that the Army has been highly flexible, with “strategic shifts in terms of the threats and enemies that the United States has faced. With each of these shifts, came a different approach, or way, to fighting wars or preparing for them in peacetime.”

maximize its welfare but simply to engender support for a “government whose first priority is repressing violence” (2011:782), such as “an ally or occupying power” (2011:777).

This transition in strategy was intended to allow American forces to overcome the identification problem discussed above. By abandoning the relative security of large bases, establishing permanently-manned posts throughout the cities and towns of Iraq, and providing security and goods and services to the previously skeptical population, so the thinking went, individual citizens would gradually come to trust American forces and provide them with the information needed to identify and neutralize insurgent actors. As I progress through the different ethnic regions of Iraq, I will discuss how this new approach, as well as the pre-2007 strategy, may or may not have shaped the patterns of violence that occurred within each, as well as the potential role of local actors.

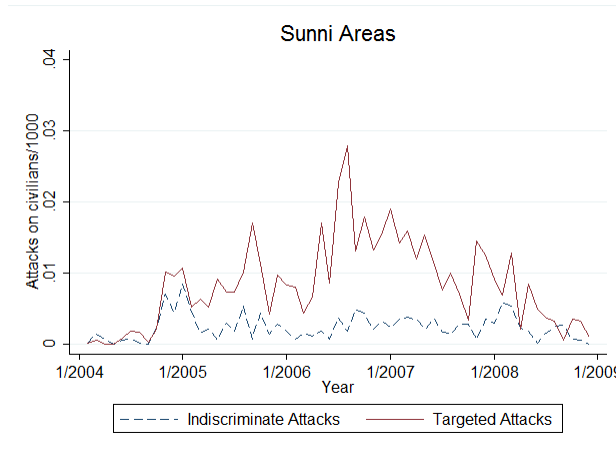
Figure 4.2. The Provinces of Iraq



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Districts_of_Iraq

Sunni Areas

Figure 4.3. Indiscriminate and Targeted Violence per Month in Sunni Territory (2004-2008)



Let us begin the discussion with the Sunni areas defined primarily by the nationalist insurgency against the American occupation in the pre-Surge period. The Sunni dominated districts were in al Anbar province in the west and Salah al Din province in the center, extending from just north of Baghdad to the Kurdish regions of Kirkuk and Erbil (See Figure 4.2). Figure 4.3 shows that rates of indiscriminate and targeted attacks varied by time. While indiscriminate attacks remained at a comparatively low constant level throughout the period, selective violence appears to slightly increase up until mid-2006, when it increases dramatically. From this point, it remains elevated before a temporary drop in late 2007 and an eventual drop off again in 2008. To what extent did these patterns depend on particular actions of American and Iraqi actors? Keeping in mind the shift in American strategy in January 2007, I suggest that it is important to split the data into pre- and post-Surge components.²⁸

²⁸ Each region's discussion will be split at this same period.

Table 4.1. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Sunni-Dominated Areas

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
	Overall				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	140	0.014	0.03	0	0.16
Targeted Attacks/1,000	140	0.05	0.08	0	0.52
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	140	31.51	70.87	0	552.81
Avg. Battalion per Capita	140	0.01	0.01	0	0.06
	2004-2006				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	84	0.01	0.03	0	0.16
Targeted Attacks/1,000	84	0.05	0.09	0	0.52
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	84	33.71	88.23	0	552.81
Avg. Battalion per Capita	84	0.012	0.013	0	0.06
	2007-2008				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	56	0.014	0.017	0	0.07
Targeted Attacks/1,000	56	0.05	0.08	0	0.43
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	56	28.22	30.48	1.67	130.21
Avg. Battalion per Capita	56	0.008	0.009	0	0.03

Table 4.1 provides summary statistics with respect to both the levels of violence and two measures intended to capture the presence of American military forces. After breaking up these into pre- and post-Surge periods and keeping in mind that aggregate summaries like this do not capture trends within a period of time, we see that violence of both kinds decreased marginally from one period to the next. But interestingly, we also see that the indicators of American forces also decreased. This suggests that if declines in violence were to be attributed to the Surge, it would be due to a change in the behavior and operational approach (i.e., moving away from large bases to a more community-based presence), not an increase in numbers, either in terms of the

total number of troops or the amount of money dedicated to fostering goodwill among the population.

Sunni Areas (2004 – 2006)

Starting with the pre-Surge environment, I suggest that ethnic ties, more than security operations by the Americans, drove the information-sharing behavior of the Sunni population.²⁹ In other words, the civilian population had little ability or motivation to work with American forces and instead provided co-ethnic Sunni insurgents with information about possible defectors, who were then targeted for selective violence.³⁰ This is due to a couple of reasons. First, by and large, the American forces were not going to resort to the killing of civilians to overcome their identification problem. Indeed, there is a good deal of empirical evidence (Hultman 2012; Eck and Hultman 2007; Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004) that democracies are far less likely to engage in mass killings during armed conflicts for any number of reasons including norms (Harff 2003) or the costs of doing so (Li 2005).

Second, the willingness to collaborate with a political actor requires an accompanying belief by the collaborating individual that he or she will be protected from future threats, but there was no sense that the American occupation was going to be permanent. Indeed, Kalyvas states that “civilians would rather side with (expected) winner than the loser” (2006:126-27), but during this period, the outcome was very much up in the air, as the insurgency was growing rapidly and American political leaders were making it clear that they had no intention of remaining as an indefinite occupying power. Further, the posture taken by American forces,

²⁹ Recall that any violence against civilians that might have been perpetrated by Americans is not included in the data, so we can assume that the attacks picked up in the data likely were committed by the insurgents.

³⁰ Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012:22-23) note that while this was dominant force posture in Iraq, some local commanders in these Sunni areas had experimented with Surge-like approaches during this earlier period.

where they were primarily going out on mounted patrols only to then return to base, did not allow for any meaningful, trusting relationships between those forces and the population to develop. This echoes Kalyvas's reference to the unwillingness of German sympathizers in occupied Ukraine to collaborate because "infrequent German patrols were simply not credible protection, and... some villages had yet to see any German troops at all (T. Anderson 1995)" (2006:124-25).

If the population was unwilling to provide information to the United States in its effort to defeat the insurgency, what does that mean for patterns of violence during this period? If we consider the opposite, that the population did respond to the American presence, we would expect that the insurgency would increasingly resort to indiscriminate violence, as it loses the support of the population and the accompanying flow of information. In the language of Kalyvas and the predictions of his model, these Sunni areas would have switched from being under incomplete insurgent control to incomplete American control. However, we do not see such a pattern emerge, which suggests that whatever efforts at control were being put forward by the American forces in this period in these regions had little effect on selective violence against civilians. More formally:

H1a: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Sunni areas between 2004 and 2006.

On the other hand, the American forces during this period may be associated with comparatively lower levels of indiscriminate violence. The question remains, though, as to the reason why such attacks were far less frequent than selective attacks. It may be the case that a sufficient number of troops patrolling an area simply makes it more difficult to carry out bombings and other large-scale killings. Scholars have long-argued that cities and towns are

difficult targets for insurgents due to the typically strong presence of the state (Kalyvas 2006:133; Kocher 2004; Trinquier 1964:18, Kitson 1960:78), and it may have been the case that Sunni insurgents did not want to take many chances with the difficulties that come with carrying out such spectacular, fear-inducing attacks.

*H1b: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Sunni areas between 2004 and 2006.*³¹

Here, I have suggested that while their mere presence may have made it more difficult for insurgents to carry out indiscriminate attacks, American forces did little to shape patterns of selective violence in the Sunni portions of Iraq between 2004 and 2006. Individual noncombatants had little reason to trust in the distant and disengaged American forces, leaving *de facto* control in the hands of the Sunni insurgency, who employed selective violence in their effort to maintain it. However, as I discuss in the following subsection, these patterns of violence shifted dramatically, as did the posture of American forces and the allegiances of those within the insurgency.

Sunni Areas (2007 – 2008)

After a brief spike in selective violence against civilians living in the Sunni-dominated regions of Iraq in the middle of 2006, violence stabilizes and begins to decline in early 2007, disappearing almost entirely by 2009. In this section, I detail three potential explanations for this stabilization

³¹ At the same time, however, one can imagine that if this were the case, the American forces could not have been isolated on their bases to only leave them for short mounted patrols, as such a posture does not lend itself to effective monitoring or policing to prevent such actions. It is possible that insurgents could maintain control without engaging in such attacks. As noted earlier, indiscriminate violence is likely to alienate a population, and if the insurgency could maintain control over the population through selective violence, such large-scale attacks are unlikely to be deployed on any regular basis.

and eventual decline: one focused on the efforts of American counterinsurgents, a second stressing dynamics that occurred within the Sunni insurgency, and the final being an interaction of the two.

The first story would suggest that, despite the apparent decrease in troop presence and public goods investment shown in Table 4.1, The Surge altered the behavior of the Sunni population vis-à-vis the insurgency, separating the two and leading the population to throw its support to the Americans in a way Kalyvas's model predicts. This new strategy would have taken these Sunni areas from Zone 4 where the insurgents have incomplete control to Zone 2, where that control, albeit incomplete, now lies in the hands of the American forces. This could have happened via a number of causal pathways. First, everyday Sunnis may have taken the new, more engaged strategy that defined The Surge as a signal by the Americans that, despite the costs involved, they were committed to imposing their authority in Iraq. As a result, the population's best bet for long-term stability and survival lay with the occupation. Alternatively, these citizens, who may for whatever reason have grown disenchanted with the instability brought by the insurgency, may have felt that with the more enmeshed presence of American forces, they would have been protected from retribution now whereas they would not have previously. By simply being more present, a political actor can open up lines of communication that were previously closed off. Third, the occupation may have successfully generated a sufficient degree of loyalty among the population through its provision of goods and services, which itself was made possible through the new strategy. Without a strong troop presence able to exercise control, others have noted that such efforts are unlikely to have any effect (Harmon 1992; Clutterbuck 1966; Kalyvas 2006).

As a consequence of this shift, the insurgent actors would no longer be able to carry out targeted attacks on suspected collaborators, as they no longer would have access to information regarding their identities. In most circumstances, and as existing theory (Kalyvas 2006; Ziemke 2008; Hultman 2008; Eck and Hultman 2007) would suggest, the only option remaining to these insurgents would be to turn to indiscriminate attacks, which could be motivated by a number of the factors outlined above. For example, they would perhaps use such operations to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the American authority (Hultman 2008, 2012; Eck and Hultman 2007) or to gain access to resources that otherwise would have been available if they still held control (Wood, Kathman, and Gent 2012).

However, we do not see any accompanying increase in indiscriminate attacks. In the previous three years, the infrequency of indiscriminate attacks by insurgents could have been a function of either the intensity of the US presence or, more plausibly, the lack of motivation for the insurgents to do so. However, Sunni insurgents in this current period certainly would be motivated to use indiscriminate attacks, and the fact that they did not suggests that newly-implemented change in US strategy may have prevented them from doing so. This leads to the following:

H2a: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

H2b: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

However, an alternative account suggests that the underlying relationship between the noncombatant civilians and the American counterinsurgency remained largely static across both periods, regardless of the occupation's strategy change. Instead, it argues that dynamics within

the Sunni insurgency produced the decline in selective violence and low levels of indiscriminate violence. Just as The Surge has been viewed as a key turning point in the Iraq conflict, so, too, has been the decision by Iraq's Sunni tribal leaders to flip sides and align themselves with the American occupation in opposition to the insurgency. While some argue that what came to be known as the Sons of Iraq movement emerged in response to the exceptional levels of violence that the Al Qaeda (AQI) dominated insurgency used to in its attempt to exert control in the community (e.g., Stanliand 2012), others such as Long (2008:77) have suggested that they did this for two reasons: 1) following the national elections of 2005, they came to believe that the political process held more promise than ongoing violence, and 2) they hoped to eliminate AQI as a source of competition for the smuggling and banditry revenues that they had long controlled.³² Further, Lindsay and Long (2013) argue that Anbar Province, where the Sunni insurgency was most active, had actually been pacified prior to the 2007 surge. They note that one of the major tribes in the Province, the Albu Mahal, had managed to create its own resistance force to combat Sunni extremists, not Americans, and placed hundreds of their men into local police forces. Most importantly, they note that "this occurred despite, rather than because of, the presence of a U.S. Army battalion in the region" (2013: 183-84).

This flipping within the insurgency, regardless of its motivations, could have set in motion a process that led to a change in control, which carried with it changes in civilian allegiances and patterns of violence. Again, Kalyvas (2006: 124-125) offers a variety of pathways whereby changes in control can lead to changes in patterns of such civilian collaboration, two of which may be relevant here. First, the tribes may have been able to function

³² It may be possible, however, that if violence turned the population against the insurgency, it was non-lethal in nature. Also, see Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012) or Long (2008) for a discussion of the efforts by Sunni tribal leaders to end their insurgent campaign and align with US forces to defeat al Qaeda in Iraq.

in a similar capacity to how the American forces are depicted in the previous account, as a guarantor of security. If individual civilians had indeed grown tired of the harsh methods of control exercised by the insurgency, they would have been able to turn to the tribes for protection. In contrast to the occupying forces, the local tribes existed long before the conflict began and they were likely to persist after the conflict ended, offering ongoing protection from retribution that could not have been guaranteed by temporary occupiers, regardless of a change in their strategy. Alternatively, by splitting from the insurgency and exerting control over these areas, the tribes placed themselves in a position to efficiently monitor the population. Individuals within these tribal communities knew each other, lived next to each other, practiced the same faith traditions and spoke the same dialects. As a result, information regarding the identities of those still aligned with the insurgency could be transmitted quickly and efficiently to established community leaders, who could then punish such individuals for their behavior.³³

The implications of this logic are threefold. First, the remaining insurgents would no longer be able to maintain control through selective violence, as they no longer held control of the territory. Second, as control shifted to the tribes, theory would suggest that they would then start to use selective violence to exercise their own control. However, this did not happen, as instead, such violence mostly continued at its low rate and eventually declined. To explain this, it may be the case that the tribes did not have an identification problem because they already knew who the remaining AQI insurgents were and did not need to target civilians to get that information, much in the same way that paramilitaries in Colombia relied on defectors, rather than civilians, to combat that insurgency (Vargas 2009). As Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro suggest, these former insurgents knew the “AQI membership, cell structure, the identity of safe

³³ See Lyall (2010b) for a full discussion of how co-ethnics can leverage their connections to the community to better gather intelligence.

houses and bomb-making workshops, and locations of roadside bombs and booby traps” (2012:25). With such information in hand, it would be unnecessary to look to civilians, and the SOI could use their own weapons to eliminate the threat. Further, it would probably be the case that very few civilians would still be aligned with the remaining AQI insurgency, as its extreme, theocratic nature might have conflicted with established norms and hierarchies in what was a largely secular population.

The third implication is that the remaining insurgent actors should have resorted to indiscriminate violence. However, the evidence suggest that they did not, as those levels remained fairly constant at low levels. One can imagine that what allowed the tribes to not have to rely on selective violence against civilians – knowing who all of the insurgents were themselves – also made it very difficult for the insurgents to pull off such attacks. Because the SOI was comprised of large numbers of former insurgents, they were able to essentially shut down the ability of those actors to carry out any sort of attack and clear the territory of those elements. This line of thinking echoes a series of examples from Kalyvas (2006: 128-129) ranging from Malaya, Vietnam, and German-occupied Soviet Union.

This account produces the following two hypotheses:

H3a: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in the Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

H3b: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in the Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

This account prioritizes the internal dynamics of the insurgency in explaining the patterns of civilian violence in the Sunni regions of Iraq between 2007 and 2008. However, a final story suggests that any reductions that occurred in Iraq were the result of the interaction of the efforts

that defined The Surge and the standup of the Sons of Iraq. It posits that the SOI were unable to accomplish on their own what is detailed in the previous account and that the Surge would not have succeeded without the intelligence that was provided by the SOI. Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro argue that rather than keep the intelligence regarding AQI membership, structure, etc., for themselves, the tribes passed that information on to American forces, allowing “coalition firepower [to become] extremely lethal” (2012:25). This story suggests that trust between the SOIs and the American forces improved as a result of the new Surge strategy, allowing them to function more as a single actor as opposed to two distinct groups. These authors find evidence that this dynamic did have the effect of reducing overall violence in Iraq, including that which was experienced by both American counterinsurgent forces and civilians.³⁴

But how might this story translate into predictions regarding patterns of violence experienced exclusively by civilians? Much like the previous accounts offered here, the interaction of The Surge and the SOI emergence would predict a dampening effect on both targeted, selective violence, and indiscriminate attacks. As control slips away from those who remain committed to expelling the American forces, they would no longer be able to exercise selective violence and would most likely work to transition to employing indiscriminate violence. However, in this story, the engaged American forces, coupled with the difficulty in maintaining secrecy since the SOI knew their identities, left insurgents largely unable to accomplish either. What distinguishes it from the previous account focused solely on the Sons of

³⁴ It is vitally important to note that Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012) measure violence very broadly, using SIGACTS, which is the total number of incidents recorded by the Multi-National Forces Iraq SIGACT III database. It contains information about “enemy executed attacks targeted against coalition, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), civilians, Iraqi infrastructure and government organizations” (ESOC Civil War Dataset Codebook, Version 3, 2012:5). The limitation in this data that is most relevant for the current inquiry is that it only captures violence against civilians that takes place where US forces are present to record it. This is likely to produce a dramatic undercounting of civilian violence, which would not only bias the findings here, but perhaps might also bias their finding that overall violence declined as a result of the interaction of The Surge and SOI standup.

Iraq is the idea the civilian population would not have thrown its support to the SOI if it was not backed by American firepower, as it served as the reinforcements needed to provide civilians with the confidence to know that if they shifted their behavior, they would still be protected. The account suggests the following two hypotheses:

H4a: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in the Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

H4b: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in the Sunni areas between 2007 and 2008.

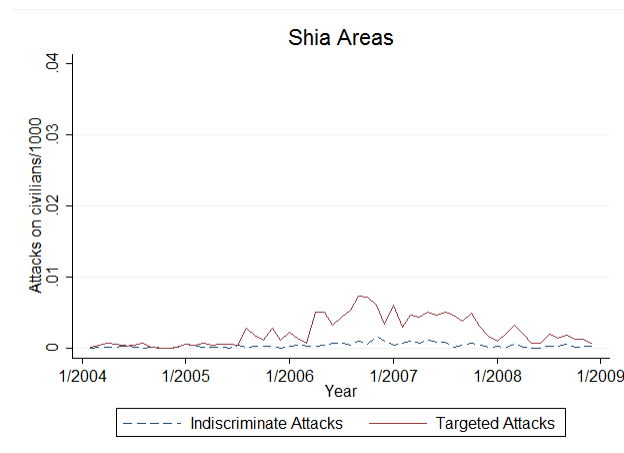
In this subsection, I have outlined three different causal stories that might explain the relationship between political actors present in the Sunni areas of Iraq between 2006 and 2008 and the patterns of civilian violence that emerged during that time. The first posits that steps taken by the American occupation actually changed civilian attitudes in these areas, and noncombatants placed their trust in a new American approach that was instituted in January 2007. The second argues that these noncombatants remained loyal to their tribal leaders and when they split from the insurgency, these civilians took their allegiances with them. This was not necessarily due to their pre-war linkages (although they were undoubtedly strong) but rather because they offered the best chance of both current and long-term stability and security. The final story argues that this change in behavior could not have come about if the Sons of Iraq were not backed by the military might and capability of American forces and if those forces did not have the intelligence provided by the Sons of Iraq. All three will be tested against one another in

the empirical analysis section of the chapter. Now, however, I turn to a discussion of the violence against civilians that occurred in areas of Iraq dominated by Shia populations.

Shia Areas

The Shia provinces (Karbala, Babil, Wasit, Maysan, Najaf, Qadisiyyah, Dhi Qar, and Basra) extend from the center of the country to the south. As is clear from Figure 4.4, the populations living in Shia-dominant areas of Iraq experienced far less violence than their Sunni counterparts. Levels of indiscriminate violence remained quite low throughout the period, while selective violence also remained low, although it did increase in the latter half of 2006 and remained at those levels until the latter months of 2007/early 2008, when it resumed 2004-2005 levels.

Figure 4.4. Indiscriminate and Targeted Violence per Month in Shia Territory (2004-2008)



Whereas violence in the Sunni areas centered on the conflict between nationalist insurgents and the American occupation, violence experienced by civilians in these Shia areas can perhaps be linked to a wider variety of sources of friction. First, two rival militias – the Madhi Army under the control of cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Badr Bridage, which was aligned with the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), a Shiite political party –

fought for dominance within the broader Shiite community. While SCIRI was tied to the establishment Shia political hierarchy in Iraq, al-Sadr and the Mahdi Army were viewed as possessing some broader appeal on the Shiite street for their willingness to engage the Americans in an effort to force their withdraw (Carroll 2005). The tension between the groups, which dated back to al-Sadr's father's rivalry with Ayatollah al-Sistani, one of the most widely respected Shiite religious scholars who gave his "blessing" to SCIRI, frequently boiled up into violent clashes in cities like Najaf (2005) and Basra (2008). And even in the absence of violence, media outlets reported that "civil strife between Shiites [was] brewing just below the surface" (Carroll 2005). When violence between the groups erupted, American and Iraqi forces were dispatched to suppress it, with Mahdi Army members frequently stating that these operations unfairly targeted them, and SCIRI actors given a pass, largely because of their close relationship with al-Sistani and the central government (Kamber and Glanz 2008).

Civilians in these areas were also caught up in intersectarian violence between Sunnis and Shia. Shiite shrines and holy sites in places like Najaf were bombed by Sunni militants, while prominent members of the Sunni community in cities such as Basra were also targeted as sectarian violence rose throughout the country (Daragahi and Fakhrildeen 2006). Violence experienced by civilians in these areas may also have stemmed from the efforts by these Shia militias, primarily the Madhi Army, to expel the American forces. While not nearly on the same scale as the Sunni insurgency, al-Sadr's forces repeatedly fought the Americans, most notably in Najaf in 2004 and in Sadr City, a Shia slum in eastern Baghdad (Arango and Ali 2011).³⁵ Any civilians who were denounced as aligned with the Americans may have been targeted and punished for such transgressions by these Shiite militias. Finally, Kalyvas (2006) notes that a

³⁵Sadr City, while almost certainly entirely Shia, is in Baghdad province, which was more heterogeneous in its sectarian composition overall than those provinces discussed in this section. Violence in these mixed areas will be discussed below.

nontrivial amount of violence in the Greek Civil War arose from private feuds between families and neighbors or simple opportunism. Such action, while not connected to the larger conflict, can often be attributed to it, and it may be the case that this occurred in these Shia areas, as well as in other areas.

Despite these various potential sources of violence, Figure 4.4 and Table 4.2 show that violence levels remained small relative to those in the Sunni areas. Kalyvas’s model predicts minimal violence of any kind against civilians if no side could plausibly claim control, and if we focus on what appeared to be the primary conflict occurring in these areas, that which existed between rival Shiite militias, we see that this is largely the case. Both targeted and indiscriminate violence was much less frequent than what occurred in the Sunni areas, as the mean number of indiscriminate attacks was .2/100,000 population, or one-seventh of the 1.4/100,000 average in the Sunni areas. (Distinct from the conflict between rival Shia factions, this can perhaps also be attributed to the fact that Sunni militants had a very hard time entering these areas to commit such acts, as they would be quickly targeted and eliminated.³⁶) Similarly, selective attacks had a mean of 1.4, or a little more than one-third of the 5 average in Sunni areas.

Table 4.2. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Shia-Dominated Areas

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
	Overall				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	375	0.002	0.008	0	0.08
Targeted Attacks/1,000	375	0.014	0.04	0	0.28
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	410	7.41	18.71	0	295.37
Avg. Battalion per capita	405	0.0013	0.003	0	0.02
2004-2006					

³⁶ This is not to suggest that such attacks did not occur.

Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	224	0.002	0.007	0	0.06
Targeted Attacks/1,000	224	0.011	0.032	0	0.28
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	246	4.35	6.74	0	68.67
Avg. Battalion per capita	242	0.0014	0.003	0	0.02
2007-2008					
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	151	0.003	0.009	0	0.08
Targeted Attacks/1,000	151	0.02	0.04	0	0.27
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	164	11.99	27.82	0	295.37
Avg. Battalion per capita	163	0.0013	0.0024	0	0.014

Shia Areas (2004-2006)

If we follow the same progression as we did with respect to the discussion of the Sunni areas, let us first turn to the pre-Surge environment. We also see in Table 4.2 that the American presence in these areas was actually quite limited during this period, with a per capita mean of only 0.001. A closer inspection of the data also reveals that of the 246 Shia district-half months prior to 2007, 149 had no American battalions at all. Also, we see that investments in local public goods projects was also fairly small, compared to both what it would be in the latter period and what it was in the Sunni areas at the same time, where the mean per capita in a district, 31.51, was almost eight times greater. For reasons similar to the predictions regarding the inefficacy of the American strategy in the Sunni areas during this period, I anticipate that these efforts had little impact on the violence experienced by civilians. Shiite civilians had neither the opportunity nor incentive to engage in collaboration with American forces, due to their limited interactions and uncertainty over whether the Americans would remain to ensure their protection.

Therefore,

H5a: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of selective violence against civilians in Shia areas between 2004 and 2006.

In contrast with the Sunni areas where American troop density was greater, I suggest that the minimal troop strength in the Shia provinces had little impact on indiscriminate violence:

H5b: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Shia areas between 2004 and 2006.

In terms of American security efforts put forward within these areas, we see that there is little change across the two periods in terms of the number of battalions present in a given district, perhaps reflecting their general deference to the idea of self-governance except in the periods of open warfare between the two factions. However, we do see a fairly significant increase in the amount of money devoted to public goods projects from the pre-2007 period to The Surge, suggesting that American forces responded to the visible uptick in selective violence that occurred in these areas. As we can see, selective violence goes from an average rate of 0.1 attack/100,000 in a half-year to 0.2, and mean spending levels almost triple and the maximum investment over a 6-month period is over four times the size of the largest investment in the pre-Surge period.

Shia Areas (2007-2008)

As discussed above, the purpose of the public goods spending by American forces was to generate goodwill among the population, with the ultimate goal of acquiring the information needed to eliminate opposing actors. If the American Surge strategy changed from one of limited interactions with the population to one defined by greater levels of engagement, we might predict that levels of selective violence would decline. But for this to be the case, it would mean that

overall *de facto* control of these areas shifted to the Americans. The population would have to believe that the new strategy would be a sustained effort that would supplant existing hierarchies and networks, and that the Americans would be remaining in control. However, as I will discuss shortly, Muqtada al-Sadr and his supporters, both members of his militia as well as civilians, pushed strongly for the rapid departure of American forces and threatened renewed attacks and instances of civil disobedience against the occupation if the United States remained in the territory beyond previously agreed-upon dates (Arango and Ali 2011). As such, it seems difficult to believe that American efforts had any relationship with patterns of violence in these areas in the Surge period, as well.

H6a: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of selective violence against civilians in Shia areas between 2007 and 2008.

H6b: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Shia areas between 2007 and 2008.

As is obvious from the several conflicts going on simultaneously within the Shia areas, the Americans were not the only actors who might have shaped patterns of civilian violence in them.³⁷ With its attacks against American forces, attacks on Sunni neighborhoods (to be discussed below), and rivalry with SCIRI, the Mahdi Army had been a large source of instability early on in Iraq. However, in August 2007, al-Sadr ordered a ceasefire, pledging that his forces would refrain from attacking Sunnis, competing Shiite groups (SCIRI in particular), and American forces.

Several factors may have motivated al-Sadr to order the ceasefire. First, it may have been in response to the realignment of Sunni groups with the American occupation. Since the

³⁷ Throughout this chapter, I use the phrase “civilian violence” when referring to the violence that is experienced by civilians, whether it is committed by insurgent actors or other civilians.

insurgency posed less of a problem, al-Sadr may have decided that he did not want to challenge a less-distracted American force, and it may have become clear that the costs of seeking to totally eliminate the Sunni population were going to be prohibitive. Further, he had suffered a loss of political support that occurred as a result of the Mahdi Army's killing of fifty people in the holy city of Karbala in fighting with SCIRI. His political movement also faced increasing isolation as a result of the overreach and opportunism of members of the Mahdi Army. He frequently engaged in nationalist rhetoric framed in opposition to the American occupation, but if al-Sadr had any aspirations of continuing authority and influence after the departure of American forces, he would need to curb his militia's violent behavior both across the sectarian divide and within his own community.

American military and political leaders believed that this decision, whatever its motives, had a dampening effect on violence. In February 2008, when the ceasefire was extended, General David Petraeus stated that "The continuation of the cease-fire is an important commitment by al-Sayyid Moqtada al-Sadr that holds the potential for a further reduction in violence in Iraq" (Raghavan and Paley 2008). In his announcement to his supporters of the continuation of the ceasefire, al-Sadr stated that he had no tolerance for dissident or rogue elements who would not abide by the ceasefire: "If you want to help me, do as you are ordered and implement what I am going to say, for I am ordering virtue and banning vice... I fear the day of judgment, so I cannot tolerate the disobedience of the disobedient, nor the sins of the sinners, nor the crimes of the criminals" (Raghavan and Paley 2008).

The ceasefire's enforcement mechanisms resemble an ideal counterinsurgency approach, as it reflects an ability to acquire information regarding bad actors and punish them accordingly without having to resort to indiscriminate violence. During Friday prayers, the names of the

offending members were read aloud, and posters were hung on walls detailing who had been purged (or worse) and why (Paley 2008). Most of those who were either fired from the Mahdi army or executed received these punishments for committing crimes against civilians, including murder. At the same time, al-Sadr's organization began engaging in social services and settling disputes with the goal of further improving its reputation. The implication here is that the Mahdi organization was well-placed to find out who was engaging in the bad behavior and punish those individuals specifically. The organization was local and was not going to be leaving any time soon. This provided a sense of optimism within the communities where it was active, as well as amongst Sunnis, who were previously the target of the Mahdi army's sectarian violence. For example, Iraq's Sunni vice president at the time stated, "We are not afraid of them now. Now we don't have eye-catching sectarian strife" (Paley 2008).

This discussion implies that whatever its motivations, the Mahdi Army ceasefire should result in a decrease in selective and indiscriminate civilian violence in the Shia-dominated provinces, as it sought to bring rogue elements who sought to further destabilize the country under control. And because the ceasefire and its extensions were strongly supported by both American and Sunni officials, we can posit the following two hypotheses:

H7a: The Mahdi Army ceasefire of August 2007 is associated with decreased levels of selective violence in the Shia areas.

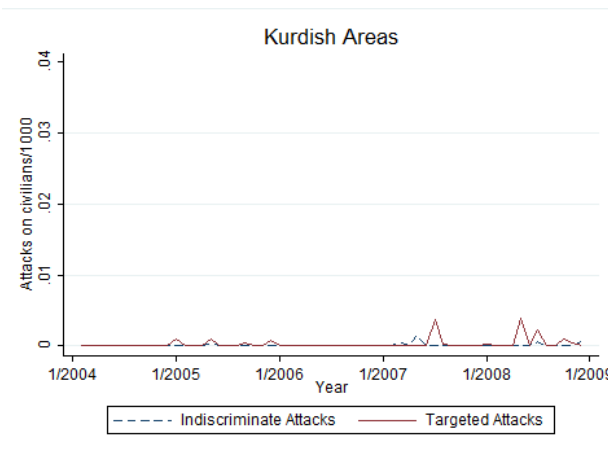
H7b: The Mahdi Army ceasefire of August 2007 is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence in the Shia areas.

While recognizing the relatively small levels of violence in these areas, this section argues that the efforts by American forces, both before and after the 2007 Surge, had little impact in limiting the violence that did exist. Instead, it suggests that any reductions that did occur came

about by the decision of the Mahdi Army militia’s leader, Muqtada al-Sadr, to institute a ceasefire in August of that year. Before turning to an examination of civilian violence in the more ethnically or religiously mixed provinces, I will briefly focus attention on the dynamics that occurred in the Kurdish-dominated areas.

Kurdish Areas

Figure 4.5. Indiscriminate and Targeted Violence per Month in Kurdish Territory (2004-2008)



In Figure 4.2, we see that the Kurdish dominated areas are located in the northern provinces of Iraq – Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah, and Erbil. Figure 4.5 shows that civilian violence in the Kurdish areas was very low throughout the period for which data is available. Table 4.3 also confirms these low incidents of violence; an average of just 2 indiscriminate attacks per 100,000 people and 7 selective attacks per 100,000 every half-year. Table 4.3 also shows the extent to which American counterinsurgent forces allowed local Kurdish forces, which were independent of the central Iraqi government, to operate and maintain their own security, as no American battalions were recorded in these areas. Also, Americans invested little in terms of public goods spending,

further illustrating both how little violence was in the area and how little of an American presence was required. When considering these observations within Kalyvas' (2006) theoretical framework, these Kurdish areas largely resemble Zone 1, where an incumbent enjoys complete control and faces no meaningful challenge to its authority. As such, I will now move on to an examination of the ethnically and religiously mixed areas of Iraq, where no such stability existed.

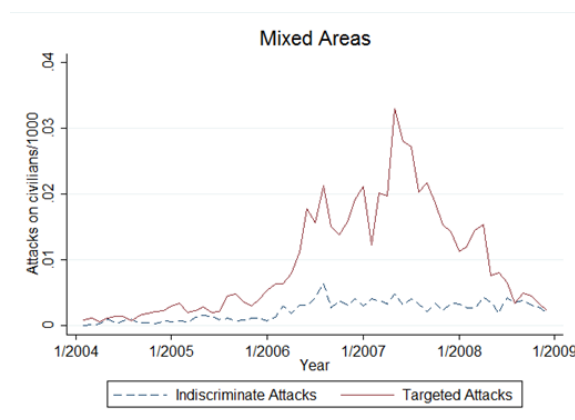
Table 4.3. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Kurd-Dominated Areas

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
	Overall				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	140	0.0004	0.002	0	0.02
Targeted Attacks/1,000	140	0.002	0.007	0	0.06
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	210	2	5.47	0	49.92
Average Battalion per capita	211	0	0	0	0
	2004-2006				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	84	0.0001	0.0005	0	0.004
Targeted Attacks/1,000	84	0.0005	0.003	0	0.03
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	126	1.48	2.55	0	11.6
Avg. Battalion per capita	126	0	0	0	0
	2007-2008				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	56	0.0007	0.003	0	0.02
Targeted Attacks/1,000	56	0.003	0.01	0	0.06
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	84	2.77	8.03	0	49.92
Avg. Battalion per capita	85	0	0	0	0

Mixed Areas

While Sunni-dominated regions of Iraq were defined by the insurgency against the American occupation and the Shia regions by intra-group tensions between rival factions, those areas which were more ethnically or religiously heterogeneous were thought generally to have suffered from the violence associated with intense sectarian war. Such mixed districts were located in four governorates, or provinces: Baghdad, Diyala, Ninewa, and Ta'meem (renamed Kirkuk in 2006). Figure 4.6 displays the aggregate patterns of targeted and indiscriminate violence across these areas, which increased substantially in the early to middle of 2006. Targeted violence remains elevated into 2007, where it then spikes again in the middle of that year before declining. We see that, by and large, indiscriminate attacks remained relatively infrequent compared to targeted attacks.

Figure 4.6. Selective and Indiscriminate Violence in Mixed Areas of Iraq (2004-2008)



Kalyvas' (2006) theory posits that mixed areas where no one group possesses control should have little selective violence, as neither side will want to jeopardize their standing within the community and individual citizens have little incentive to collaborate with either the incumbent or the challenger. The pattern of violence shown here, at first glance, might suggest that such a dynamic did not hold in Iraq, or at least only did so for the first two years of the data. However, while these provinces do not possess the same high degree of homogeneity that defines the

ethnically dominated regions, Table 4.4 shows that they still tend to contain one strong ethnic or sectarian group. Diyala is the most heterogeneous district, followed by Ta'meem/Kirkuk, Ninewa, and then Baghdad. Diyala and Ninewa were both Sunni-majority by similar margins, with 26- and 31- point differences between the Sunni vote share and the next largest ethnic party, respectively. Ta'meem shows a 28-point Kurd advantage over its nearest competitor, the Sunnis, and Shia in Baghdad hold a 39-point advantage over Sunnis, the nearest ethnic group. Clearly, no province approaches parity in terms of its ethnic or sectarian composition. At the same time, how do we then account for the fact that, compared to the Sunni areas where violence was also intense, violence did not pick up until much later in these places? Also, why were Shia Baghdad and Kurdish Ta'meem far more violent beginning in 2006 than their much more homogenous counterparts?

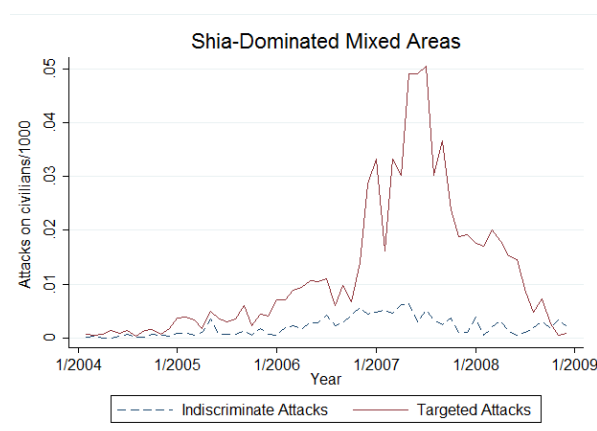
Table 4.4. Vote shares of ethnic political parties within mixed governorates

	Sunni	Shia	Kurd
Baghdad	21%	60%	1%
Diyala	48%	22%	13%
Ninewa	50%	7%	19%
Ta'meem/Kirkuk	25%	4%	53%

In the remainder of this section and beginning with Shia majority Baghdad, I will attempt to answer these questions, and also suggest how American and Iraqi efforts to address the violence may have worked.

Baghdad

Figure 4.7. Selective and Indiscriminate Violence in Baghdad (2004-2008)



Baghdad Province was in many respects the epicenter of civilian violence in Iraq, at least in the latter portion of the conflict. In Figure 4.7, we see that early on, civilian violence there appeared to be fairly limited, but it began to increase in early 2006 before spiking dramatically later that year and continuing to increase in the first half of 2007 before declining in the latter half of that year and all the way through 2008. Table 4.5 provides the summary statistics of the civilian violence and American counterinsurgent efforts in Baghdad province, and some interesting facts emerge. First it is clear that targeted violence in Baghdad was high, as there was a mean of five attacks per 100,000 people per half-year period. In the early pre-2007 period, there was a mean of two such attacks, which increased to a mean of nine attacks in the subsequent period. Indiscriminate attacks were comparatively rare over the full period, with a mean of 1.2 per 100,000 over the five years. In the first three years, there was a mean of 1 attack per 100,000, which increased to two in the latter two.

Table 4.5. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Baghdad

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
	Overall				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	80	0.012	0.02	0	0.07
Targeted Attacks/1,000	80	0.05	0.07	0	0.31
Public Goods	90	18.4	22.88	0	119.85

Spending (\$ per capita)					
Avg. Battalion per capita	80	0.004	0.004	0	0.016
	2004-2006				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	48	0.01	0.01	0	0.05
Targeted Attacks/1,000	48	0.02	0.03	0	0.13
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	54	10.53	15.61	0	92.24
Avg. Battalion per capita	48	0.003	0.003	0	0.014
	2007-2008				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	32	0.02	0.02	0	0.07
Targeted Attacks/1,000	32	0.09	0.09	0	0.31
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	36	30.22	26.88	2	119.85
Avg. Battalion per capita	32	0.005	0.004	0.0008	0.016

Scholars, analysts, and journalists have offered several theories to explain this pattern, ranging from ethnic segregation and cleansing (Weidmann and Salehyan 2013; Agnew, et al 2008; Korb, et al 2008), the standup of the Sunni tribes (Long 2008; Simon 2008; Green 2010), or some combination of these and the Surge (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012; Biddle, O’Hanlon, and Pollack 2008; Malkasian 2007; West 2008; Ricks 2009; Robinson 2008). These latter two explanations are detailed above in the discussion of violence in the Sunni areas, and so they do not need to be repeated here.

However, a brief discussion of the first potential explanation – the unmixing of Iraqi society – is necessary. Weidmann and Salehyan (2013) suggest that what occurred in Iraq, particularly its once-ethnically mixed capital city of Baghdad, reflects much of what scholars have thought about the onset of ethnic war more generally. With the dismantling of Iraq’s military, too few troops, and minimal state capacity to establish order (see Tilly 1978; Kaufmann 1996; Mueller 2000; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004), extreme voices from

the Sunni and Shia communities marginalized any moderate ones and forced individuals to cast their allegiances to a particular side, regardless of the substantial intermarriage and ethnic mixing that had previously defined the pre-invasion secular Iraq state (Telhami 2005; Raghavan 2007). After Sunni militants bombed the al-Askari Mosque in February 2006, many Shia joined various militias in Baghdad and other areas. Subsequently, the outnumbered Sunnis in the capital region fled as Shia “death squads” ethnically cleansed Baghdad’s neighborhoods through violence exemplified by that described in this chapter’s introduction. This period of escalating violence appears to last about a year and a half, from early 2006 until mid-2007.

When civilian violence began to decline in the middle of 2007, some have argued that this was due to the sequence outlined above; “[T]he killing stopped because there was no one left to kill” (Cockburn 2008 from Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012). However, others such as Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012:14-18) delve into great detail of events in Baghdad to suggest that this was not the case, as Shia militias (namely Sadr’s Mahdi Army), after having cleared a neighborhood of Sunnis, simply used that territory as a base from which to launch further incursions into more Sunni areas of Baghdad. They conclude that when violence declined in mid-2007, there were still Sunni areas of Baghdad that could have been cleansed by the Shia militias, and thus, something else must have stopped them from advancing. Instead, these scholars argue that the combination of the Sons of Iraq movement and The Surge brought about an overall decrease in attacks on both civilians and counterinsurgent forces.

Baghdad (2004-2006)

This story implies that prior to 2007, the American occupation was largely ineffectual in limiting targeted, selective violence in Baghdad. Such an implication would be consistent with the

accounts in other regions of Iraq already discussed. With no sustained, engaged presence among the residents of Baghdad by the American military and uncertainty about its long-term presence, neither Sunni nor Shia individuals had reason to believe that the occupying power could do anything to protect them. While the Americans held *de jure* control of Baghdad, it is perhaps an open question as to who possessed *de facto* control. If we consider selective violence to be fairly infrequent (at least when compared to what it would be in later years), it may be the case that neither Sunnis nor Shia held control, which would match with Kalyvas' (2006) assertion that regions where no party owns control should experience minimal violence. Alternatively, the incentives for these groups to engage in intersectarian violence during this period may have been fairly minimal and instead of no one group holding control, it may have been the case that both groups were able to police themselves and prevent individuals from perpetrating such attacks (see Fearon and Laitin 1996). In neither of these accounts, however, is the American occupation relevant, suggesting the following hypothesis:

H8a: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of selective violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2004 and 2006.

It is important to note here that the selective violence that is recorded here appears at first glance to be very different in its motivations than that which is involved in the logic of violence detailed by Kalyvas (2006). In his theoretical account, armed actors target civilians after they have been identified as someone whose allegiances might lead them to denounce or identify those actors to their rivals. In the ethnic cleansing that occurred, it would appear that everyday Sunnis were killed simply because they were Sunni. While there may be some truth to this, there are probably some other explanations as well. First, the Sunni identity of these individuals meant that they could not be trusted to be "loyal" members of a Shia dominated community, and thus,

they were killed before they even had a chance to state or demonstrate their allegiances. Second, it also may be the case that individual militia members who may have been motivated by reasons other than the good of the Shia community targeted particular Sunnis for their own benefit, perhaps to acquire their property or as part of private feuds among neighbors or acquaintances. Indiscriminate violence during this period, while less frequent than targeted attacks, was still certainly present. However, if control of Baghdad was up in the air as suggested above, Kalyvas's logic suggests that such attacks would also be quite rare, as neither side would want to jeopardize an uneasy "peaceful" status quo. This outcome might mirror earlier work by Fearon and Laitin (1996), where ethnic groups police their own communities to prevent defections by individuals that would result in large-scale breakdowns in social order. Again, this low-intensity equilibrium could obtain independent of American activities during this period.

H8b: American security efforts are not associated with patterns of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2004 and 2006.

Baghdad (2007-2008)

However, the relative calm did break down with the February 2006 bombing of the al-Askari Mosque, which ushered in the period of increased levels of both targeted and indiscriminate violence that ultimately peaked in the latter half of 2007. Prior to this point, we can imagine that violence remained fairly low because the two ethnic groups had not yet found themselves in the spiral of violence that scholars have argued is part and parcel of ethnic war (see Snyder and Jervis 1999; Posen 1993).

In the earlier portions of this chapter, I have discussed a number of different factors that might have played a role in limiting this violence as it began to decrease in late 2007 and into

2008. Many of those theoretical expectations can be applied to Baghdad, as well, as all of these factors were in operation there – The Surge, the standup of the Sons of Iraq, and the ceasefire of the Mahdi Army.

In early 2007, The Surge troop increase and change in strategy was implemented to address this descent into sectarian violence, as is suggested by Table 4.5. In it we see that mean public goods spending increased dramatically, almost threefold. Also, the mean level of American forces jumped by half a battalion per district in Baghdad, an average increase of about 300 troops per district. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed the possibility that this new approach altered the relationship between the community and the American counterinsurgents. The latter were now located on the streets of Baghdad rather than behind the walls of the Green Zone and the public goods that they provided generated a sense of loyalty and appreciation. As a result, those community members were willing to provide intelligence to American forces dedicated to keeping the peace, leading to a decrease in the frequency of targeted attacks against civilians. Also, and perhaps even more importantly, by being present in Baghdad's remaining Sunni neighborhoods, they were able to prevent Shia militias from further house by house or block by block cleansing. This suggests the following hypothesis:

H9a: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2007 and 2008.

At the same time, Figure 4.7 shows that after an initial increase in indiscriminate attacks, those also declined. This pattern would make sense. If we assume that the bulk of such violence was committed across sectarian lines, violence actors would want to respond to The Surge by demonstrating that they still possessed the capacity to inflict harm on the opposing community. But as the new strategy went into effect and additional troops took up their new positions

throughout Baghdad, the ability to carry out such attacks would have diminished as it became more difficult to cross from one community into another. This suggests the following hypothesis:

H9b: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2007 and 2008.

However, the Sons of Iraq were also active in Baghdad during this period, and as was true in the Sunni-dominated areas of the country, they may have played more of a role in limiting violence than the American occupation. Prior to the standup, “protection” of the Sunni community was left to insurgent actors, who were responsible for the de-stabilization of the country such as the mosque bombing in Samarra. However, the SOI were now fighting those extreme elements and no longer opposed to the American presence, at least for the short-term. As such, their presence in the Sunni areas of Baghdad would not have been with the purpose of expelling Americans, but protecting fellow Sunnis. Such protection might have taken two forms. First, the presence of the Sons would have made it much more difficult for the Shia militias to continue their ethnic cleansing unabated. Should they have tried to do so, the militias would have been met with an armed response. Also, they would have been able to protect their fellow Sunnis from the remaining extreme elements within the community, as was suggested in the discussion pertaining to the Sunni-dominant regions of the country. By being permanent members of their communities and former insurgents themselves, the Sons knew who these destabilizing elements were and could act quickly to remove them from the environment.

H10a: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Baghdad areas between 2007 and 2008.

At the same time, the Sons of Iraq may have also been able to prevent these remaining violent Sunnis from attacking Shia areas with indiscriminate violence in an effort to further

destabilize the country. As touched on briefly above, this logic would be similar to that which was first articulated by Fearon and Laitin (1996), where rival ethnic groups will police their own and punish those who attempt to defect by attacking across ethnic lines.

H10b: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2007 and 2008.

As was suggested in the case of the Sunni areas, the reduction of civilian violence in Baghdad may have also been the result of the interaction of the new US approach and the standup of the Sons of Iraq. In this account, the Sons provided the intelligence to the Americans, who then took action to remove the bad actors from the environment, with the same result.

H11a: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2007 and 2008.

H11b: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Baghdad between 2007 and 2008.

As discussed in the beginning of this section, most of the violence in Baghdad was the result of efforts by Shia militias to cleanse the capital region of Sunnis. For these accounts prioritizing Sunni dynamics and the Sons of Iraq to be accurate, it would have to be the case that they provided enough of a deterrent to lead those militias to conclude such efforts were no longer worthwhile. But we know from the discussion of violence in the Shia-dominant regions of the country that political dynamics on the Shia side of the sectarian divide might have also played a role. In particular, Muqtada al-Sadr found himself in a difficult position. Members of his militia had jeopardized its standing in the Shia community through its opportunism and predation, he

had suffered a drop in support following the clash with SCIRI in Karbala that left fifty Shia civilians dead, and the Americans now had the Sons of Iraq working with them. To salvage his reputation within his community and perhaps position himself politically in post-occupation Iraq or prevent an unwanted showdown with the American military, al-Sadr ordered those loyal to him to stand down in the summer of 2007. As noted above, this effort to control what was arguably the largest source of violence was largely welcomed by American commanders, as well as many Sunnis. As such, we have the following hypotheses:

H12a: The Mahdi Army ceasefire of August 2007 is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Baghdad.

H12b: The Mahdi Army ceasefire of August 2007 is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Baghdad.

In this section, I have offered a series of possible accounts regarding the effect of steps by the American occupation and Iraqi actors to limit the violence targeting the civilian population of Baghdad, a city that was at the center of the simultaneous conflicts that engulfed the country. In contrast to the Shia-dominated districts to the south, Baghdad was quite heterogeneous in terms of its sectarian composition. In the earlier period, prior to the full outbreak of sectarian war, tension between Sunni and Shia may have existed, but a peaceful equilibrium appears to have obtained. However, when that equilibrium was disrupted, most likely with the al-Askari bombing, violence was more prevalent here simply because both populations were present. This was obviously not the case to anywhere near the same degree in the other Shia areas. I turn now to Diyala and Ninewa, where Sunnis possessed a strong numerical advantage over their fellow Iraqis.

Diyala and Ninewa

Both Diyala and Ninewa were approximately 50% Sunni, with 48.3% and 49.7% respectively. As shown in Figure 4.2, Diyala borders the Shia provinces of Wasit and Babil in the south, the Sunni province of Salah al Din to the west, and Kurdish Sulaymaniyah to the north. Shia represented the second largest group, with 22%, with the Kurds at 13%. Ninewa is bordered by Sunni strongholds of Anbar and Salah al Din to the south and Kurdish Erbil and Dohuk to the north and east. Here, Kurds represented 19% of the population and Shia, 7%.

Figure 4.8. Selective and Indiscriminate Violence in Diyala and Ninewa (2004-2006)

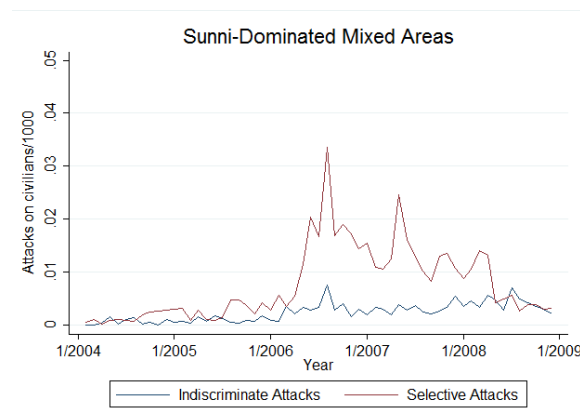


Figure 4.8 shows the patterns of indiscriminate and selective violence against civilians in these two provinces. In contrast to these patterns in the overwhelmingly Sunni districts of Anbar and Salah al Din, we see that they remained fairly peaceful until early 2006, or shortly after the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque, which ushered in the era of significant sectarian strife. Following this event, both types of violence increased, although the frequency of selective attacks went up dramatically while indiscriminate attacks did so very gradually. Selective violence began to ebb in the latter half of 2006 and except for a spike in the middle of 2007,

declined back to low levels by the end of 2008. In contrast, indiscriminate attacks remained fairly minimal, but do appear to have increased slightly throughout the entire period.

Diyala and Ninewa (2004-2006)

Up to this point, I have outlined a number of theories regarding the effect of American and Iraqi efforts in other regions of the country, and so I will not go into great detail with them here.

However, I will still provide brief discussions with specific hypotheses. Beginning with the American counterinsurgency efforts summarized in Table 4.6, we see that levels of American troops and spending were minimal in the pre-Surge period in these two provinces compared to the much more Sunni but also more violent Anbar and Salah al Din provinces. Taking what we know about the American strategy during this period, we can imagine that the relationship between it and all manner of violence in this period is fairly limited.

H13a: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2004 and 2006.

H13b: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2004 and 2006.

Table 4.6. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Diyala and Ninewa

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
	Overall				
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	139	0.014	0.03	0	0.15
Targeted Attacks/1,000	139	0.05	0.13	0	1.16
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	150	7.92	10.42	0	64.89
Avg. Battalion per capita	150	0.63	0.8	0	3
	2004-2006				
Indiscriminate	83	0.01	0.02	0	0.13

Attacks/1,000 Targeted	83	0.04	0.14	0	1.16
Attacks/1,000 Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	90	6.87	7.7	0	31.92
Avg. Battalion per capita	90	0.67	0.8	0	2.5
2007-2008					
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000 Targeted	56	0.02	0.03	0	0.15
Attacks/1,000 Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	56	0.06	0.11	0	0.6
Avg. Battalion per capita	60	9.49	13.44	0	64.89
	60	0.58	0.81	0	3

An obvious question to ask is why Diyala and Ninewa had much lower levels of civilian violence during the 2004-2006 period compared to Anbar and Salah al Din. All four were primarily Sunni, although the latter two were far more homogenous than the former set. One can imagine that this is due to the difference in the American presence between these two sets of provinces. The mean battalion presence in Diyala and Ninewa was .67, while it was 1.51 in Anbar and Salah al Din. Also, the level of public goods investments was radically different. In the Diyala and Ninewa, the mean level of spending was 6.87, with a max investment of 31.92. Conversely, Anbar and Salah al Din saw a mean of 33.71, with a maximum investment over a six-month period of 552.81. From this information, one can reasonably argue that the civilians in Diyala and Ninewa provinces were not caught up in a situation where the Sunni militants were concerned about potential defections to the American occupation. If there were no Americans to defect to in Anbar and Salah al Din, these regions perhaps may have better resembled Zone 1, where there was total dominance, rather than Zone 2, where there was control, but not domination.

Diyala and Ninewa (2007-2008)

Turning to the 2007-2008 period, we see that civilian violence increased dramatically in these areas, beginning even in 2006. This is most likely due to a number of factors. First, overall sectarian violence throughout the country increased following the bombing of the al-Askari Mosque in February 2006. As noted earlier, moderate voices across the sectarian divide were drowned out by extremist elements, and the Sunni and Shia suffered from a security dilemma, where trust gave way to mutual suspicion. In the absence of any leviathan capable of maintaining stable relations, sectarian violence took over. And because Diyala and Ninewa were more diverse than Anbar and Salah al Din, we can imagine that they experienced this source of violence, where the latter two did not.

Second, and relatedly, as the insurgency declined in or was forced out of Anbar and Salah al Din, it moved to these districts. Baqubah, Diyala's largest city, had been taken over by al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) in 2007 and its leadership sought to make it the capital of its anticipated caliphate. With this new arrival of Sunni extremist fighters, Shia civilians had to either flee south in search of protection in the larger Shia communities of Baghdad or possibly be targeted. At the same time, Shiites controlled the provincial council seats, as well as the local security forces, which were comprised primarily of members of the Badr Organization militia discussed earlier (Moore 2007), which would suggest that intersectarian violence would be on the increase. Similar dynamics were operating in Ninewa, as well, as al Qaeda elements moved away from Anbar and Salah al Din to this region where, instead of a strong Shia minority, there was a significant Kurdish presence. And just as Diyala's security forces were comprised of Shiites, much of Ninewa's was controlled by the minority Kurdish forces, known as the Peshmerga (Muir 2008).

Because the insurgency shifted locations, we can imagine that the focus of the Americans may have shifted as well. Indeed, in 2007 and 2008, American forces engaged in sustained campaigns to retake both provinces from the insurgents who had come to control them despite the efforts of the local security forces. We might then expect patterns to emerge that were similar to those which were discussed toward the beginning of this chapter. As the American forces implemented their new strategy of clearing the territory and investing in public goods to win the allegiance of the population, remaining insurgents in both Ninewa and Diyala would have difficulty either controlling the population with selective violence or perpetrating indiscriminate bombings in an effort to continue sectarian cleansing or stem defections to the American side. Thus, we can hypothesize the following:

H14a: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

H14b: American security efforts are associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

Also, the Sons of Iraq were active in these provinces, and it may be the case that they were able to combat the remaining insurgent elements on their own, as was posited elsewhere. This would lead to the following:

H15a: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

H15b: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

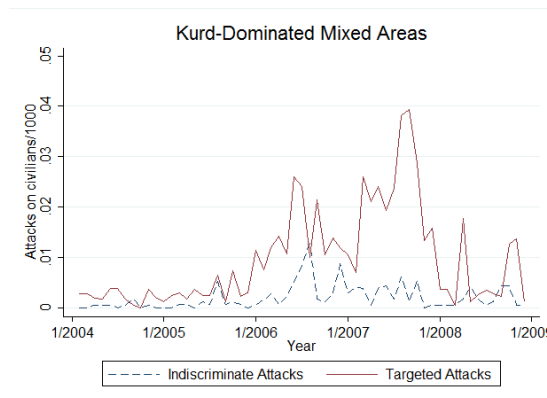
And finally, we can test the possibility that violence ultimately declined in these provinces due to the interaction of the standup of the SOI and the new American military strategy.

H16a: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

H16b: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Diyala and Ninewa between 2007 and 2008.

While Sunnis were the largest ethnic or sectarian group in Diyala and Ninewa, violence came much later to these areas than Anbar and Salah al Din, which were overwhelmingly Sunni. When it did arrive, the dynamics reflected multiple conflicts – ethnic cleansing of Kurds (Ninewa) and Shia (Diyala) *and* insurgent rebellion against the United States. Anbar and Salah al Din differed in this respect, as they only experienced insurgency. Still, the American Surge strategy, the emergence of the Sons of Iraq, or some combination of the two may have limited both forms of violence, as they presented significant obstacles for the Sunni militants who wanted to cleanse these neighborhoods of rival groups and prevent local citizens from aligning with the American occupation. The effectiveness of these efforts will be explored in the empirical section below, but for now, I will conclude this theoretical discussion with the violence that took place in Kurdish-majority Ta'meem/Kirkuk.

Figure 4.9. Selective and Indiscriminate Violence in Ta'meem (2004-2006)



Violence came to Ta'meem, re-named Kirkuk in 2006, around the same time it came to Diyala and Ninewa, the two other mixed areas near the Sunni strongholds of Anbar and Salah al Din. (See Figure 4.2 for its location.) Figure 4.9 and Table 4.7 show that selective violence increased significantly in the second period, as the mean rate of these attacks went from 4 attacks/100,000 per half year to 8. Interestingly, indiscriminate attacks actually remained fairly constant in terms of the mean rate. However, we can see that the half-year with the highest rate of such attacks (6/100,000) occurred in the earlier period.

Table 4.7. Summary Statistics of Violent Attacks and US Counterinsurgent Efforts in Ta'meem

	Observations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Overall					
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	30	0.012	0.01	0	0.06
Targeted Attacks/1,000	30	0.06	0.06	0	0.24
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	40	15.57	16.39	0	62.76
Avg. Battalion per capita	40	0.58	0.74	0	2.33
2004-2006					
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	18	0.01	0.01	0	0.06
Targeted Attacks/1,000	18	0.04	0.04	0	0.15
Public Goods	24	10	10.36	0	32.1

Spending (\$ per capita)					
Avg. Battalion per capita	24	0.56	0.73	0	2.33
			2007-2008		
Indiscriminate Attacks/1,000	12	0.01	0.01	0	0.04
Targeted Attacks/1,000	12	0.08	0.07	0.005	0.24
Public Goods Spending (\$ per capita)	16	23.91	20.26	1.46	62.76
Avg. Battalion per capita	16	0.6	0.78	0	2.33

An examination of the qualitative evidence suggests that Sunni insurgents spent much of 2006 seeking to displace the Kurdish majority that had returned to Kirkuk after being forcibly displaced from the area during the Ba’athist era under Saddam Hussein (Windawi and Barnes 2006). If the insurgency was seeking to establish control over the area and move it from a zone of Kurdish control to one of their own, we can imagine that they would first seek to demonstrate the inability of those Kurdish forces to protect the population, and so they would carry out indiscriminate attacks seeking to sow fear. At the same time, the reliance on such attacks suggests they did not yet have the presence necessary to compel civilians to alter their behavior such that they would switch and cast their allegiance to the insurgents. However, we can imagine that these Sunni insurgents linked to al Qaeda (Oppel and al-Ansary 2006) would not have given these civilians an opportunity to do so, as they more likely would have engaged in ethnic cleansing, as they did in Diyala and Ninewa. And as was true throughout much of the country during this period, primary security responsibility was delegated to local Iraqi forces, as American forces remained detached and hands-off. Again, we would expect this pre-Surge strategy to have no significant effect on violence:

H17a: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Ta’meem between 2004 and 2006.

H17b: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Ta'meem between 2004 and 2006.

As violence entered the 2007-2008 period and the province was now called Kirkuk, we see that targeted attacks continued to increase, while indiscriminate bombings leveled off. When targeted attacks declined in late 2007, it does not appear that the American presence changed in terms of absolute numbers. Therefore, it may be the case that the change in American strategy, which included increased investments in public goods projects, led to an eventual decrease in both forms of violence:

H18a: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

H18b: American security efforts are not associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

Again, there is evidence that the Sons of Iraq were in operation in the area (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012:31), and for reasons already discussed, they may have been better positioned to combat the remaining insurgents than the American forces.

H19a: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

H19b: The Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

Finally, as was true elsewhere, the decline in both selective and indiscriminate violence may have resulted from a combination of the two:

H20a: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of indiscriminate violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

H20b: The interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the emergence of the Sons of Iraq movement is associated with decreased levels of selective violence against civilians in Kirkuk between 2007 and 2008.

Before concluding, it is worth mentioning one additional explanation for the decline in indiscriminate attacks between periods. It might be the case that such attacks in the earlier period had their intended effect: they spread enough fear among Kurds and other groups that they all simply left the area and fled to the stability and security of the other Kurdish regions where insurgents did not go. If Kirkuk could be cleansed of remaining Kurds via selective targeting and cleansing, it would mean that control had shifted away from the Kurdish forces to the insurgents. However, as Figure 4.9 suggests, this control would not last past 2007, as violence of all kinds would decline and control would shift back away from the insurgents.

In this section, I have tried to shed light on the violence that existed across the different regions of Iraq. I have suggested why violence occurred in the patterns it did over time, and most importantly, I have offered a series of potential causal explanations regarding the effectiveness of American and local attempts to control it. I have suggested that the American posture prior to the Surge did little to shape the violence experienced by everyday civilians, as it largely avoided the messy and difficult work of what might be called “true” counterinsurgency: permanently locating forces in the communities, gaining the trust and allegiance of the population, and separating the violent actors from those wishing for a return to normalcy. At the same time, in exploring the role of domestic political actors, I have suggested the possibility that even with the new Surge

approach, American forces were going to have a hard time gaining the trust and allegiance of the population, as their long-term status – and their ability to guarantee the population’s security – might always have been in doubt. I turn now to the empirical analysis, which is a first cut at determining the effect of these efforts on civilian violence.

Empirical Analysis

This section seeks to determine the effect of American counterinsurgency efforts and steps by Iraqi political actors to limit violence in that country. More specifically, it will examine whether the billions of dollars invested in public goods and the presence and effort of American service personnel had any effect on limiting the violence experienced by everyday Iraqis, or whether the Sons of Iraq or ceasefire of the Mahdi Army played a more prominent role. As I did in the theoretical discussion above, I break up the analysis into four regions, Sunni, Shia, Kurd, and mixed. For the mixed regions, I again separate these according to which ethnic or sectarian group predominates. To overcome the potential problems that arise from some of the small sample sizes in the region-level analyses, I will conclude the section with an evaluation of the effect of these factors on the national level.

I begin the analysis, however, with a description of the data. Within each of the four ethnic or sectarian regions (Sunni, Shia, Kurd, Mixed), provinces are the largest administrative unit, and they are further broken down into districts. There are 104 districts spread across 18 provinces. The level of analysis is the district-half-year.³⁸ There are two dependent variables:

³⁸ The primary reason for using the district half-year, as opposed to the district-month, relates to one of the key independent variables, development spending. The average development project lasted 93 days, and it is difficult given the data to determine how the funds for projects lasting more than a month were distributed across those months. The drawback, of course, is that we lose the sharpness and clarity that comes with more fine-grained data. See page 8 of the Empirical Studies of Conflict Iraq Civil War

rates of targeted and indiscriminate attacks against civilians at the district-half-year level, which is the same level of aggregation used in previous studies (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011; Berman et al 2013) that explore attacks against counterinsurgent forces.³⁹ Kalyvas (2006:141-45) engages in a lengthy discussion regarding the nature of and motivations for these two types of violence, suggesting that both are attempts to engender “collaboration via deterrence. The distinction is based on the level at which ‘guilt’ (and hence targeting) is determined....[O]ne way to operationalize this distinction is by noting that selective violence entails personalized targeting, whereas indiscriminate violence implies collective targeting” (142). To capture these two distinct types of attacks, I rely on data from Condra and Shapiro (2012), who distinguish between the killing of civilians that occurs in the course of violence between insurgents and Iraqi or Coalition targets and the killing of civilians that occurs independent of such violence. Indiscriminate attacks are those recorded instances of attacks where civilians were targeted and killed either by bombs or explosives, most of which occurred in public spaces such as marketplaces or mosques. In contrast targeted violence includes all recorded instances where civilians were killed by “direct fire” or “selective violence” as coded by Condra and Shapiro (2012). In looking at the data, “direct fire” describes incidents where individuals were found dead with gunshot wounds, while “selective violence” incidents usually were those where individuals were found with gunshot wounds, but their bodies also showed signs of torture.

Dataset, Version 3, for details: https://web.space.princeton.edu/users/esocweb/ESOC%20Iraq/ESOC-I-v3_codebook.pdf.

³⁹ The tables presented throughout the chapter capture the summary statistics for the two dependent variables and the independent variables capturing the variation in American counterinsurgency efforts. I do not include summary statistics for the Sons of Iraq standup or the Mahdi Ceasefire discussed below because they are measured only with dummy variables.

These two categories capture the violence that is characterized by intentional targeting of particular civilians. These data come from Condra and Shapiro (2012).⁴⁰

The first series of independent variables reflect the efforts of American counterinsurgent forces. Following Berman et al (2013:16), I use public goods spending, American troop strength, and their interaction. Public goods investment is measured using per capita spending carried out under the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP), which was designed to allow military commanders to gain the population's support and collaboration by engaging in a wide range of small-scale public goods projects at the local level. Projects were developed in consultation with local community officials, thus ensuring that they were going to be useful and beneficial, which would then maximize the likelihood that civilians would be willing to assist them in defeating the insurgency. Troop strength data (Berman et al 2013 from Lee Lindsay 2013), which was gathered from press accounts, and counts the mean number of maneuver battalions present in a district over the course of a half-year.

The next set of independent variables capture the steps taken by local political actors to exert their authority and limit the ability of insurgent actors to carry out further violence. First, I include a variable for the emergence of the Sons of Iraq (SOI), which occurred in 2006-2007. Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012) note the month and year of the standup of the SOI at the US military's area of operation (AO) level based off of interviews with American commanders or when the first payments to the SOI were made by Coalition forces. While the AOs do not correspond perfectly to Iraqi political districts, Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro (2012) do note which districts most closely correspond to a given AO. I assign a 1 for all half-years during and after the SOI aligned with Coalition forces in a given district and a 0 for all others. The second of

⁴⁰ The data were collected through a collaboration with the authors and the Iraq Body Count (IBC), a non-profit that collects and makes public data on civilian casualties from the Iraq War. The count, which by IBC's own admission, is undoubtedly low, comes from media reports of incidents involving civilians.

these variables captures the imposition of a ceasefire by Muqtada al-Sadr on his Shiite militia, the Mahdi Army (JAM, for the acronym in Arabic). Because JAM had a presence in nearly all Shiite-majority districts, all districts where the Shiite vote share was over fifty percent received a 1 for the three half-years in the data where the ceasefire was in effect (i.e., second half of 2007 and both halves of 2008). All others receive a 0. Finally, each regression is weighted by population and include year effects, as is done in previous research (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011; Berman et al 2013).

As will be the case throughout the empirical analysis, I use a first differences model that controls for pre-existing trends in both the independent and dependent variables, as well as year effects. In the model for the Sunni areas, the difference in troop strength and development spending and lag the Sons of Iraq standup (SOI) are the independent variables.

$$v_{i,t} - v_{i,t-1} = \beta_1(s_{i,t} - s_{i,t-1}) + \beta_2(f_{i,t} - f_{i,t-1}) + \beta_3(v_{i,t-1} - v_{i,t-2}) + \beta_4(SOI_{i,t-1}) + \delta_t + \epsilon_{i,t-1}$$

where $v_{i,t}$ captures per capita attacks in district i in period t , $s_{i,t}$ is the amount of public goods spending, f is the troop density, and δ_t is the fixed effects for the year.

Sunni Region Analysis

I begin with Sunni-dominated provinces of Anbar and Salah al Din. The first series of hypotheses concern selective violence. Hypothesis 1a posited that the American presence prior to the Surge had no effect on patterns of targeted, selective violence against civilians in the Sunni-dominated regions. American forces were believed to have maintained a very disengaged presence that gave them little ability to interact with civilians, earn their trust, and provide security on their behalf. Hypothesis 2a, in contrast, suggested that the Surge's change in strategy to focus more on public goods provision and increased presence by those forces should have a

negative effect on the ability of violent actors to carry out targeted attacks on noncombatants in the later period. Hypothesis 3a stated that rather than the Americans shaping patterns of selective violence, the standup of the Sons of Iraq during this period should account for these reductions, as they were permanent actors in the area, and as such, had the opportunity to earn the trust of the population and could protect them from potential retribution by the remaining insurgent actors. Finally, Hypothesis 4a suggested that the SOI and American forces combined to produce the decline in violence, as the SOI fed intelligence to the well-armed Americans, who could then eliminate the insurgents, thereby reducing the targeting of civilians.

Table 4.8. Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Sunni-Dominated Regions, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP per capita	0.000592 (0.000602)	0.000101 (0.000700)	-0.000755 (0.00112)
Troops per capita	4.948 (3.289)	1.166 (1.558)	-1.172 (3.902)
CERP*Troops	-0.00941 (0.00855)	-0.0243 (0.0447)	0.0296 (0.0650)
Troops (t-1)	0.697 (2.128)	-1.412 (1.785)	-2.145 (2.575)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.0343 (0.0345)	-0.0375 (0.0262)
2005	-0.0325* (0.0181)		
2007		-0.00968	-0.0102

		(0.0178)	(0.0178)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	-0.661	-0.290**	-0.300**
	(0.499)	(0.126)	(0.125)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.137
			(0.106)
CERP* SOI Standup (t-1)			0.00161
			(0.00143)
Troops * SOI Standup (t-1)			5.782
			(5.627)
Constant	0.0489***	-0.00266	-0.000249
	(0.0123)	(0.0247)	(0.0207)
Observations	56	56	56
R-squared	0.456	0.436	0.467

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

In Table 4.8, Column 1 provides results related to Hypothesis 1a, and it shows that the combined effect of troop density and investment has no significant effect, although the sign is negative ($p=.291$). On their own, the coefficients of the constituent terms are in the opposite direction, suggesting that in the absence of the other, targeted attacks were likely to increase. While both investments and troop density are related to increased attacks, it is important to note the difference in the size of the coefficients, as the relationship between troop density and attacks is much greater, and not too far from achieving conventional levels of statistical significance ($p=.156$). Taken together it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions (perhaps due to the limited sample size), but there is some evidence that even prior to the Surge, this combination

may have had some effect in making it more difficult for insurgents to target individuals, meaning that the null result predicted is not supported. While not shown here, I also lag increases in troop presence and spending, as well as their interaction going back two years (4 six-month periods) and find no effect.

In Column 2, we see that despite the prediction of Hypothesis 2a, there is no definitive evidence that American counterinsurgency efforts had any effect on targeted violence during the Surge period. Adding an additional six-month lag on changes in troop density produces a negative, but insignificant coefficient. While the coefficient on the interaction of spending and troop density is negative, it is not close to statistically significant ($p=.596$), giving us little confidence. Also, as was the case in Column 1, the effect of each of these on their own is in the positive direction. Column 2 also allows for an initial investigation of Hypothesis 3a, and we can see that the Sons of Iraq appear to have had a negative effect on selective violence, which was predicted, although the finding lacks conventional statistical significance ($p=.337$). Again, I also lagged troop presence, spending, their interaction, and the SOI standup and find no effect.

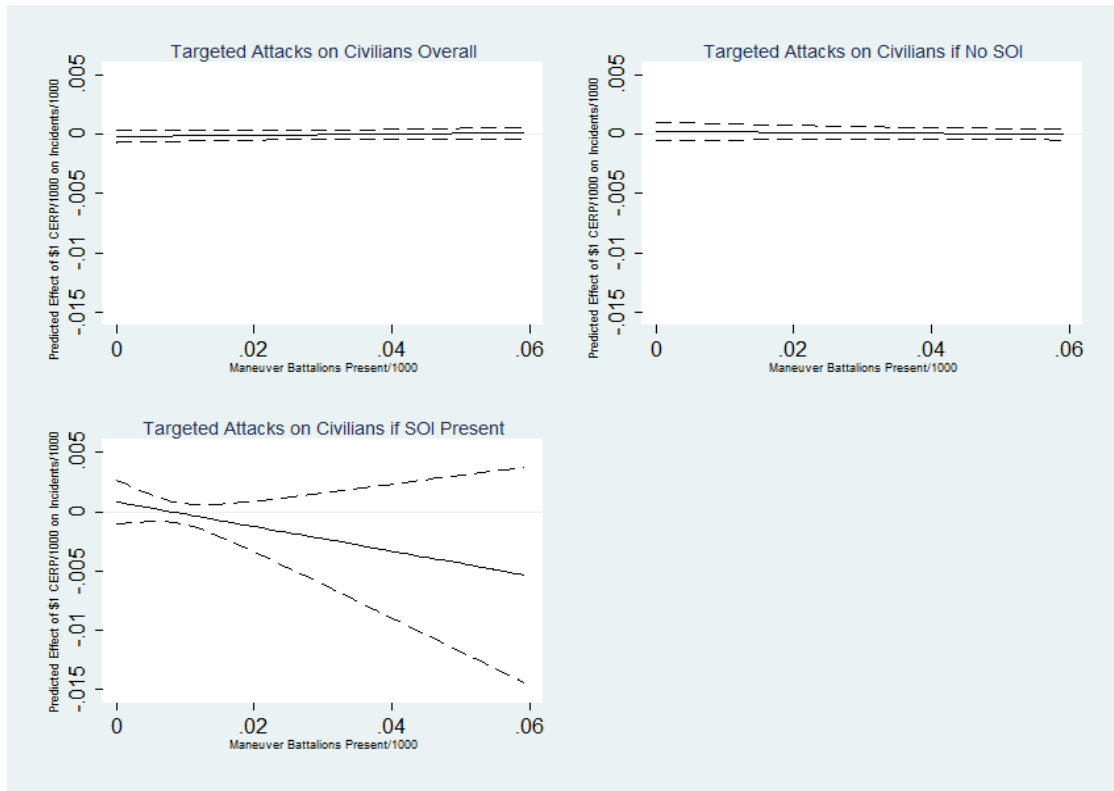
In Column 3, we have perhaps the full test of the three Surge hypotheses, as it measures the independent effect of American forces, the independent effect of the SOI, and their combined effect. Here, with respect to Hypothesis 2a, we see that the sign on the interaction term of spending and troops has now switched to positive, meaning that this combination, in the absence of the SOI, led to an increase in selective attacks on civilians. While this suggests that Hypothesis 2a is not supported, I also ran a separate analysis lagging four subsequent six-month periods, or two years, which I do not show here. In this analysis, all coefficients for troop density are negative, and the one year and two year lags are both statistically significant. Lagged public spending also produces a negative effect, with the six- and eighteen-month lags reaching

statistical significance. Introducing lags of the interaction of the two again yields a negative effect over time, with the six-month, one year, and two year lags all reaching statistical significance. (The eighteen month lag is positive, but not statistically significant.)

On its own, the coefficient on the SOI standup is negative and, although not meeting the conventional thresholds of statistical significance ($p=.163$), it does lend support to Hypothesis 3a, as well as the idea put forward by Lindsay and Long (2013) that the SOI were effective in Anbar, even in the absence American counterinsurgents. Interestingly, none of the lags are negative or statistically significant, suggesting that the negative effect may, in fact, only be temporary. However, there is still some evidence supporting Hypothesis 4a, as the interaction of troop density, investment, and the SOI also produced a negative (and larger) coefficient. Finally, the six month and year lags which I also ran here are negative and statistically significant, while the eighteen- and twenty-four month lags are negative but not significant.

Relying on coefficients alone to interpret these marginal effects is difficult, and so Figure 4.10 allows us to look further understand how these patterns change with the inclusion of the Sons of Iraq standup. In the top left graph, we see how levels of targeted attacks change as spending and troop density increase independent of the inclusion of the SOI standup variable in the model. The other two graphs show the marginal effect of including the SOI variable. We can see that when the SOIs were active in an area, the effect of increasing spending and troop density appears much more pronounced than when they were absent.

Figure 4.10. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Sunni Dominated Regions



Hypotheses 1b through 4b involve the effect of these efforts and dynamics on indiscriminate violence, where violent actors do not target individuals to engender compliance, but rather the entire community. Here, I suggested in Hypothesis 1b that, despite what was largely thought to be a restrained and distant posture, the large American troop presence might make it more difficult for insurgents to carry out such attacks in the pre-Surge period. Hypothesis 2b posited that although troop density decreased in these provinces post-2006, the more engaged presence made it more difficult for insurgents to carry out these attacks. Likewise, Hypothesis 3b examined the possibility that, just as the SOI was able to reduce targeted attacks, so, too would they make it more difficult for insurgent actors to use indiscriminate violence. Finally, Hypothesis 4 reflects the idea that indiscriminate attacks declined due to the combined,

synergized efforts (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012) of American counterinsurgents and the Sons of Iraq.

Table 4.9. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Sunni-Dominated Regions, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP per capita	0.000417** (0.000182)	4.73e-05 (0.000120)	0.000191 (0.000447)
Troops per capita	2.400* (1.270)	0.787 (0.908)	0.956 (1.543)
CERP*Troops	-0.00708** (0.00258)	0.00322 (0.00892)	-0.00175 (0.0253)
Troops (t-1)	-0.0689 (0.624)	0.382 (0.879)	0.278 (0.980)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.0179 (0.0134)	-0.0158* (0.00905)
2005	-0.000876 (0.00335)		
2007		-0.00265 (0.00861)	-0.00125 (0.00686)
Indiscriminate Attacks (t-1)	-0.598*** (0.156)	-0.542*** (0.135)	-0.493** (0.187)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.00583 (0.0435)
CERP* SOI Standup (t-1)			-9.15e-05 (0.000546)
Troops * SOI Standup (t-1)			0.325 (2.196)

Constant	0.00293 (0.00179)	0.0107 (0.0108)	0.00900 (0.00786)
Observations	56	56	56
R-squared	0.445	0.422	0.426

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.9, which is structured in the same way as Table 4.8, shows the results pertaining to indiscriminate attacks in Sunni-dominated areas. In Column 1, we see that changes in troop density accompanied by changes in investment in public goods produce a statistically significant decline in indiscriminate attacks, although the coefficient is quite small, suggesting support for Hypothesis 1b. However, this is not for the reason suggested in the theoretical discussion. There, I suggested that we might expect to see such a result due to the significant troop density, rather than any combined effect. Here, troop density on its own is responsible for a rather strong increase in such attacks. (CERP spending is also associated with an increase in attacks, although the coefficient is much smaller.) The result of a 0.7 decrease in attacks per 100,000 people for every unit increase in dollars spent*troop density raises the possibility that when put into effect, even on the limited basis that it was during this period, the effort to “clear, hold, and build” did make it more difficult for insurgents to indiscriminately attack civilians. The lagged effects of increased troop density, per capita spending, and the interaction of the two, while again not shown, are insignificant.

Interestingly, however, when we move to Hypotheses 2b and Column 2, the lack of significant or negative coefficients on the spending and troop density variables indicates that this effect did not obtain during the Surge period, suggesting the decline in troops and spending during this period in the Sunni areas noted in Table 4.1 was not compensated for by the wider

simultaneous change in posture taken by American troops. In Column 2, we can also see the effect of the SOI standup, which was discussed as Hypothesis 3b. Here, the effect of the SOI is negative, as predicted. And while the result does not achieve conventional levels of statistical significance ($p=.206$), it is suggestive of an effect. The lagged effects of all four variables – increases in troop density and spending, their interaction, and the introduction of the SOI – across the four subsequent six-month periods are all insignificant, as well.

In Column 3, the full model, we see that again, American efforts appear to have little meaningful effect on rates of indiscriminate attacks in the Surge period, providing further evidence against Hypothesis 2b. This is true even after the lags are included. However, Hypothesis 3b finds further support, as the Sons of Iraq, when active independent of American forces, were associated with declines in indiscriminate violence at statistically significant levels, although this effect disappears over the four subsequent time periods. When the SOI is combined with American troop density and investment, the coefficient is in the expected direction, but it lacks any statistical significance ($p=.894$). However, the effect does gain significance six months and a year later, and remains negative but insignificant following that time. Further, when spending and troops are interacted independently with the SOI, there is no discernable effect, suggesting again that Hypothesis 4b cannot be supported.

In Figure 4.11, we again see the marginal effects. In the upper left, we see that the interaction of increased spending and troop density does not produce a discernable change in violence. The other two graphs show that when the SOI were present in a district, the effect is perhaps slightly more negative than when they are not, although there is no significant difference between the two.

Figure 4.11. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Sunni Dominated Regions

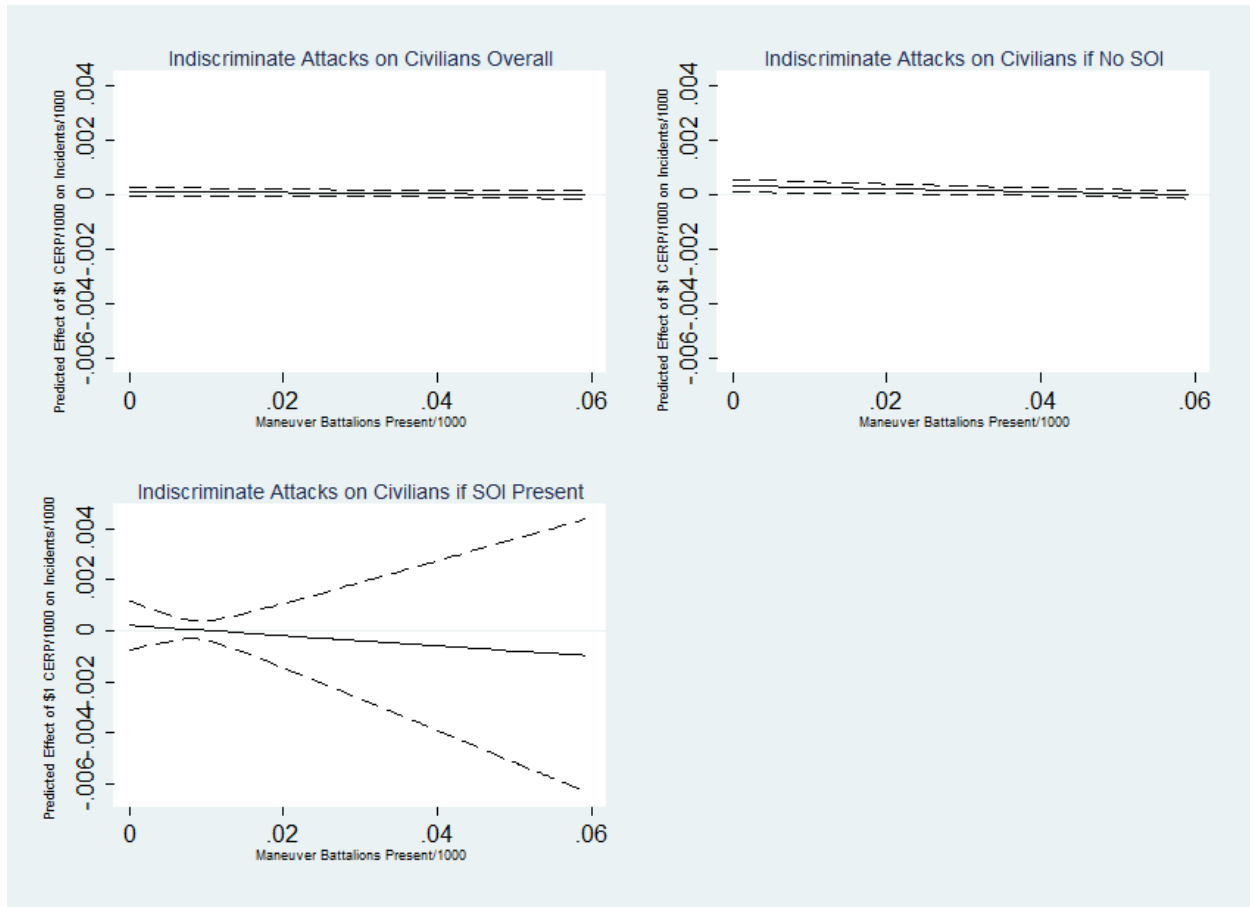


Table 4.10. Summary of Results from Sunni-Dominated Regions

Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No/Suggestive)
<i>Selective Attacks</i>	
1a. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	No
2a. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
3a. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	Suggestive
4a. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	Suggestive
<i>Indiscriminate Attacks</i>	
1b. American efforts, pre-Surge – negative effect	Yes
2b. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
3b. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	Yes
4b. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No

These results cast some initial doubt on the idea that American forces played a significant role in the reduction of violence in the Surge period, at least right away, in the Sunni-dominated provinces of Anbar and Salah al Din. Instead, the effect on targeted attacks only becomes apparent after a year. Further, the evidence, albeit inconclusive in terms of selective attacks, suggests that these efforts did play a role in reducing violence prior to the Surge. Further, they did so not just through significant troop density, but with a combination of troops and investments in public goods. As noted earlier, individual commanders did engage in “Surge”-like efforts during this period in these regions, and it may be the case that they did have the desired effect. This, of course, raises the question of why these efforts did not appear to work in the latter period. To answer this, it is important to recall that violence moved from these Sunni-dominated provinces to more mixed areas, and it may be the case that as violence migrated in 2007, the impact of the Surge may show up more in these areas. This possibility will be examined in turn, but I now turn to the analysis of the data from the Shia provinces of Iraq.

Shia Region Analysis

I argued in the development of Hypotheses 5a and b and 6a and b that American efforts in Iraq were unlikely to have an effect on the violence experienced by civilians living in the Shia-dominated regions of Iraq, either prior to or during the Surge period. Even after the change in strategy that defined the Surge, Shia leadership pushed strongly for an expeditious American exit, which would have made it difficult for everyday Shia to trust that American forces would have been there to protect them from retribution should they decide to denounce the violent actors in their communities. Instead, in Hypotheses 7a and b, I suggested that the decision by Muqtada al-Sadr to enact a total ceasefire in August of 2007 accounted for much of the decline

in both forms of violence in the Shia-dominated regions of Iraq, as his group would be able to effectively monitor and prevent defections from the ceasefire, which would limit both selective and indiscriminate attacks.

Table 4.11. Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Shia-Dominated Regions, by period

	(1)	(2)
	2004-2006	2007-2008
CERP	0.000584 (0.000470)	5.60e-05 (0.000162)
Troops	2.091 (2.584)	-0.863 (1.398)
CERP*Troops	-0.0562 (0.104)	0.0273 (0.0718)
Troops (t-1)	3.433 (3.107)	-2.026 (1.568)
2005	-0.0146*** (0.00520)	
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	0.0600 (0.644)	-0.294*** (0.0897)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		-0.00812 (0.00930)
Constant	0.0177*** (0.00364)	-0.00525 (0.00447)
Observations	145	150
R-squared	0.346	0.285

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.11 displays the results for the targeted violence hypotheses. In Column 1, we do not see evidence indicating that the American posture during the pre-Surge period led to a decline in targeted attacks in the Shia regions of Iraq. The coefficients on increasing CERP and troop density suggest that such measures actually increased violence when the other was absent, although neither result is statistically significant ($p=.222$ and $.423$, respectively), and the coefficient on CERP suggests that there is essentially no relationship. When both increasing CERP and troop density are observed, their combined effect becomes negative, although again, the coefficient is not statistically significant ($p=.593$). This negative coefficient suggests that we cannot fully confirm the null hypothesis in 5a, but have reason to believe that it is accurate. Additionally, and while again not shown, after including lagged measures of increases in spending and troop density, as well as their interaction, the lack of effect from each, as well as their interaction, remains consistent over the following two years,

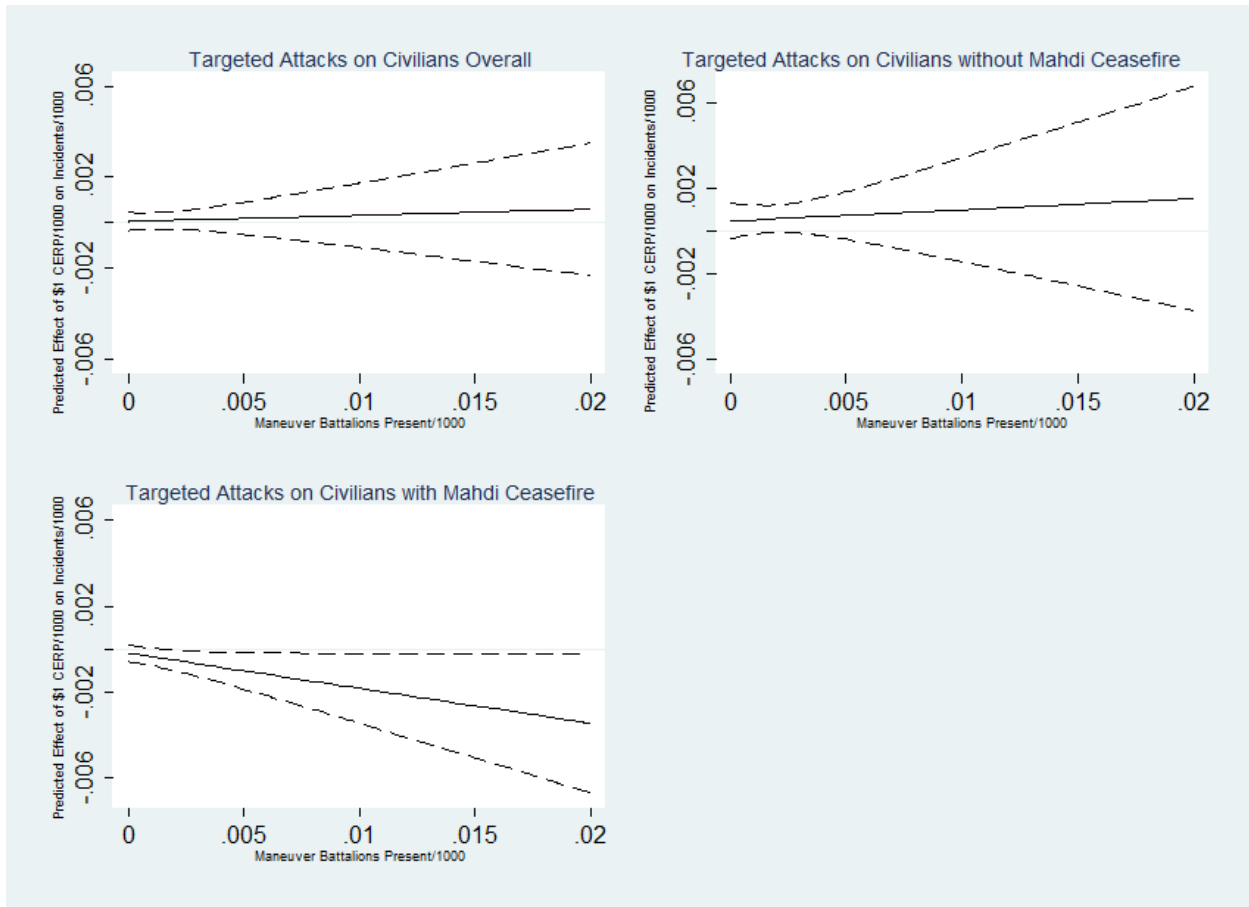
Column 2 captures the Surge period. In this period, the coefficient on increasing troop density absent investments is negative. To explain this difference in the effect of troop density across periods, we perhaps might consider the relative scale of these increases. Prior to the Surge, troop levels in these regions were very small (mean of 0.0013 battalions per capita), and increasing them perhaps might have been a source of concern to the violent actors, but doing so did not inhibit their ability to act, which led to increases in civilian targeting. However, during the Surge, the troops levels were far greater (0.003 battalions per capita), and any increases at this level, along with the more engaged posture, may have simply made it more difficult for these actors to engage in violence. This negative substantive effect of increasing troop density, while not statistically significant ($p=.541$), would provide evidence against Hypothesis 6a, which predicted no effect. However, it is difficult to reconcile this finding with the coefficient on the

interaction of increasing troops and development, which is positive, although not statistically significant ($p=.706$). This suggests that when these two were at higher levels than in the pre-Surge period and increasing, selective violence actually increased. Developing a plausible explanation for this is difficult, although it may be that where investments were high, troop density was low enough such that violent actors could still target individuals whose loyalties were questionable.⁴¹ Overall, these results cannot confirm the null result posited by Hypothesis 6a, but they suggest American forces had little effect on selective violence in these areas during the Surge. When including the four period lags for each of these variables, the coefficients for the first two six-month periods are negative, but they then become positive for the second year, and the interaction of increased spending and troop density is actually associated with a statistically significant increase in targeted attacks in these regions.

I also included in Column 2 the lagged indicator of the Mahdi Ceasefire. While Hypothesis 7a posited that the Ceasefire should have led to a decline in targeted violence, our evidence suggests that we cannot be confident that it did. The coefficient is negative, but small (a 0.8 attack/100,000) and lacking statistical significance ($p=.388$) and the lagged indicators, while not shown, also lack any statistical support. This lack of an effect may be attributable to the fact that, despite the tensions between the Mahdi Army and the SCIRI-backed Badr Organization, most of the targeted violence the Mahdi Army engaged in was directed at Sunnis, which would have occurred in the more mixed provinces and Baghdad in particular. Such a possibility will be adjudicated below, following the discussion of the results pertaining to indiscriminate violence in these Shia-dominated areas.

⁴¹ Indeed, troop density and public goods spending in Shia regions during the Surge period were only weakly correlated (0.09), indicating that while trying to win the support of the population with development aid, the Americans may not have had enough troops present in those areas to protect anyone who might have been willing to give them their support.

Figure 4.12. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Shia Dominated Regions



In Figure 4.12, we see that increasing spending and troops has no effect on targeted attacks in the Shia-dominated regions. However, when we examine their effect in the presence or absence of the Mahdi Ceasefire, we see that these efforts produce a substantive, if not significant, decline in these attacks.

The hypotheses relating to indiscriminate violence in these Shia-dominated areas are consistent with those relating to targeted violence. However, the results are somewhat different substantively, if not statistically. In Column 1 of Table 4.12, the interaction of troop density and public goods investment yields a positive effect on indiscriminate violence. While not

statistically significant by any means ($p=.945$) it hints at the possibility that as these factors increased at the relatively low levels of the pre-Surge period, it made targeting individuals more difficult, and so, violent actors may have then resorted to indiscriminate attacks to limit the possibility of defections. At the same time, though, any indiscriminate violence in these areas was potentially committed by Sunni extremists to foment sectarian violence, rather than by local Shias, and so we should be cautious when drawing any conclusions in this regard. Additionally, as was the case with selective violence, indiscriminate attacks increased in the presence of increasing force density, while they had almost no relationship with public goods investments, although, again, neither coefficient is statistically significant. Finally, the addition of a six-month lag in the changed troop presence does not result in a statistically significant change in violence ($p=.458$), although the sign is negative. However, this effect appears to be temporary, as the trend of increased attacks in response to increased force density returns in the next period, as the twelve-, eighteen-, and twenty four-month lags all possess positive coefficients, with the twelve and twenty four month periods reaching statistical significance. Additionally, the lagged increases in per capita spending and the interaction of spending and troop density appear to have no effect. Based on these results, we can feel comfortable in stating that American efforts in these areas prior to the Surge did not have a negative effect on indiscriminate violence.

Table 4.12. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Shia-Dominated Regions, by period

	(1)	(2)
	2004-2006	2006-2008
CERP	-2.31e-05 (4.78e-05)	-6.28e-05 (4.92e-05)
Troops	0.494	0.334

	(0.475)	(0.404)
CERP*Troops	0.00117	-0.0757
	(0.0170)	(0.0450)
Troops (t-1)	-0.536	-0.620
	(0.715)	(0.430)
2005	-0.00172*	
	(0.000854)	
Indiscriminate Attacks (t-1)	-0.503***	-0.0145
	(0.0949)	(0.138)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		-0.000319
		(0.000592)
Constant	0.00229***	-0.000836***
	(0.000360)	(0.000267)
Observations	145	150
R-squared	0.451	0.311

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The Surge environment is examined in Column 2. Here, we see that, contrary to Hypothesis 6b, indiscriminate violence declines in the presence of increasing CERP and troop density, and it only narrowly misses statistical significance ($p=.101$). This effect is temporary, as the coefficient for the lagged interaction is positive for the two years following this initial decline. However, in those districts where there is no CERP but troop density is increasing, indiscriminate attacks also appear to increase, although the result is not statistically significant ($p=.413$). The six-month lagged change in troop levels also is negative, and with a p-value of .158, it suggests that increasing troop density may eventually have had some effect, but attacks once again increase in response when additional lags are included. And as was the case in the

pre-Surge period, increasing the level of CERP has no real discernable effect, a trend that remains consistent throughout the next two years, as well. Finally, with respect to Hypothesis 7b, we do not see that the imposition of the Mahdi Army ceasefire had any meaningful effect on indiscriminate violence. Again, this lack of a result may stem from the fact that prior to the ceasefire, the Mahdi Army focused its violent action in more mixed regions where there were Sunni populations, rather than in these regions that were much more homogenous.

Again if we look at the marginal effects graphs in Figure 4.13, we can see that when we include the ceasefire in the model, its effect, as shown in the bottom left figure, does not change the effect of spending and troop density on these indiscriminate attacks. Areas without the ceasefire, however, see an increase in attacks in response to these American efforts.

Figure 4.13. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Shia Dominated Regions

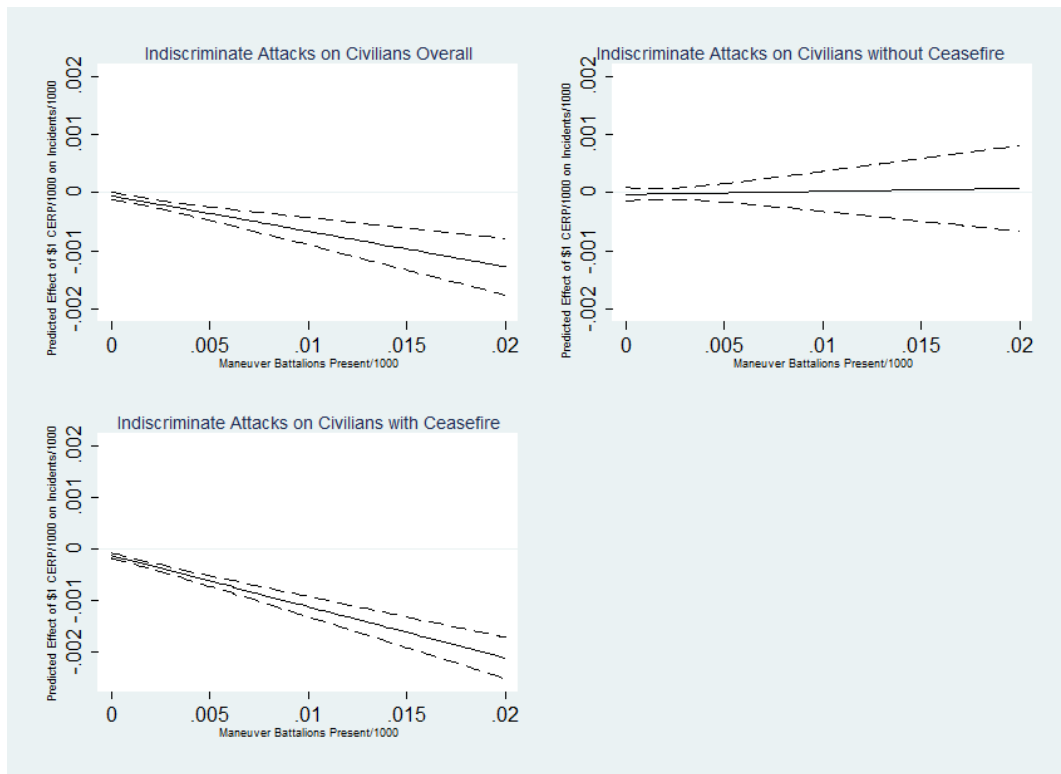


Table 4.13. Summary of Results from Shia-Dominated Regions

Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No/Suggestive)
<i>Selective Attacks</i>	
5a. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	Suggestive
6a. American efforts, 2007-2008 – no neg. effect	Suggestive
7a. Mahdi Army Ceasefire – negative effect	No
<i>Indiscriminate Attacks</i>	
5b. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	Suggestive
6b. American efforts, 2007-2008 – no neg. effect	No
7b. Mahdi Army Ceasefire – negative effect	No

Like those from the Sunni-dominated regions, the data from the Shia regions indicate that we cannot have much confidence in the idea that American efforts had a negative impact on the violence experienced by civilians, either before or during the Surge.⁴² Neither changes in CERP nor troop density, nor the interaction of the two, yielded a statistically significant reduction in either selective or indiscriminate violence, regardless of the time period. I have suggested that this may be due to the fact local Shia civilians were unlikely to believe in the long-term presence of American forces, and were subsequently unwilling to provide them with intelligence regarding the identities and whereabouts of existing violent actors. Similarly, the evidence suggests that the Mahdi Army’s decision to engage in a ceasefire did not have a meaningful impact on violence in the Shia areas. However, I have suggested that this effect, if it exists, is likely to be found in the more mixed areas, where the decision to refrain from further ethnic cleansing of Sunnis would carry greater impact. I turn now to an analysis of Baghdad, which, while majority Shia, contained many Sunnis who would be targeted for such cleansing.

Baghdad Analysis

⁴² The lone exception where there is evidence of a negative effect is on indiscriminate violence in the Sunni areas prior to the Surge.

As with the previous set of hypotheses, I argued in Hypotheses 8a and b that the American force presence in Baghdad would have little impact on the violence that took place there before the Surge. In Hypotheses 9a and b, I test the possibility that the Surge's change in posture and increase in public goods investment and troop levels into Baghdad actually did have a measureable effect in reducing violence. The alternative theory arguing that the Sons of Iraq were responsible for any reductions in violence is tested with Hypotheses 10a and b, and the interaction of these two is evaluated in Hypotheses 11a and b. Finally, Hypotheses 12a and b examine the possibility that the Madhi Army's ceasefire led to reduced targeted and indiscriminate attacks in Baghdad.

In Table 4.14, we see the results with respect to the targeted violence hypotheses. At the outset, it is important to note the small sample size of only 32. Therefore, we should be cautious about drawing any definitive conclusions about the results. Column 1 shows that prior to the Surge, we do not see a statistically significant association between American efforts in terms of troop density and public goods spending and reductions in selective violence against civilians in Baghdad. The interaction of troops and spending changes is negative, but it lacks statistical significance ($p=.183$), and the same is true for changes in troop density on its own ($p=.453$). On the other hand, CERP appears to have almost no effect at all during this period on these attacks. The lagged change in troop density is also negative, but its high p-value ($p=.922$) suggests that we can take little from it. The effect, or lack thereof, remains the same when we add in additional lags. Hypothesis 8a predicted a null result, however, and based on the sign of the coefficient on the interaction and its p-value alone, we cannot confirm that these factors did not have a negative effect.

Table 4.14. Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	9.53e-05 (0.000724)	-0.00469 (0.00294)	-0.00195 (0.00395)
Troops	-2.449 (3.080)	-8.785 (10.45)	-6.872 (21.86)
CERP*Troops	-0.104 (0.0702)	0.518 (0.347)	0.0228 (0.765)
Troops (t-1)	-0.306 (3.014)	14.01 (13.02)	17.34 (13.78)
2005	-0.0158 (0.00912)		
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.0266 (0.0710)	0.00250 (0.0640)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		-0.136** (0.0439)	-0.181*** (0.0600)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	-0.415** (0.158)	-0.159 (0.247)	-0.230 (0.298)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			1.657 (1.101)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.0109 (0.00658)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			-83.87 (50.25)
Constant	0.0274*** (0.00492)	0.0681* (0.0337)	0.0869** (0.0341)

Observations	32	32	32
R-squared	0.530	0.521	0.617

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

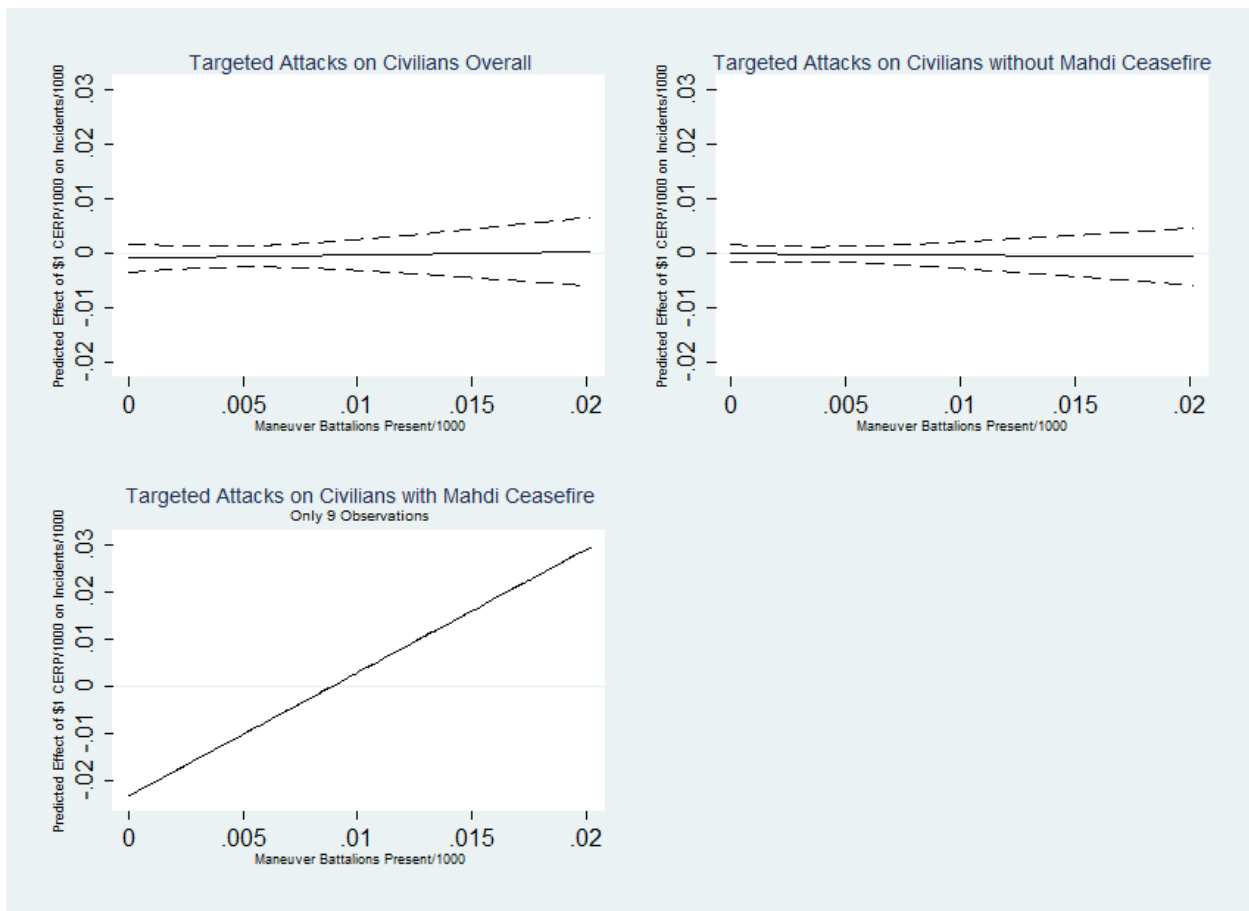
In Column 2, we have the results for the Surge period. Here, we see that, in contrast to the expectation posited in Hypothesis 9a, we see no significant relationship between American efforts and targeted violence against civilians during this time. The interaction of changes in troop density and spending is associated with increased violence, although the result is not statistically significant. Again, changes in CERP spending on its own has little effect, while changes in troop density are associated with fewer attacks, although this result is also not significant ($p=.428$). This is in contrast to the result on the lagged change in density, which is positive ($p=.318$). While we do not see confirmation of Hypothesis 9a, this at least substantively suggests that the increase in troops brought about an initial spike in attacks over the first six months that was brought under control in the subsequent half-year period, and this result is robust when including an additional three six-month lags, although they do not achieve standard levels of statistical significance. Column 2 allows us to evaluate other hypotheses, as well. 10a stated that the standup of the Sons of Iraq brought about the drop in violence. We see that on its own, however, the SOI standup did not have a statistically significant effect, although the coefficient is in the negative direction. (This effect becomes positive in the subsequent periods, however, following the initial dip in such attacks.) Finally, Hypothesis 12a predicted that the Mahdi ceasefire of August 2007 was associated with decreased levels of violence. Here, and in contrast to its effect in the Shia-majority provinces, the ceasefire does have a significant negative association with targeted attacks, both in the subsequent period and the following six months, although that result is not statistically significant.

Column 3 of Table 4.14 displays the results once they include the interaction of American counterinsurgency efforts and the SOI standup. As was the case in Column 2, the interaction of CERP and troop density changes is positive, the coefficient on troop changes is negative but insignificant ($p=.758$), and CERP appears to have no discernable effect. Taken together, we can reject Hypothesis 9a, although the coefficient does eventually become negative for these variables after about a year. On its own, the SOI standup appears to have no effect on violence in the following six-month period, or in subsequent ones, which would go against Hypothesis 10a. The interaction of changes in troop density and public goods investment with the SOI standup produces a positive coefficient that, while not statistically significant ($p=.155$), is certainly suggestive, although we observe no effect when looking at later periods. Interestingly, however, when we look at the component parts of the Surge as they interacted independently, we see that they do have a negative effect. In particular, the coefficient on the interaction of changes in troop density with the SOI is very strong, and is quite close to being statistically significant ($p=.117$). Likewise, the coefficient of the interaction of CERP and the standup is also negative, although the coefficient is much smaller ($p=.121$). However, we can still reject Hypothesis 11a, as there is no statistically significant evidence supporting the idea that the interaction of American efforts and the SOI led to a decrease in targeted violence. Finally, we do see further confirmation of the effect of the Madhi ceasefire (Hypothesis 12a), as its negative coefficient is highly statistically significant six months later, although the effect loses significance in a second six-month period.

Figures 4.14 and 4.15 show the marginal effects of these factors on selective attacks in Baghdad. In the top left of Figure 4.14, we see that the effect of increasing spending and troop density is not different from zero when neither the Ceasefire or the SOI standup are present in

the model. Unfortunately, the limited number of observations where the SOIs were present and the Ceasefire was in effect do not allow us to see much beyond the fact that targeted attacks on civilians increased in these contexts. In areas where the Mahdi Ceasefire was not in effect (i.e., the Sunni-majority districts of Baghdad), we see that the effect of the American efforts is not altogether different from when they are not included at all.

Figure 4.14. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad when SOI Not Present



In Figure 4.15, when the Sons of Iraq are present, increased spending and troop density lead to an increase in violence. When the Ceasefire is included in the model, we see that in areas

where it is in effect, it appears to not alter the effect of the American efforts. Unfortunately, we have too few observations to generate meaningful predicted probabilities for how targeted violence might shift in areas where the Ceasefire and the SOI are both present, although it appears that the effect of the Ceasefire is negligible.

Figure 4.15. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad when SOI Are Present

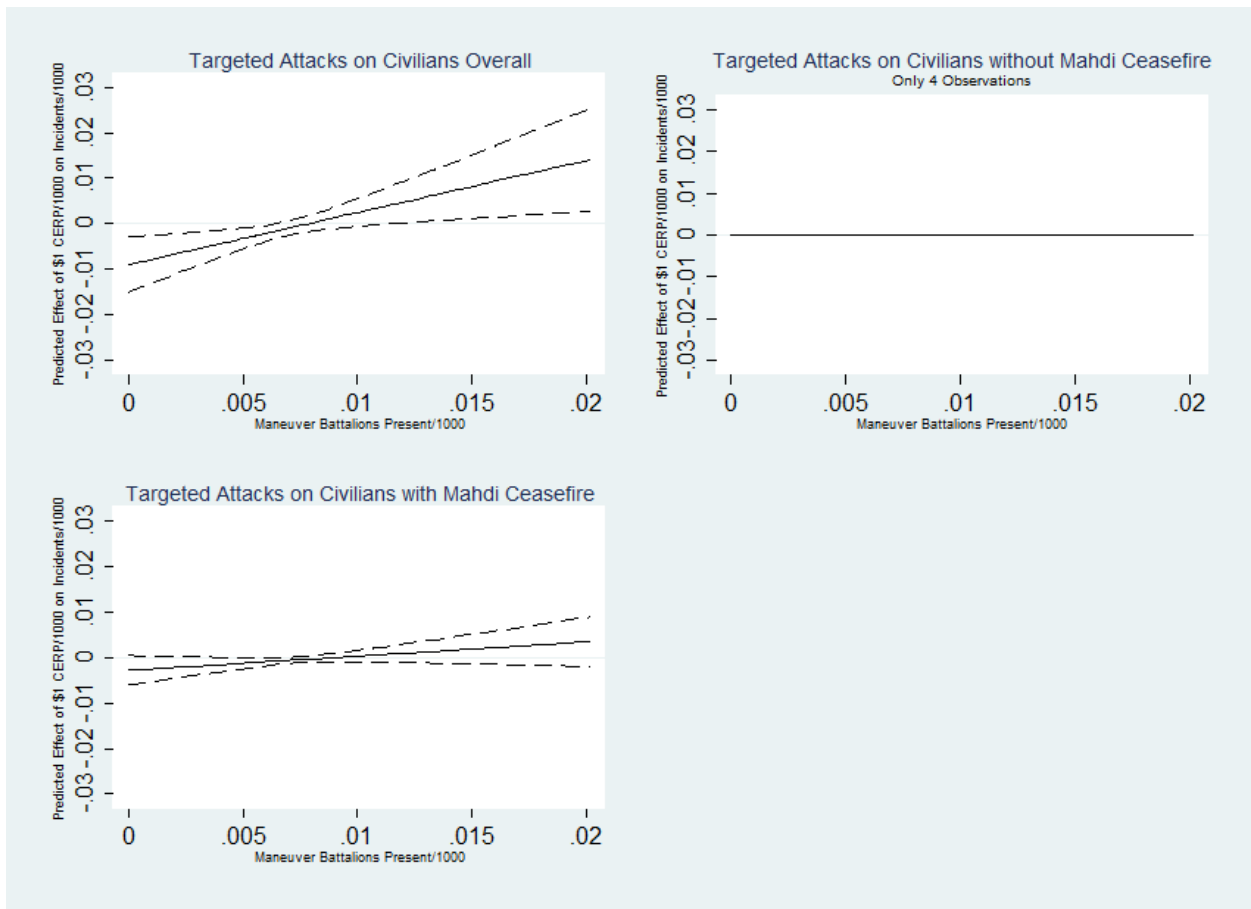


Table 4.15. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	-0.000418 (0.000472)	0.000240 (0.000380)	0.000277 (0.000756)
Troops	1.327* (0.696)	-0.383 (2.187)	-0.232 (4.207)
CERP*Troops	-0.0227 (0.0325)	-0.0502 (0.0473)	-0.0782 (0.148)
Troops (t-1)	1.944* (1.015)	1.631 (2.265)	1.715 (2.637)
2005	-0.0121*** (0.00275)		
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.0268 (0.0207)	-0.0264* (0.0135)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		0.00352 (0.00864)	0.00330 (0.00946)
Indiscriminate Attacks (t-1)	-0.229 (0.237)	-0.122 (0.197)	-0.0998 (0.292)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.0398 (0.230)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			-7.68e-05 (0.00137)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			-1.615 (11.92)
Constant	0.0152*** (0.00204)	0.00550 (0.00692)	0.00561 (0.00675)

Observations	32	32	32
R-squared	0.660	0.390	0.396

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

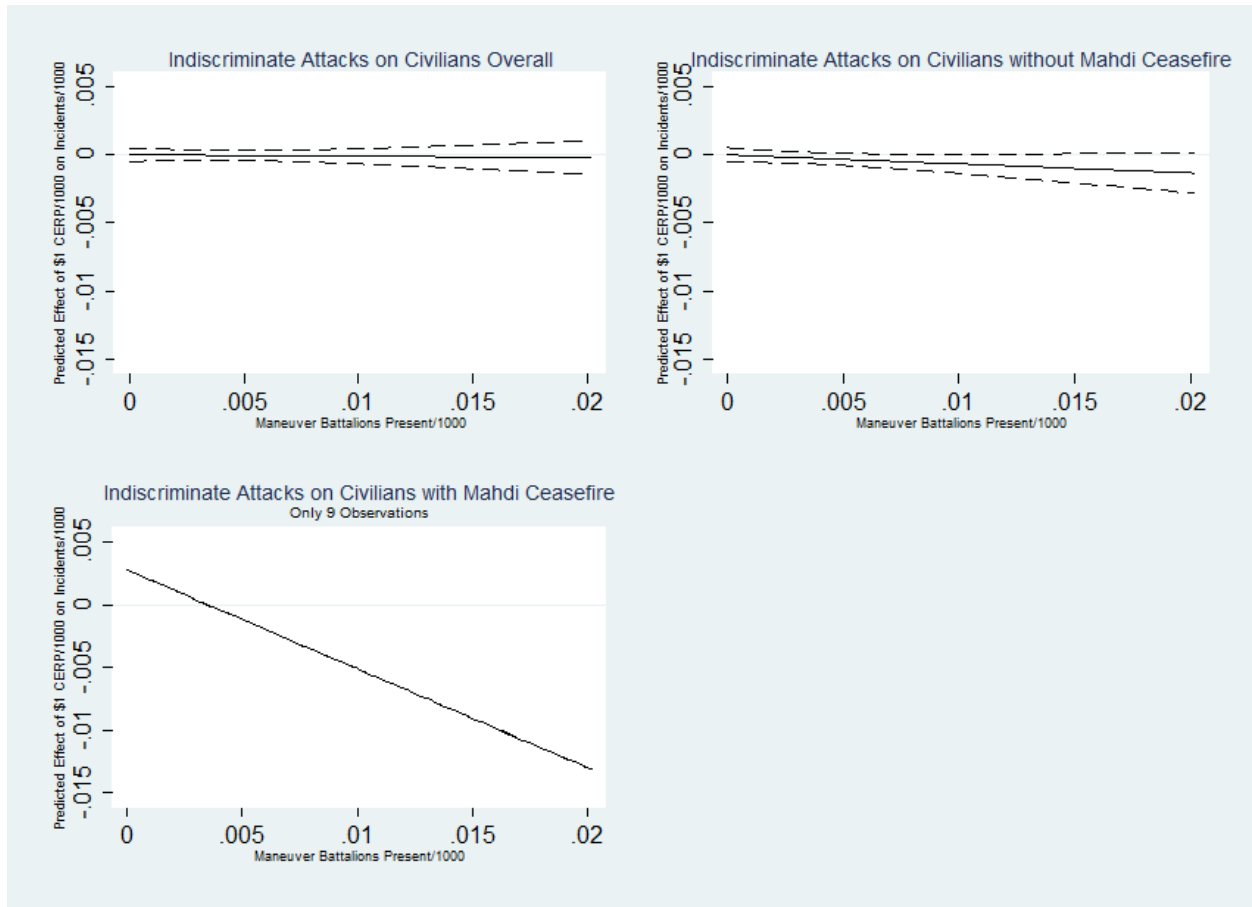
Turning now to Table 4.15, which contains the results of the indiscriminate violence analysis. Again, the sample size is small so these results should be interpreted cautiously. In Column 1, which examines the effect of American military efforts prior to the Surge, we see that the combined effect of CERP and troop density changes has a statistically insignificant ($p=.507$) negative effect on levels of indiscriminate attacks, a trend that continues in subsequent periods, although not displayed here. (Further, we see that changes in troop density actually result in a statistically significant increase in these attacks, although when introducing the lags, this sign becomes negative and insignificant. Changes in spending have no real effect on attacks at any point over the following two years. Taken together, we do not appear to have enough evidence to confirm the null hypothesis of 8b, although the evidence is certainly suggestive.

In Column 2, we see no real evidence in support for any of the relevant hypotheses. With respect to 9b, we see no statistically significant decline connected to American Surge efforts, as the coefficients on both the interaction of CERP and troops and troops by themselves are insignificant ($p=.323$ and $.866$, respectively). As has been the case for the other models pertaining to Baghdad, CERP has a very small, statistically insignificant coefficient. Also, we see that the SOI standup does not appear to have any stand-alone effect on violence, meaning Hypothesis 10b can be rejected. Finally, in contrast to the finding with respect to targeted attacks, the Mahdi ceasefire has no discernable effect on indiscriminate attacks; if there is a result at all, it was an increase in such attacks. These results are consistent even after accounting for the four six-month lags, and there was no effect on these periods as well.

Finally, in Column 3, we again see limited evidence in support of any of the relevant hypotheses. We see no significance on the coefficients of the American efforts, even though both the interaction of CERP and troop density changes is negative, and remains so after the inclusion of the four six-month lags, which are not shown here. As such, we can reject Hypothesis 9b. We do, however, see evidence in support of the SOI's ability to limit indiscriminate attacks, as the coefficient has statistical significance, providing evidence in this full model (as opposed to the uninteracted model in Column 2) which allows us to confirm Hypothesis 10b, although this effect does not last, as increased indiscriminate attacks are associated with the twelve and eighteen month lags. However, the interaction of the SOI and American efforts are all statistically insignificant, including later lags, which means we can reject Hypothesis 11b, as well. Finally, in contrast to its effect on targeted attacks, the Mahdi ceasefire did not have the predicted negative impact on this violence, either six months or a year later, when the data ends, leading us to reject Hypothesis 12b.

With respect to the marginal effects of the various factors, we see below in Figures 4.16 that they are minimal when the SOIs are not present. Here, American efforts had no discernable impact, and this does not change in areas where the Mahdi Ceasefire was in effect once it is included in the model. Again, we lack enough observations to see how indiscriminate attacks are influenced by American efforts and the Ceasefire, although the effect appears to be negative.

Figure 4.16. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad when SOI Are Not Present



In Figure 4.17, we see in the upper left that indiscriminate attacks appear to increase in response to American efforts when the SOIs are present, but where the Ceasefire is also in effect, it appears that these attacks decrease. However, the effect does not appear to be significantly different from those instances where only the SOI is present (i.e., Sunni dominated areas) and the Mahdi Ceasefire is absent.

Figure 4.17. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Baghdad when SOI Are Present

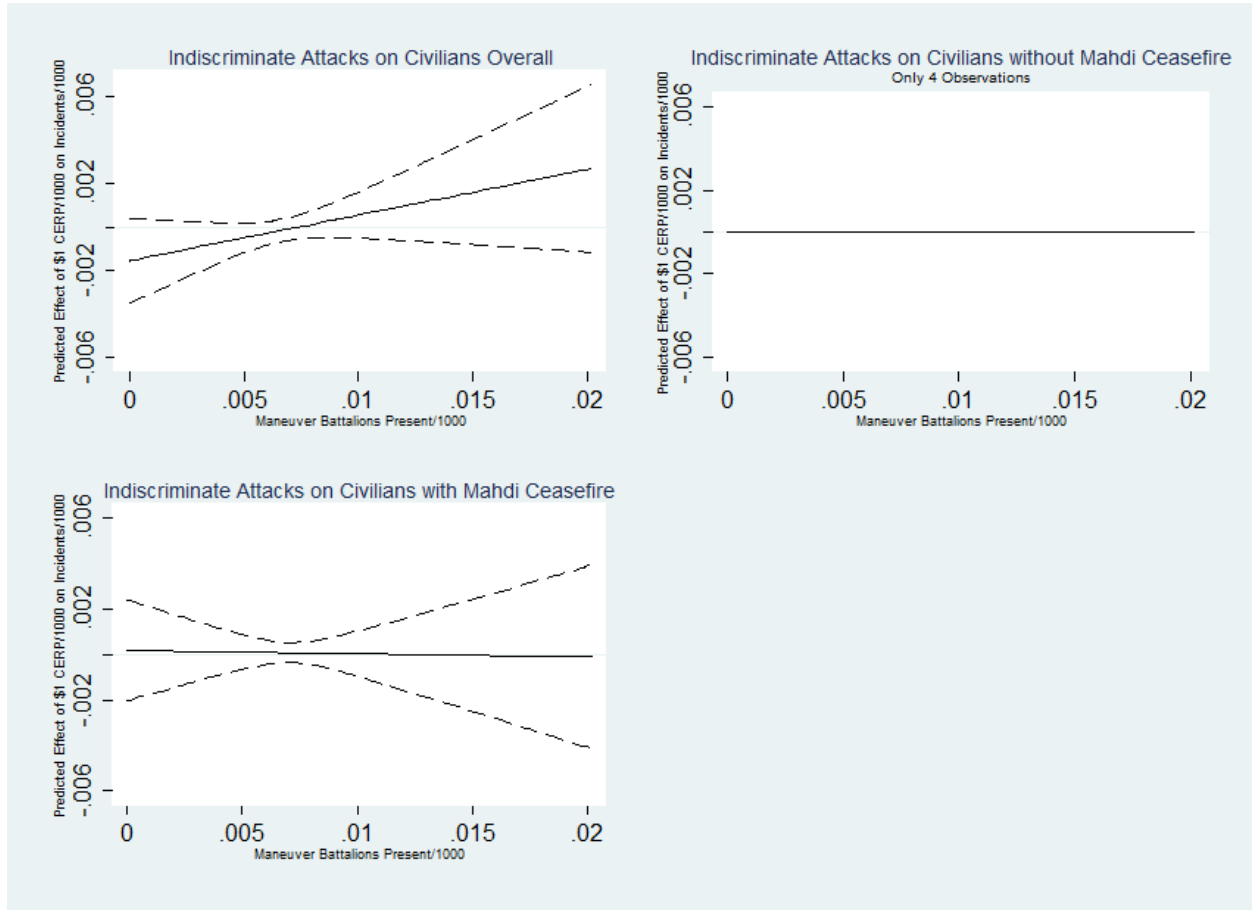


Table 4.16. Summary of Results from Baghdad

Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No/Suggestive)
<i>Selective Attacks</i>	
8a. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	No
9a. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
10a. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
11a. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No
12a. Mahdi Ceasefire – negative effect	Yes
<i>Indiscriminate Attacks</i>	
8b. American efforts, pre-Surge – no negative effect	Suggestive
9b. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
10b. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
11b. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No
12b. Mahdi Ceasefire – negative effect	No

The small sample that constitutes Baghdad province makes it difficult to make strong claims. While we cannot say the hypotheses are supported in the data, the coefficients (and corresponding p-values) with respect to the combined effect of American efforts and the SOI on targeted violence suggest the possibility of an effect. This would not be altogether that surprising and would confirm existing evidence of the effect of collaboration between the American forces and those Sunni tribes who turned against the insurgency. Why these efforts did not appear to yield a corresponding decline in indiscriminate attacks is a question that deserves further attention. Perhaps it is the case that such levels were already low and were unlikely to go further. Or alternatively, it may be that these indiscriminate attacks were likely to be carried out by Sunni extremists in the Shia districts of Baghdad, but the SOI and American troops were concentrated in the Sunni districts, which meant that they prevented such attacks in their own areas but were unable to police these extremists beyond their own borders. Similarly, the final surprising result is the lack of effect by the Mahdi Ceasefire in reducing indiscriminate violence given its association with reduced targeted attacks. It may be the case that the Shia militias did not use this tactic with any regularity, as they relied primarily on targeting individuals as they moved through previously Sunni neighborhoods. While future qualitative work may want to explore these findings further, I turn now to an examination of the analysis of Diyala and Ninewa, where Sunnis were the largest of the several ethnic groups present.

Diyala and Ninewa Analysis

The relevant hypotheses in Diyala and Ninewa concern the American forces, the Sons of Iraq, and the interaction of the two. As noted, violence in these areas remained fairly low up until the pacification of the more violent –and more homogenously Sunni – provinces of Anbar and Salah

al Din. At that point, civilian violence migrated to these provinces. I argued in Hypotheses 13a and b that the American force presence in these would have little impact on the violence that took place there between 2004 and 2006, both because there was relatively little violence and the forces that were present were minimal. In Hypotheses 14a and b, I tested the possibility that as violence shifted to these areas and the Surge was implemented, American efforts actually had a dampening effect on civilian violence. Hypotheses 15a and b test the proposition that the Sons of Iraq actually produced the declines in violence, while Hypotheses 16a and b concern the interaction of the Sons of Iraq and American efforts.

Table 4.17. Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Diyala and Ninewa, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	0.000635 (0.00102)	-0.00187 (0.00184)	-0.00164 (0.00133)
Troops	-1.978 (5.975)	2.979 (11.27)	-1.263 (9.013)
CERP*Troops	-0.0414 (0.194)	-0.0551 (0.214)	0.0597 (0.286)
Troops (t-1)	-1.436 (8.547)	0.400 (3.834)	2.194 (7.290)
2005	-0.0308* (0.0161)		
2007		0.0206* (0.0109)	0.0195 (0.0143)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		0.0118	0.000690

		(0.0272)	(0.0302)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	1.526**	-0.372***	-0.310***
	(0.639)	(0.103)	(0.106)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.322
			(0.808)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.0109
			(0.0101)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			-6.869
			(24.80)
Constant	0.0237**	-0.0315***	-0.0316***
	(0.0107)	(0.00790)	(0.0109)
Observations	54	56	56
R-squared	0.790	0.826	0.835

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

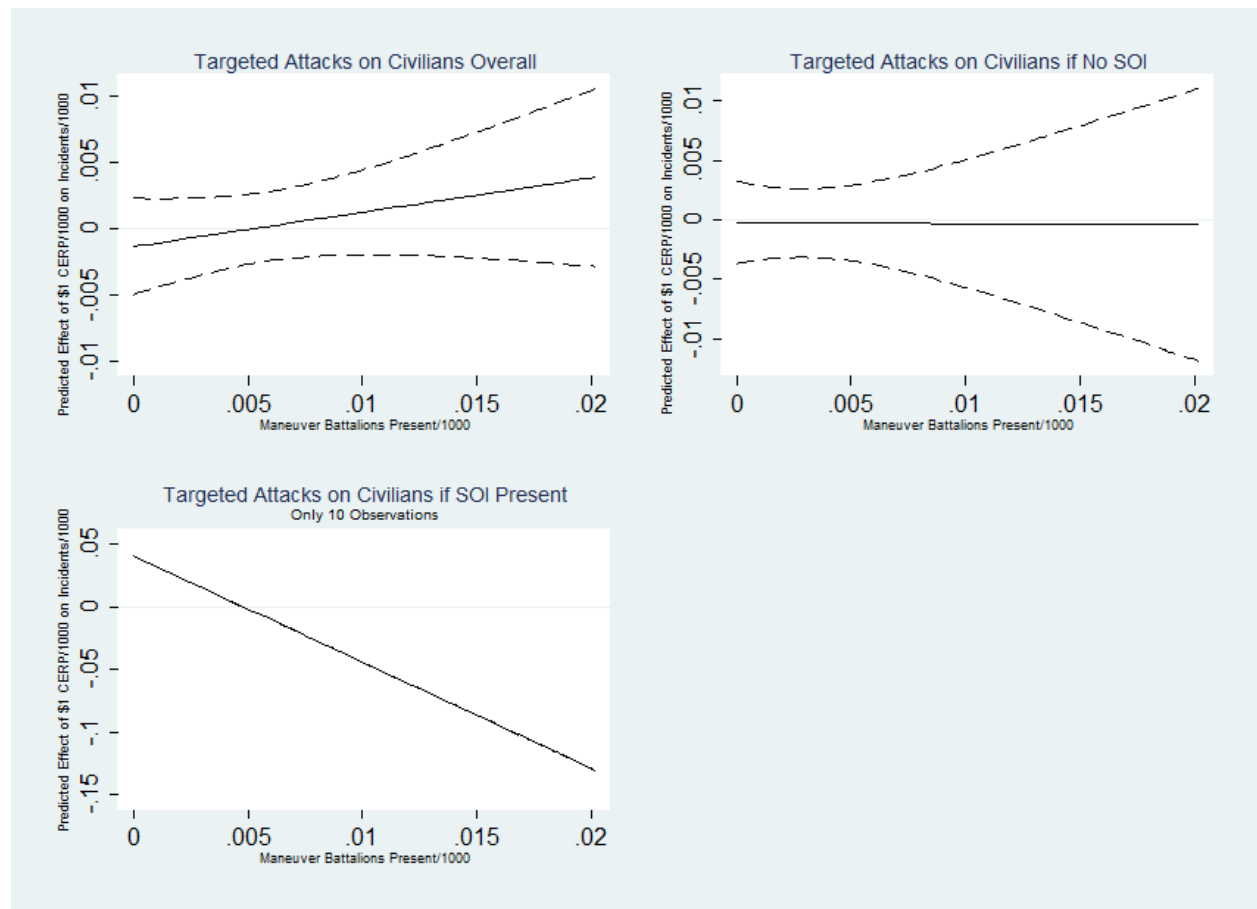
We see in Column 1 of Table 4.17 that American troops had no significant effect on targeted violence within these mixed areas where Sunnis comprised the largest ethno-sectarian group. The coefficient on the change in troop levels is negative but insignificant ($p=.746$), as is the lagged change ($p=.869$). Adding three additional six-month lags changes the sign on these coefficients to positive, but the effect is not significant. Changes in CERP have no discernable effect, and while the interaction of changes in CERP and troop levels is also negative, again, the effect is not statistically significant. Again, the additional lags do not produce any significant effects, either. While we cannot confirm the null hypotheses posited in 13a, the results are highly suggestive.

With the results in Column 2 we can see that there is little evidence supporting the idea that the Surge strategy – either the development investments or the troops density – had any effect on targeted violence during the latter period. The impact of changing CERP is still very minimal and statistically insignificant in the results presented, as well when the four additional lags are included, while the changes in troop levels actually produced increases in violence, although the result is not statistically significant ($p=.796$). This effect, however, turns negative eighteen months out, but it is insignificant. Also, the interaction of the two is negative, but again, lacks statistical significance ($p=.801$). When the additional lags are included, the coefficient for the contemporaneous period becomes positive, and the first three lags are also positive but insignificant. Also, in this model, we see that on its own, the emergence of the Sons of Iraq is linked to an increase in targeted attacks, although again, the result is not statistically significant ($p=.672$), and it does turn negative but insignificant after six months.

Finally, in the third column, we see the full model where American efforts are interacted with the emergence of the Sons of Iraq. Again, we see no significant effects on the part of either. The coefficient of changes in American troop density becomes negative, although still insignificant ($p=.889$). When the lags in increased troop density are included, the first year sees an insignificant increase in attacks followed by an eventual insignificant decrease in the second year out. The interaction of the CERP and troop changes switches to positive, suggesting that separate from the Sons of Iraq, American efforts may actually be linked to increases in targeted attacks, but again, the finding is statistically insignificant ($p=.836$). After six months, the effect becomes negative but insignificant. This, coupled with the lack of a corresponding finding in Column 1 means that Hypothesis 14a is not supported. At the same time, we again see no support for the idea that the emergence of the Sons of Iraq played a role in stopping selective

violence in the short term, although the effect does become negative and slightly significant after one year (not shown). Finally, the interaction of American efforts and the SOI standup appears to have had little effect on targeted violence in Diyala and Ninewa, as the interactions of the constituent components and overall all return insignificant results. The three-way interaction appears to yield increased violence, while the SOI interacted with CERP and troop changes individually produce negative coefficients, but neither are statistically significant. However, when we introduce further lags, the first six-month period experiences a slightly significant decrease in attacks, and the effect remains negative, although insignificant, twelve months and eighteen months later.

Figure 4.18. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Diyala and Ninewa



In Figure 4.18, we see that without the inclusion of the SOI variable, the effect of increasing spending and American troops is associated with increasing rates of attacks. When the variable is included, we do not see much of a change in areas where the SOIs are not present. In contrast, and even though we lack the observations needed to generate appropriate confidence intervals, it appears that in areas where the SOIs were present, American efforts did have a substantial negative effect on targeted attacks in these two districts.

Table 4.18. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Diyala and Ninewa, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	0.000196 (0.000432)	-3.42e-05 (0.000298)	-0.000477 (0.000318)
Troops	-0.737 (1.130)	2.905 (3.790)	4.321** (1.995)
CERP*Troops	-0.0821 (0.0974)	-0.0649** (0.0266)	0.0964* (0.0474)
Troops (t-1)	-1.008 (2.234)	0.570 (2.213)	0.777 (1.686)
2005	-0.00645** (0.00270)		
2007		0.00257 (0.00395)	0.00274 (0.00330)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		0.0159 (0.0121)	0.0203*** (0.00720)

Indiscriminate Attacks (t-1)	0.0488	-0.605***	-0.619***
	(0.0807)	(0.171)	(0.132)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.726***
			(0.178)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.00275
			(0.00237)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			16.19**
			(5.982)
Constant	0.00524***	-0.000612	-0.00374
	(0.000994)	(0.00214)	(0.00259)
Observations	54	56	56
R-squared	0.645	0.343	0.675

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

I turn now to the patterns of indiscriminate attacks in Diyala and Ninewa, and as Table 4.18 shows, the results are quite different from those of the targeted attacks, at least in the later period. First, however, we see that in Column 1, American efforts once again, do not appear to have had any meaningful impact on indiscriminate attacks, even after including the four lagged periods. CERP's coefficient is negligible, and while troop density changes and the interaction of CERP and troop changes are both negative, neither is statistically significant (p=.526 and .414, respectively). Here, we again cannot confirm the null of Hypothesis 13b, but the results are certainly suggestive. In Column 2, we see that the interaction of CERP and troop changes produces a statistically significant negative effect on indiscriminate violence against civilians during the Surge period, which would provide some initial support for Hypothesis 14b. This

effect disappears however, once we account for the additional lags. We also see that in this main effects model, the SOI standup is linked to a statistically insignificant increase in indiscriminate attacks ($p=.213$), but the effect loses statistical significance once we include the lags.

If we move to the third model with the interactive effects, we first see that in the absence of the Sons of Iraq, the combination of CERP and troop changes is actually related to a (weakly) statistically significant increase in indiscriminate attacks, although this effect disappears once we include the lags. Troop changes on their own are also linked to an increase in such attacks, and this remains consistent with the inclusion of the lags. This more fully specified model suggests that we can actually reject Hypothesis 14b. However, the Sons of Iraq, in the absence of American troops, are linked to a statistically significant increase in indiscriminate attacks in the six months after their emergence. Interestingly, when we include the one year and eighteen month lags, this short term effect becomes significant in the negative direction, although it loses significance at the one year mark and actually turns positive eighteen months later, suggesting that Hypothesis 15b is not supported. Finally, we see some interesting texture when we turn to Hypothesis 16b, which suggested that the interaction of American efforts and the SOI standup would yield a decline in these kinds of attacks. We see that only when all three are present – American troops, CERP, and the SOI – do indiscriminate attacks decline, although this effect becomes insignificant and eventually positive as we include the additional time lags. However, when looking at the effect of only CERP and the SOI, we see no significant impact on violence, and when looking at the effect of troops and the SOI, we see a statistically significant increase in bombings and the like. Thus, we have mixed results for Hypothesis 16b, but they are nonetheless suggestive of some effect, at least in the short term.

Once again, marginal effects graphs can help us understand these effects. Figure 4.19 illustrates a negative effect on indiscriminate attacks as American troop density and public goods spending increase. When the SOI standup is included in the model, we see not much of an effect in areas where the SOIs are not present, but the slope of the effect appears to be steeper in areas where the SOIs are present, although the inability to generate confidence intervals prevents us from determining if the effect is significantly different.

Figure 4.19. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Diyala and Ninewa

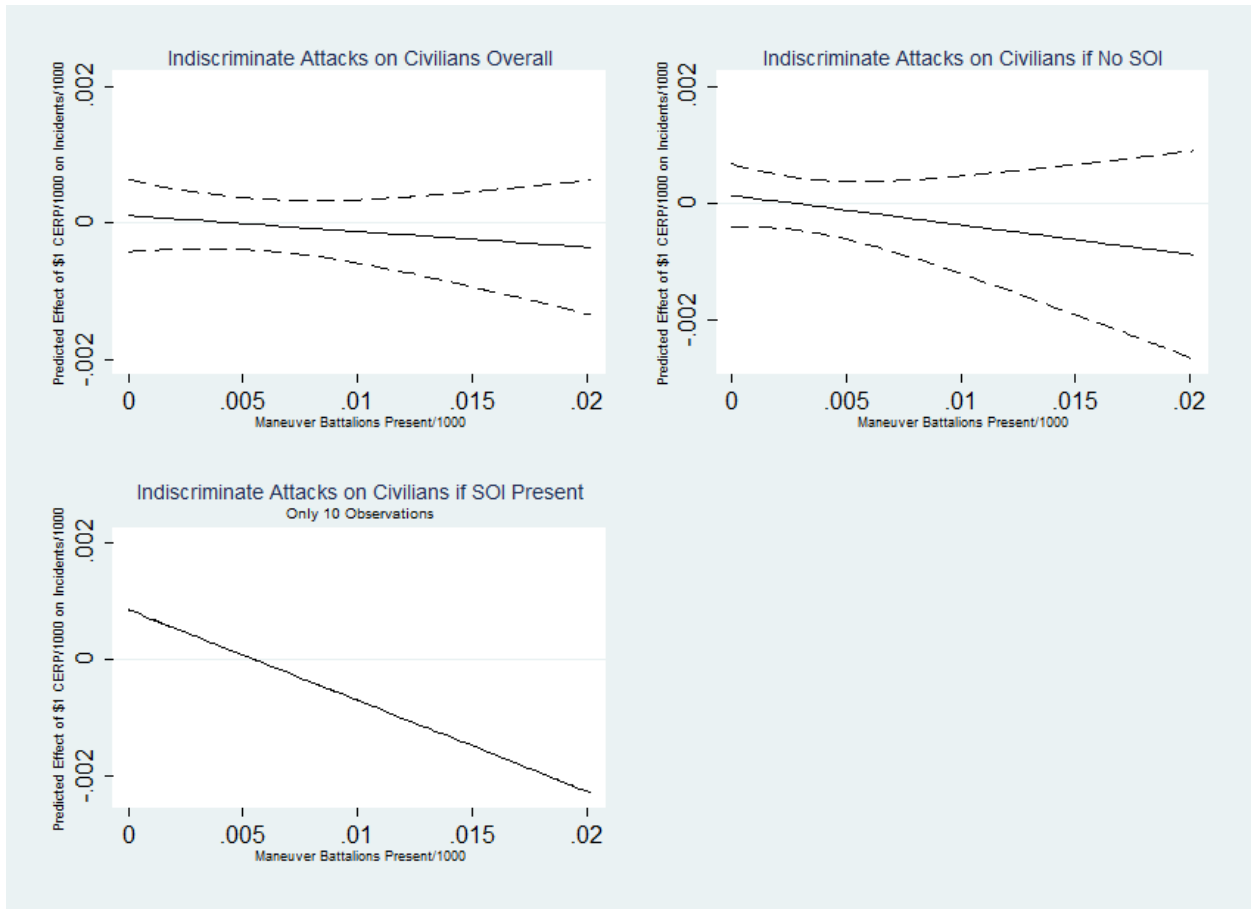


Table 4.19. Summary of Results from Diyala and Ninewa

Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No/Suggestive)
<i>Selective Attacks</i>	
13a. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	Suggestive
14a. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
15a. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
16a. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No
<i>Indiscriminate Attacks</i>	
13b. American efforts, pre-Surge – no negative effect	Suggestive
14b. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
15b. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
16b. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	Suggestive

In Diyala and Ninewa, we see some tentative support for the idea that American efforts and the standup of the Sons of Iraq had a negative effect on violence. Specifically, indiscriminate attacks on civilians declined under changing levels of troops and CERP, and the presence of the Sons of Iraq. This alliance had no effect on selective attacks in the short term, but when lags are introduced, the effect does become significant. Further, indiscriminate attacks appeared to decrease in the period immediately following the emergence of the Sons of Iraq, such attacks in Diyala and Ninewa appear to have increased as a result of their emergence, but once additional lags are introduced, the effect is negative, but temporary.

Ta'meem/Kirkuk

Here, I address the patterns of violence in Ta'meem, or Kirkuk. As noted, this province was of mixed ethnicity, but was predominantly Kurdish. Like Diyala and Ninewa, violence came later on in the conflict as it migrated from Anbar and Salah al Din. Unfortunately, we only have twelve observations, and so drawing any meaningful conclusions about the true relationships between American and Iraqi efforts and the violence that occurred is difficult, if not impossible. Nonetheless, I will briefly discuss the statistical findings, and I should note that there are not

enough observations to conduct the lagged analyses. As shown in Column 1 of Table 4.20, we cannot see any discernable effect of American efforts in the pre-2007 period on targeted violence. The combined effect of changes in CERP and troop density appears to have a decreasing effect on targeted violence, but on its own, troop density appears to increase violence while CERP’s effect is highly negligible. All of these results fail to achieve statistical significance, but we cannot confirm the null hypothesis of 17a. Moving to Column 2, the combined effect of CERP and troops during the Surge period, as well as those of the individual constituent terms, is negative, but they lack meaningful statistical significance, meaning that Hypothesis 18a is not supported. The effect of the SOI standup appears to also have dampening effect, but again, we do not see any statistical significance, meaning we cannot say that Hypothesis 19a has support. Finally, in Column 3, we see that the interaction of American troops and CERP, without the SOIs present, has no statistically significant effect, providing further evidence that we cannot claim support for Hypothesis 18a. Also, the Sons of Iraq, on their own, now appear to have a positive relationship with violence, which would provide further evidence against Hypothesis 19a. Finally, we see that the interaction of CERP and troops, along with the SOIs’ emergence, has no significant effect on selective violence, although the signs suggest that it increases. This is evidence against Hypothesis 20a.

Table 4.20. Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Ta’meem/Kirkuk, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	0.000336 (0.000264)	-0.00385 (0.00596)	-0.000917 (0.00594)
Troops	21.38	-53.40	53.12

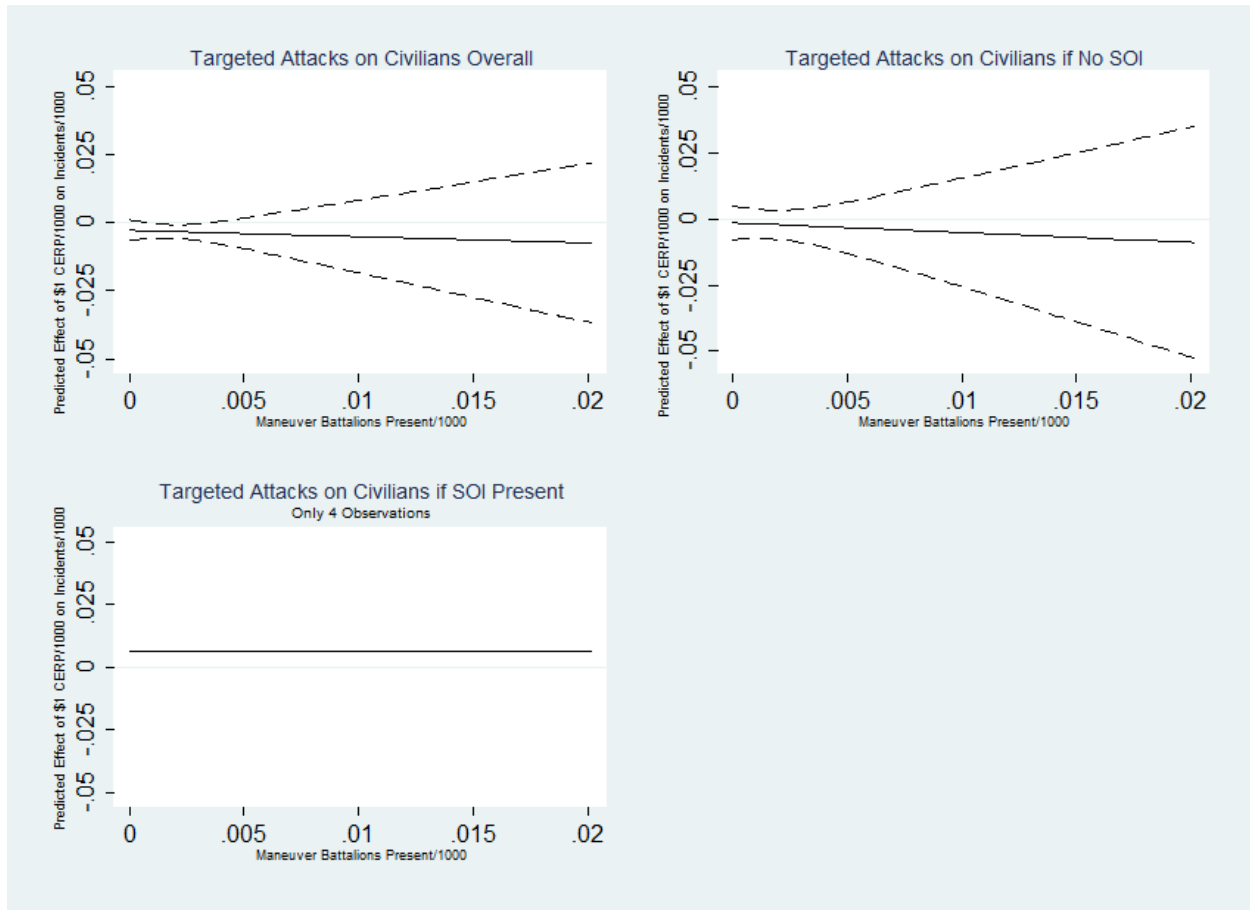
	(43.78)	(160.7)	(156.5)
CERP*Troops	-0.241	-1.449	-4.939
	(0.761)	(1.474)	(4.001)
Troops (t-1)	8.527	-93.32	105.7
	(30.98)	(333.9)	(298.4)
2005	-0.0615		
	(0.0266)		
2007		0.0220	0.194
		(0.319)	(0.262)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.0954	0.658
		(0.835)	(0.936)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	-0.830*	-0.366	3.177
	(0.208)	(2.370)	(3.974)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.0537
			(0.0550)
Constant	0.0811*	0.0101	-0.209
	(0.0212)	(0.381)	(0.327)
Observations	12	12	12
R-squared	0.976	0.888	0.942

Interactions of SOI with CERP and Troops dropped due to collinearity.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

When we look at Figure 4.20, we see little effect from American efforts, as the effect is slightly negative when the SOIs are not included in the model. This remains the case when that variable is included, but the SOIs are not present. In areas where they are present, once again, we lack enough observations to draw meaningful conclusions.

Figure 4.20. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Targeted Attacks on Civilians in Ta'meem/Kirkuk



Moving to indiscriminate attacks, we actually see the opposite substantive effect in Column 1 of Table 4.21 from what we observed with respect to selective violence. It appears that while selective violence decreased in response to changes in CERP and troop density during the pre-Surge period, indiscriminate attacks increased. This also differs from what occurred in Diyala and Ninewa, but, again, because we are dealing with so few observations, everything is likely to be highly collinear (indeed, several of the interactions were dropped because of this) and so we should be wary about putting much stock in these findings. That being said, we can probably confirm the null hypothesis of 17b. We can also reject Hypothesis 18b, as both models 2 and 3 return a positive coefficient on this interaction in the Surge period, and the coefficient is

highly significant in model 2. We can also reject Hypothesis 19b, as the positive coefficient on the stand-alone of the SOI standup suggests that indiscriminate attacks did not decline as the SOIs emerged. Finally, while the coefficient on the three-way interaction of CERP, troops, and the SOI standup is negative, it lacks statistical significance, meaning that we can reject Hypothesis 20b. Figure 4.21 largely confirms these results, as the interaction of increased American troops and spending is likely to yield an increase in such attacks. Once the SOI variable is included, we see little effect when the SOIs are not present, and we again lack enough observations to see exactly how these effects shift when the SOIs are present.

Figure 4.21. Marginal Effect of Sons of Iraq Standup on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Ta'meem/Kirkuk

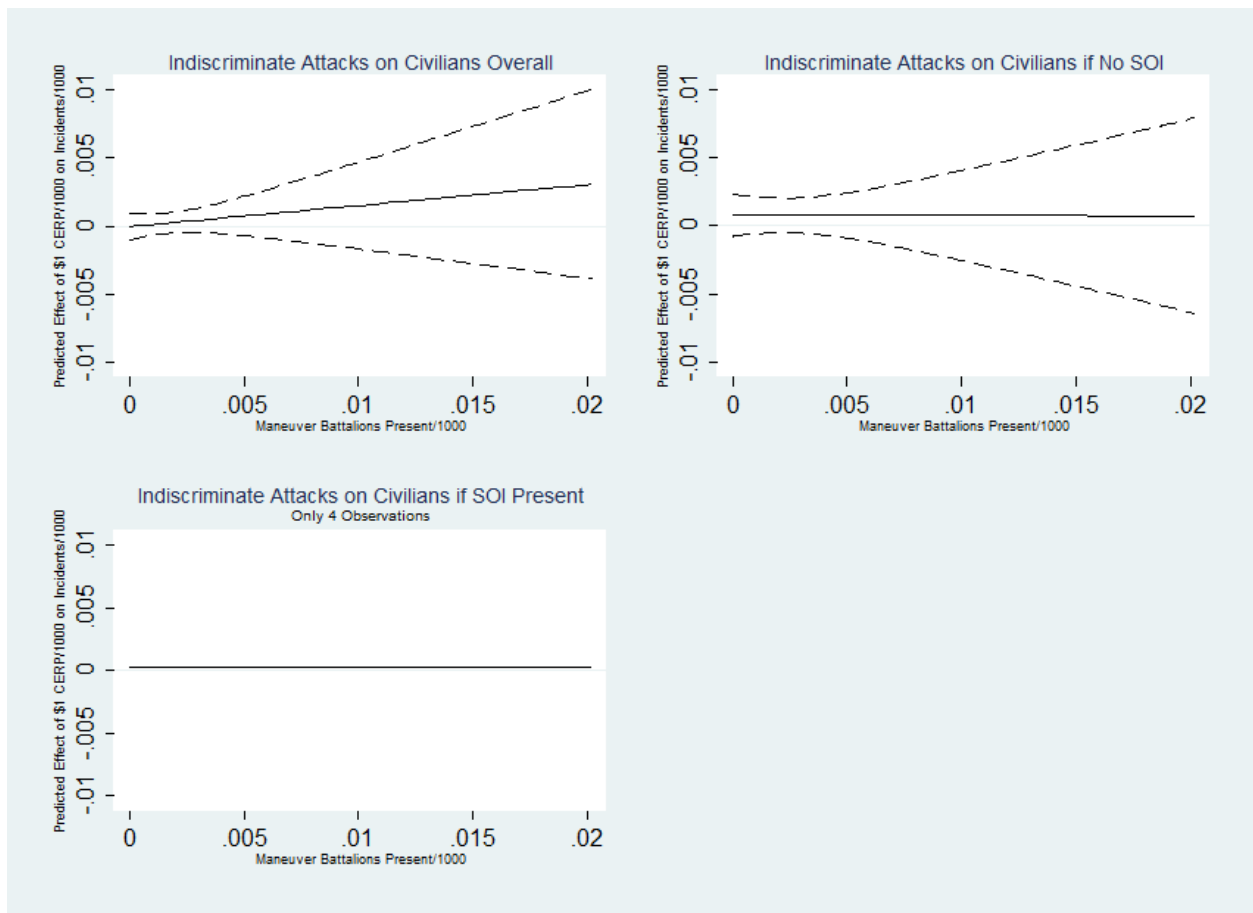


Table 4.21. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians in Ta'meem/Kirkuk, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008
CERP	-0.000348 (0.000183)	0.000123 (0.000156)	0.000546 (0.000356)
Troops	13.73 (111.1)	-6.675 (3.227)	2.941 (7.299)
CERP*Troops	0.566 (1.231)	0.574*** (0.0550)	0.552 (0.174)
Troops (t-1)	8.036 (87.29)	16.64 (6.754)	31.00 (10.53)
2005	-0.0262 (0.0220)		
2007		0.0266** (0.00558)	0.0357 (0.00971)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		0.0184 (0.0124)	0.0406 (0.0167)
Indiscriminate Attacks (t-1)	-0.198 (0.975)	-0.632*** (0.0591)	-0.524 (0.133)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.00332 (0.00216)
Constant	0.0249 (0.0257)	-0.0329** (0.00702)	-0.0466 (0.0112)
Observations	12	12	12
R-squared	0.643	0.934	0.980

Interactions of SOI with CERP and Troops dropped due to collinearity.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4.22. Summary of Results from Kirkuk/Ta'meem

Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No/Suggestive)
<i>Selective Attacks</i>	
17a. American efforts, pre-Surge – no neg. effect	Suggestive
18a. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
19a. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
20a. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No
<i>Indiscriminate Attacks</i>	
17b. American efforts, pre-Surge – no negative effect	Yes
18b. American efforts, 2007-2008 – negative effect	No
19b. Sons of Iraq – negative effect	No
20b. Combined American and SOI – negative effect	No

Again, it is important to stress that these results from Ta'meem should be taken with skepticism, as conducting statistical analysis with twelve observations is hardly a standard practice. We see little evidence in support of the hypotheses, but this should not be altogether surprising. In many respects, however, the conclusions we draw from this analysis are not that different from those of other areas of Iraq. For example, the only meaningful difference between what took place in Ta'meem and what occurred in Diyala and Kirkuk is the fact that the combined presence of American efforts and the Sons of Iraq did not result in a drop in indiscriminate attacks in Ta'meem, while they did in the other provinces. This may be due to the fact that Diyala and Kirkuk had a population that was likely to get along well with the SOIs, as they were predominantly Sunni areas. On the other hand, Ta'meem is majority Kurdish, and these residents largely may have been reluctant to trust those from other ethnic groups in an environment where ethnicity was highly salient. It also may have been the case that the SOIs in Ta'meem were not looking to protect the larger population, only their own co-ethnic Sunnis. Thus, the majority Kurds may have been left to fend for themselves, or rely strictly on the Americans for protection, although this appears to have not been an effective strategy either.

Aggregated Analysis

As noted, drawing meaningful conclusions is difficult when sample sizes are so small. Also, while it is important to see the trends in the individual districts, such analyses prevent us from observing any potential overall effect, in essence leading us to perhaps miss the forest for the trees. Therefore, I conclude the empirical analysis by looking at the effect of American troop levels and investments, the Sons of Iraq standup, and the Mahdi Ceasefire on selective and indiscriminate violence throughout the entirety of Iraq. Table 4.23 shows the effect of these factors on selective, targeted violence at the aggregated national level. A number of things stand out. First, we see that in Column 4, which reflects the entire period from 2004 to 2008, increasing troop levels has a negative effect on targeted attacks. In the first six-month period, we see a slightly significant effect, but by the next six-month period, the effect is larger and even more significant. When we add in another two six-month lags (not shown), the six-month effect gains further significance, while the year and eighteen-month lags lose significance, and the two year lag regains significance. However, the interaction of spending and troops is insignificant. Given the findings of recent work highlighting the importance of public goods provision in reducing attacks on counterinsurgent forces (Berman, Felter, and Shapiro 2011; Berman et al, 2013), the lack of a result here is somewhat surprising. Indeed, the small and insignificant coefficient on the interaction of the two suggests that the public goods make it more difficult to reduce these attacks than if the increased forces were simply operating or policing an area on their own. (This lack of effect is robust to the inclusion of the additional lags, as well.)

Table 4.23. Targeted Attacks on Civilians Nationwide, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008	2004-2008
CERP	0.0002 (0.0004)	-0.0005 (0.0004)	-0.0004 (0.0004)	-0.0004 (0.0003)
Troops	-1.692 (2.104)	0.651 (2.277)	0.818 (3.007)	-2.831* (1.569)
CERP*Troops	0.005 (0.005)	0.008 (0.032)	-0.002 (0.05)	0.008 (0.007)
Troops (t-1)	-1.558 (1.411)	0.669 (2.55)	0.878 (2.457)	-3.048** (1.353)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.035 (0.034)	-0.035** (0.015)	-0.03*** (0.011)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		-0.048* (0.028)	-0.049*** (0.015)	-0.02* (0.012)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	0.475 (0.651)	-0.232** (0.094)	-0.231*** (0.051)	-0.076 (0.046)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.054 (0.121)	0.111 (0.1)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.0004 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			-1.866 (6.654)	4.032 (5.512)
Constant	0.2** (0.008)	0.009 (0.018)	0.009 (0.013)	-0.007 (0.01)
Observations	299	306	306	605
R-squared	0.4883	0.3885	0.3891	0.1614

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

This depressing effect on targeted attacks that we do find could be driven by two potential causes, each working in different regions of the country. First, where insurgent challengers previously dominated, such as the Sunni areas, Kalyvas's logic of control might apply. Prior to the Surge period, we can imagine that areas where insurgents were in control and the American presence was weak or non-existent resembled Zone 4. However, with the implementation of the Surge, these actors were no longer in control and these areas transitioned either to Zone 3, where neither side held real control, or perhaps ultimately to Zone 2, where the Americans held control. Regardless of the zone, these actors no longer had access to the information from the population that allowed them to use selective violence to control the population living under them. Alternatively, in regions such as Baghdad where Shiite militias were engaged in ethnic cleansing, which, as discussed, took the form of targeted attacks on individuals, the arrival of more American forces simply may have made it more difficult for them to continue carrying out these types of attacks. Increased patrols and checkpoints may have increased the monitoring ability of the occupation, and information provision may have had little to do with it.

Other trends emerge, as well. Prior to the ceasefire, the Mahdi Army was cleansing Sunni neighborhoods, and once the order came to refrain from such activities, al-Sadr's followers appeared to heed the edict, while at the same time being deterred by the increased American presence. Column 4 shows that targeted attacks decline in the six months following the ceasefire order, but when a second lag is included, the coefficient remains negative but becomes insignificant. In the Sunni areas beyond Baghdad, as the SOIs rose to challenge insurgents and win the allegiance (and information) of the population, those insurgents no longer had access to

flows of information regarding potential defectors, and so they were unable to carry out targeted attacks like they had been able to do previously. Again, though, this effect is short-lived, as targeted attacks increase once again in the following six months, although the result is insignificant. Finally, we see that the combined effect of the SOI standup and American public goods investments and troop density did little to change the levels of targeted attacks, suggesting that the SOIs were actually hampered by the American efforts when they were present simultaneously.⁴³ Adding the additional lags does not change this result.

Figure 4.22 shows these effects graphically when the SOIs are not present. Here, American efforts have little effect on their own in shaping patterns of targeted attacks, and this is also true in areas where the Ceasefire was not in effect. Where the Ceasefire is present, however, we see that targeted attacks experience a substantial decrease as a result of the interaction of increasing American troop density and public goods spending.

⁴³ One can speculate as to whether an association with the Americans raised questions in the minds of the Sunni population about the trustworthiness of co-ethnics aligned with the occupation, who they wanted out.

Figure 4.22. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Targeted Attacks on Civilians Nationwide when SOI Are Not Present

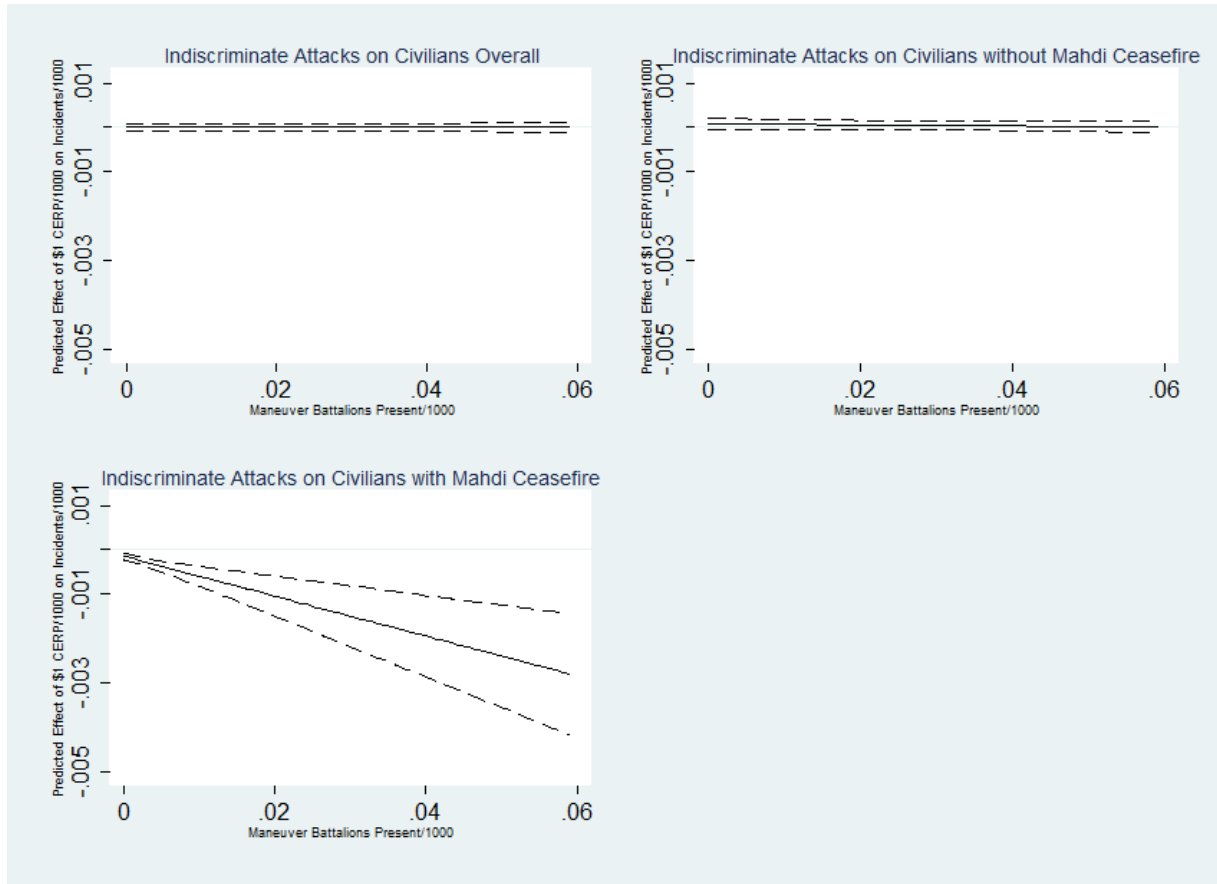
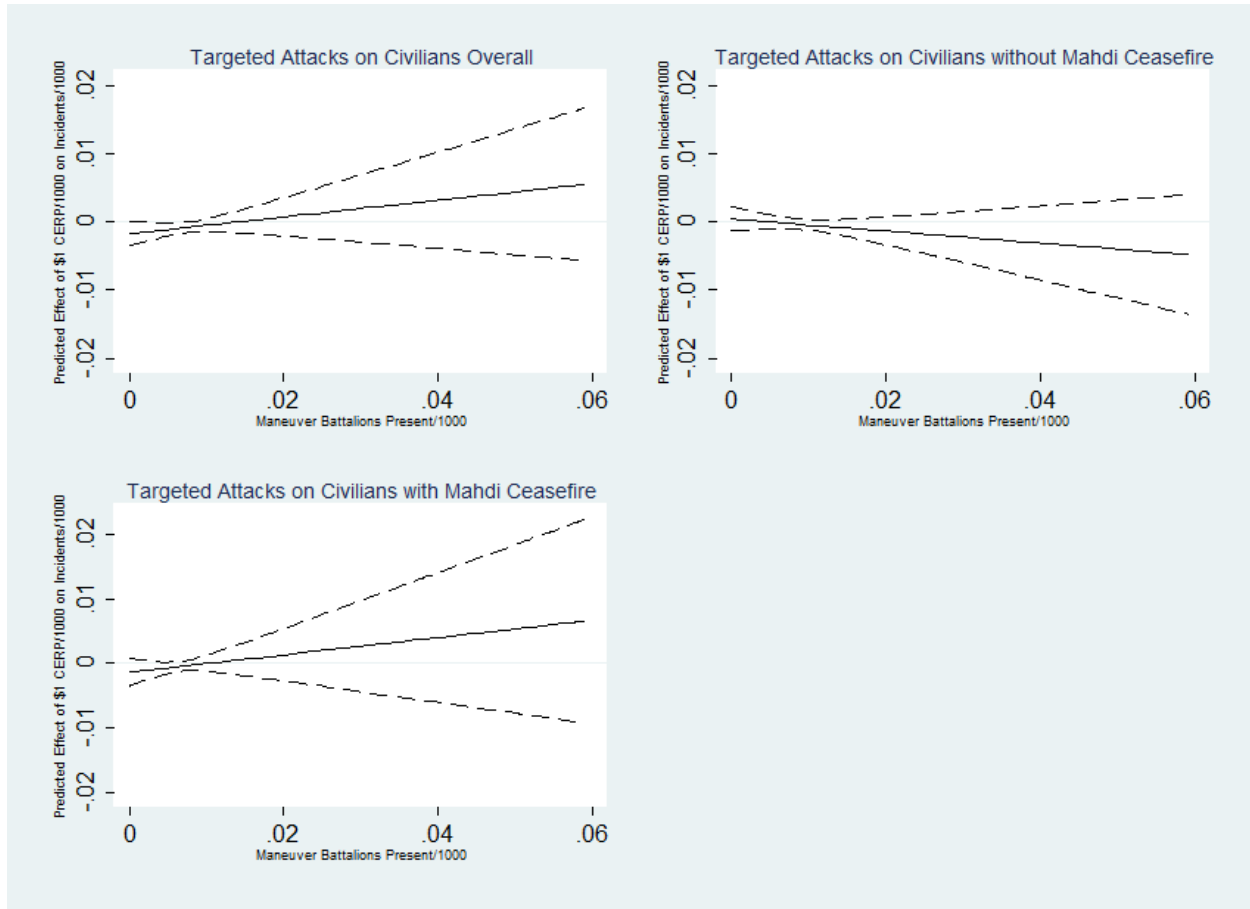


Figure 4.23 shows the marginal effect of the Mahdi Ceasefire when the Sons of Iraq are present. Here, we see slight increases in targeted attacks as a result of the efforts of American forces and the presence of the SOIs. When we include the Mahdi Ceasefire variable, we see that targeted attacks still increase in response to these efforts in the districts where it is in effect, although the effect is most likely insignificant. On the other hand, where the Ceasefire is not in effect, targeted attacks appear to decline.

Figure 4.23. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Targeted Attacks on Civilians Nationwide when SOI Are Present



When we move to indiscriminate attacks, we see some interesting differences. While Table 4.23 shows that increasing troop density reduced the rate of targeted attacks during the whole period, Table 4.24 shows that neither public goods investments nor more troops prevented bombings and other similar kinds of attacks in public areas at any point, even after including the lags. It is difficult to reconcile this finding that more troops doesn't mean fewer indiscriminate attacks with the above finding that it becomes harder to target an individual person for violence under the same circumstances. However, if we look at the other factors, we see that the SOIs are associated with a significant decline in these types of attacks. Recall that many of the SOIs were

former insurgents themselves, and as such, they would be in a position to identify those actors, who could then either be neutralized by their own forces or a collaborating American unit. It is important to mention here, though, that this would not require any increased troop density or public goods provision on the part of the Americans. Rather, all that would be necessary is their firepower, which would not necessarily be reflected in the data. The key element, though, is the identification provided by the SOIs; without it, it is perhaps an open question as to whether the American efforts would have had an effect similar to that that was found with respect to the targeted attacks. Somewhat perplexingly, however, is the temporary effect, as the lagged effects of the standup are positive and insignificant.

Table 4.24. Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians Nationwide, by period

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	2004-2006	2007-2008	2007-2008	2004-2008
CERP	0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0000)
Troops	0.428 (0.734)	-0.221 (0.905)	-0.332 (0.621)	0.059 (0.289)
CERP*Troops	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.008)	0.006 (0.01)	0.0002 (0.001)
Troops (t-1)	-0.314 (0.425)	0.453 (0.539)	0.306 (0.506)	-0.258 (0.249)
Sons of Iraq Standup (t-1)		-0.013 (0.009)	-0.012*** (0.003)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Mahdi Ceasefire (t-1)		-0.004 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.003 (0.002)
Targeted Attacks (t-1)	-0.206	-0.225***	-0.214***	-0.155***

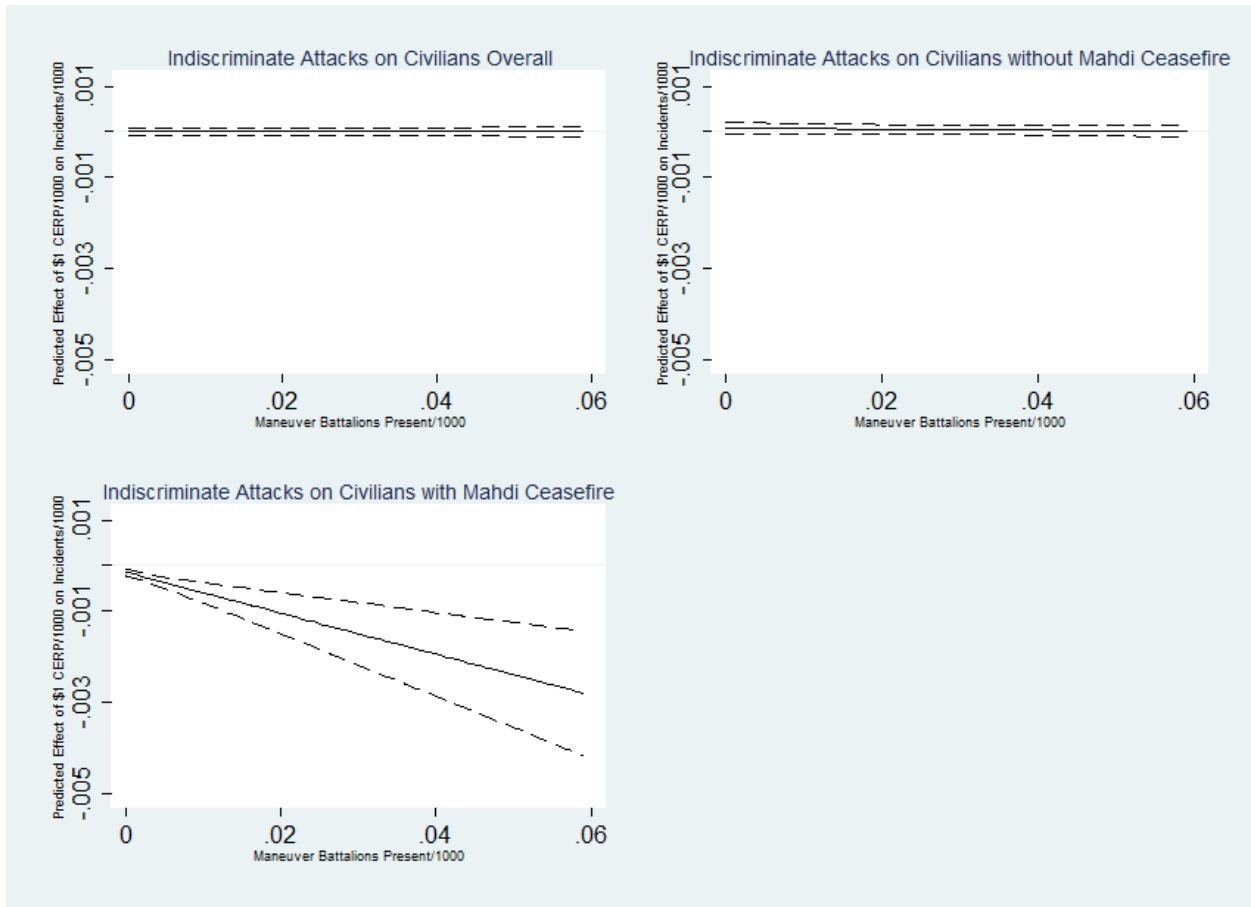
	(0.137)	(0.081)	(0.059)	(0.043)
(CERP*Troops)*SOI Standup (t-1)			-0.039	0.029
			(0.025)	(0.18)
CERP*SOI Standup (t-1)			0.0003	0.0002
			(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Troops*SOI Standup (t-1)			1.32	0.212
			(1.373)	(1.016)
Constant	0.006***	0.003	0.003	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.002)
Observations	299	306	306	605
R-squared	0.3741	0.2187	0.2274	0.1943

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Here, we also see that the Mahdi Ceasefire had no meaningful effect on indiscriminate violence. (Adding a second six-month lag does bring the first lag statistical significance, but then, in the following six months, the effect becomes positive and significant.)

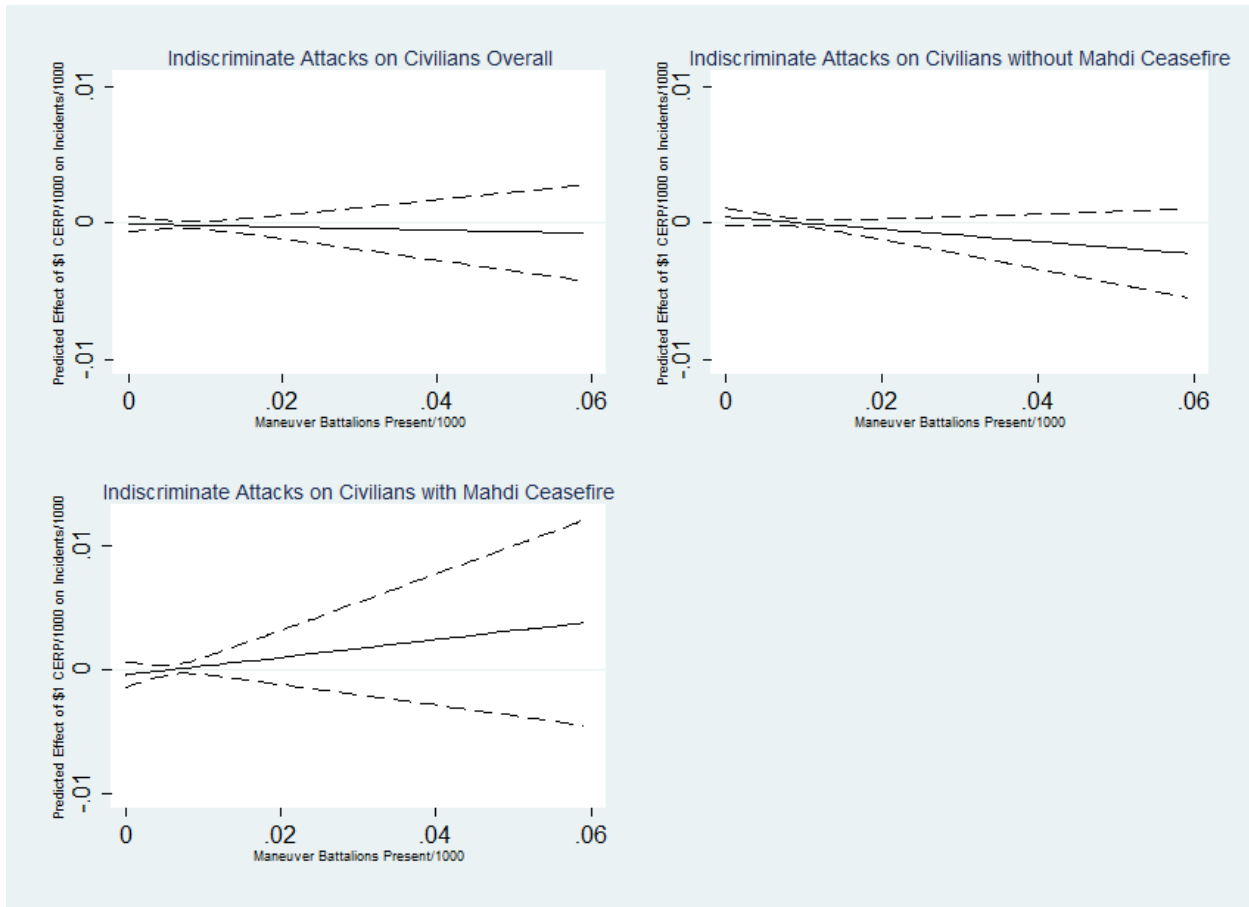
Finally, we can also look at the relevant marginal effects. The upper left graph of Figure 4.24 shows the effect of American efforts on indiscriminate violence across Iraq when the SOI is not present and the Mahdi Ceasefire is not included in the model. When we do include the Ceasefire, we see that its marginal effect appears to be significant, as the effect of the American efforts appears to be much stronger in districts where it is in effect than in areas where it is not.

Figure 4.24. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians Nationwide when SOI Are Not Present



The top left graph in Figure 4.25 shows the marginal effect American efforts when the SOI are present, and the effect appears to be minimal. The other two graphs include the Ceasefire variable, and once again, indiscriminate attacks appear to increase in response to American efforts when the Ceasefire and the SOI are present, although the effect does not appear to be significant.

Figure 4.25. Marginal Effect of Mahdi Ceasefire on Indiscriminate Attacks on Civilians Nationwide when SOI Are Present



Conclusion

This extended paper has explored patterns of selective and indiscriminate violence in the different regions of Iraq during the period of civil war between 2004 and 2008. Specifically, it examined how American counterinsurgent efforts, as well as attempts by local actors to exert their authority, impacted these outcomes that have so far been neglected in the existing literature. When looking sub-nationally at the district-level, we see that the American efforts, even following the Surge of 2007, did little to alter the violence that the population endured in the short term. In fact, American efforts on their own seem to only have had a statistically significant

effect in reducing indiscriminate violence in Sunni-dominated Anbar and Salah al Din prior to the Surge, and this effect was observed only with respect to troop density, not spending, suggesting that the mechanism behind this result has less to do with information provision to counterinsurgents and more to do with simple troop numbers. However, we did see some effect among the local actors in the regional-level analyses. The Sons of Iraq are associated with lower levels of both forms of violence in the Sunni areas, both where they dominated and in districts that were more mixed. Further, I anticipated that the interaction of the SOI standup and the American efforts of the Surge would have decreased both forms of violence in the Sunni-dominated areas of Anbar and Salah al Din, but, instead, we saw that the only significant result from this interaction occurred with respect to indiscriminate attacks in Surge-era Diyala and Ninewa.

Most of the time, adding additional lags of these independent variables produced no significant change in these results. However, in a few cases, it did. For example, the interaction of American efforts and the SOI standup was associated with a decline in targeted violence in Anbar and Salah al Din *after* the initial six-month lag. This is a case where the effect became significant. But there are others where a significant effect became insignificant or the direction of the effect switched over time, as was the case with the role of the Sons of Iraq in Diyala and Ninewa provinces (mixed, Sunni majority). Here, the Sons of Iraq were associated with a statistically significant increase in indiscriminate attacks in the six months after their emergence. But when we included the one year and eighteen month lags, this short term effect becomes significant in the negative direction, and its effect was insignificant at the one year mark and actually significantly positive eighteen months out. These fluctuations perhaps speak to the wider difficulty in establishing permanent stability, regardless of which actor is attempting to exert

control. These settings are highly dynamic and fluid, and both challengers and incumbents seek to adjust and respond to the other, sometimes increasing their efforts in particular areas (e.g., the Surge), or moving on to places where they may find more success (e.g., Sunni insurgents moving from Anbar and Salah al Din to other nearby provinces).

But these results must be taken cautiously, as the extremely small sample sizes prevent us from having much confidence in them. To overcome this limitation, I concluded the analysis with an examination of the effect of these various factors at the national level. Here we see that increases in American troop density did produce a statistically significant decrease in targeted attacks on civilians, but the same effect did not materialize with respect to indiscriminate violence. At the same time, the Sons of Iraq did appear to have a negative influence on both forms of violence. I suggested that they were able to capitalize on their preexisting knowledge of the insurgency to limit its ability to maintain control through any form of violence. The Mahdi Army operated almost entirely through targeted attacks, but when their leader, Muqtada al Sadr, called for an end to the sectarian cleansing, it appears that this call was largely heeded, as we also see an association between the ceasefire and a decline in these attacks. But again, some of these effects were muted or reversed by the inclusion of additional lags, again providing evidence that any stability that can be generated can also quickly disappear.

These findings lend further support to some existing arguments, while complicating others. First, the trends in violence depicted in the various figures lend tentative support to the hypothesis of Long (2008) and Lindsay and Long (2013) that much of the violence that plagued Anbar had petered out by the time the Surge was put into effect, and interestingly, the evidence here suggests that the density of American forces had something to do with it. On the other hand, the results indicate that the arguments for the combined effect of the Surge and the Sons of Iraq

(e.g., Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012) have little support. In contrast to earlier work showing the relationship between public goods investment (Berman, Shapiro, and Felter 2011) and such investments along with troop density (Berman, et. al. 2013) and attacks against counterinsurgents in Iraq, we see that the effect of such spending on civilian violence is nearly non-existent, suggesting that the effect of information-sharing on violence may be more limited than previously believed.

For policymakers and war planners, this presents an interesting and difficult question – is this money well spent? If the goal is to end attacks against counterinsurgents, then sure, it seems to be worthwhile. But if the goal is to create space for broader stability and order, then it appears the story is a bit more complicated. Although, to be sure, the posture those troops take within the conflict environment will ultimately matter. Sitting behind a base wall probably will not do the trick, but dismounted patrols and acting as a consistent presence might.

But because American troops are no longer present in Iraq, any stability that was brought about during this period has to be maintained by local actors. An unsettling implication of the finding that these local actors can, in some cases, temporarily increase the population's safety and sense of security is that they can just as easily be responsible for the opposite, and it would appear that as of this writing, that these forces and institutions have largely failed to prevent a breakdown in order. Over 9,800 civilians died in Iraq in 2013, and another 17,000 in 2014 (Iraq Body Count). As the Islamic State continues to advance, the numbers are perhaps only likely to increase.

These trends in Iraq's post-occupation history highlight an inherent difficulty that extends beyond this conflict to wars of occupation more generally. Occupying forces do possess the capacity to create and foster order. But the absence of violence does not mean that such order is

self-sustaining. The policy goals that require occupation frequently involve instituting and supporting a local government that would not be able to withstand a challenger on its own, hence the occupation. To establish order that is self-enforcing requires the willingness of those challengers to accept the occupier's preferred local ally or be defeated. Both of these pathways are costly. Earlier chapters in this dissertation have shown that these costs are frequently prohibitive for occupiers whose populations back home might not see the effort as necessary, which leads them to abandon these conflicts before these goals can be achieved and these war-ravaged societies once more into the abyss of violence.

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Chapter 5

Conclusion

The papers of this dissertation extend several strands of the conflict literature. Specifically, they contribute to our understanding of war outcomes, the role of public opinion in shaping support for military action, and the dynamics of violence experienced by civilians in intrastate war. They do so through the context of wars of occupation. The existing literature concerning war outcomes has long-held that despite their advantages in interstate wars, democratic states are ill-suited for such conflicts. But it has yet to demonstrate systematically how any disadvantages they have might separate them from their autocratic counterparts. Chapter 2 showed that while democracies may not win or lose these types of conflicts any more than nondemocratic states, they abandon these efforts at much lower levels of casualties. This structural explanation of conflict outcomes contrasts with much of the policy- and doctrine-focused scholarship involving counterinsurgency, which arose in response to the struggles in Iraq and Afghanistan. These efforts have focused largely on identifying strategic and operational steps that occupiers might take to achieve conventional victory over insurgent opponents, but this finding suggests that the problems run much deeper than what takes place on the battlefield. As long as democratic institutions back home allow for those opposed to these conflicts to organize and challenge the leaders who prosecute them, achieving success is likely to be an incredibly difficult endeavor.

Chapter 2 demonstrated a relationship between the public's sensitivity to casualties and conflict outcomes, but it did not concretely identify whether it is the casualties themselves that lead to the withdrawal of support or if the public looks to elites to provide context and meaning to those deaths. In Chapter 3 I used an experiment to identify the conditions under which these two competing mechanisms might operate. Existing experiments typically portray elites as divided along traditional partisan lines, but I argued that this characterization does not accurately capture the reality that foreign policy 'hawks' and 'doves' exist in both parties. I showed that under these cross-cutting circumstances, casualties play a limited role in determining support, as only political independents changed their opinions when presented with news of deaths of American servicemembers. At the same time, public attitudes were not influenced by elites when those elites were unified in their support for the conflict, but they did react negatively when they saw that elites were fractured across standard party lines.

Finally, Chapter 4 shifted gears to fill a gap in our understanding of the dynamics of violence in such conflicts. In contrast to much of the recent scholarship from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that focused on attacks on counterinsurgents, it used subnational data from the Iraq War to evaluate the effect of American counterinsurgency efforts on patterns of violence against civilians. The findings indicate that of both American public goods spending and troop density, only increasing troop density has a meaningful negative impact on violence, and the effect is only observed in the case of targeted, or selective attacks. These efforts had no significant impact on indiscriminate violence, either in isolation or when present together. At the same time, I found that the standup of the local Sunni tribes against the insurgency, known as the Anbar Awakening did reduce the rate of both selective and indiscriminate attacks on the

population. Further, the order by Muqtada al Sadr to his militia, the Mahdi Army, to stand down also resulted in a drop in selective attacks.

While these essays shed light on some important findings, there is still work to be done. First, I intend to further revise Chapters 3 and 4 for publication. Chapter 4, for example, is currently too long, but I wanted to present as much detail as I could regarding the particular circumstances that shaped violence within the different regions of Iraq. As I proceed with this paper, I will narrow its focus to the national level results, which show a clear contrast in the effect of American counterinsurgent efforts on selective and indiscriminate violence.

Beyond the dissertation itself, additional questions remain. First, it is worth exploring how these conflicts start in the first place. Occupations are quite common throughout the historical record, and they range from instances of colonial control that lasted for hundreds of years to relatively short occupations such as those that occur during wartime (e.g., German occupation of France). However, violent rebellion is relatively rare, with only 114 instances appearing in the historical record as shown in Chapter 2. The next project I intend to pursue will identify the conditions, both within the occupied territory and the politics of the home state, that give rise to these episodes.

Building off of the findings of Chapter 4, I also will to investigate the matter of post-occupation violence. Occupiers can reduce violence, but its absence does not necessarily mean that the grievances that motivate armed conflict have been resolved, nor has the opportunity to take up arms been limited. Some states manage to remain stable following the occupier's departure, but others fall back into chaos. Determining the conditions that increase the likelihood that domestic groups will reopen hostilities will also further our understanding of these difficult and seemingly intractable conflicts.