Terrorism and Civil War:  
A Spatial and Temporal Approach to a  
Conceptual Problem

Michael G. Findley  
Department of Political Science  
Brigham Young University  
mikefindley@byu.edu

Joseph K. Young  
Department of Political Science  
Southern Illinois University  
jkyoung@siu.edu

August 11, 2010  Draft

Abstract

What is the relationship between civil war and terrorism? Recent attempts to unpack the similarities between these types of political violence have either focused on creating actor-based categories (terrorists vs. insurgents) and elucidating the different reasons for being one or the other or comparing and contrasting each to discern whether they have similar etiologies. In contrast to previous approaches, we use geo-referenced terror event data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) to show where and when terror happens and whether it occurs inside or outside of civil war zones. We investigate in detail six separate violent campaigns to illustrate some of the patterns in terrorism and civil war events. While the study of terrorism and civil war mostly occurs in separate scholarly communities, we argue for more work that incorporates insights from each research program and we offer an exciting possibility for future research by merging geo-referenced terror and civil war data.
1 Introduction

In 1974, the Weather Underground, the now notorious clandestine violent organization in the United States, issued a political statement outlining its strategy for combatting the US state apparatus:

Armed struggle has come into being in the United States. It is an indication of the growth that our movement has developed clandestine organizations and that we are learning how to fight....At this early stage in the armed and clandestine struggle, our forms of combat and confrontation are few and precise. Our organized forces are small, the enemy’s forces are huge....We believe that carrying out armed struggle will affect the people’s consciousness of the nature of the struggle against the state. By beginning the armed struggle, the awareness of its necessity will be furthered....Revolutionary action generates revolutionary consciousness; growing consciousness develops revolutionary action. Action teaches the lessons of fighting and demonstrates that armed struggle is possible (Dohrn, Ayers, Jones & Sojourn 1974).

As this quote suggests, using targeted violence at the beginning of a conflict might signal to society the need for broad-based violence against the state. Acts of terrorism can signal to the population the need for a larger revolution or civil war by changing peoples belief’s about the state and increasing support for purveyor’s of violence. In short, the Weather Underground’s statement suggests that acts of terrorism might be designed to spur civil war.

Once civil war has erupted, the reasons for the use of terrorism may change. In a series of arguments, Kalyvas suggests that terrorism is a tool to establish control over the population at large (Kalyvas 1999, Kalyvas 2004, Kalyvas 2006). According to Kalyvas (2004, 99), terrorism is synonymous with “[r]esorting to violence in the context of a civil war in order to achieve compliance.” For example, killing an informant who provides intelligence to the government both eliminates this threat and deters

Note that Kalyvas (2006) prefers the term indiscriminate violence (directed at civilians).
future activity by others who might attempt a similar act. According to del Pino (1998, 168) the Shining Path, a terrorist organization operating in Peru in the 1980s and 90s, used extreme indiscriminate violence to ensure compliance by members of the population and to increase compliance within the organization. del Pino (1998, 168) claims that beyond terrorizing other citizens, “increased ruthlessness of violence employed against the population was meant to terrorize, block, and paralyze the initial currents of resistance within the Shining Path.”

The logic of terror in civil war may also differ from the reasons for its use once the war has ended. Groups might use terror to spoil the peace (Kydd & Walter 2002, Kydd & Walter 2006, Findley 2007). As Kydd & Walter (2002, 264) describe, “the purpose is to exacerbate doubts on the target side that the moderate opposition groups can be trusted to implement the peace deal and will not renege on it later on.” Events at the end of the Angolan civil war offer some support for a potential relationship between civil war and terrorism. Figure 1 shows a time line of events from 1977–1997. The dashed vertical lines represent three peace agreements that were signed (as defined by the Uppsala Conflict Database, Uppsala 2006). The connected, dotted line represents the number of terrorist events over time occurring within geographically defined civil war zones. First, it is clear that the number of terrorist events is very low until the peace process gains momentum in the late 1980s. There is a small increase in the number of events in the year prior to the first agreement. Then, there are two large increases in the years following the first two peace agreements. The increases in violence following the first two agreements are possibly attributable to deficiencies in the agreement that motivated groups to use terrorist violence to spoil the peace process. The number of events declines after the final agreement takes effect, which was arguably the most robust agreement. This figure, although not conclusive, at least suggests that terrorism in civil war zones is predicated on developments during the peace process.
As this series of examples show, scholars have identified explanations for terrorism during civil war, prior to its outbreak, and once fighting has ended. Most previous scholarly literature implicitly assumes that terrorism and civil war are distinct forms of political violence (e.g., Fearon & Laitin 2003, Collier & Hoeffler 2001, Li 2005). Past literature on the onset, duration, or resolution of civil wars barely mentions terrorism (see Collier & Hoeffler 2001, Collier, Hoeffler & Söderbom 2004, DeRouen & Sobek 2004, Downs & Stedman 2002, Downes 2004, Fearon & Laitin 2003). Recent terrorism literature also avoids grappling with the relationship between these forms of violence and generally explores cross-national explanations for the number of terrorist attacks (e.g., Drakos & Gofas 2006, Li 2005, Lai 2007, Findley & Young 2010) or modalities of attacks (e.g., Enders & Sandler 1993, Enders & Sandler 2006).

Recent work by Sambanis (2008) and Sánchez-Cuenca & De la Calle (2009) explores the terrorism-civil war relationship, and although they begin in quite different ways, they reach similar conclusions — significant differences exist between civil war and terrorism. Each approach engages different aspects of the terrorism-civil war relationship, but arguably in indirect ways, which we address below. Moreover, both approaches privilege conceptual discussions over in-depth empirical inquiries that flesh out the similarities and differences. And so we are left with the important question: Are terrorism and civil war distinctly different phenomena?

To explore this question, we examine patterns of terrorist violence geographically and temporally. Our strategy is to examine terrorism in the context of ongoing civil war, prior to the onset of war, and after the civil war ends. Our approach is both conceptual and empirical. We discuss the similarities, differences, and reasons for terrorism in different contexts, the most important of which is during a civil war. We then examine terrorism across these contexts and offer suggestions for integrating the
study of terrorism and civil war. In sum, we find a great deal of overlap between terrorism and civil war. The data show that most incidents of terrorism take place in the geographic regions where civil war is occurring during ongoing hostilities. A much smaller portion of these incidents occur prior to or after the conflict, or in zones not experiencing war. We conclude with suggestions for academic researchers of both topics as well as policymakers concerned with each phenomena.

2 Terrorism and Civil War Conceptually

Two primary approaches have been taken, thus far, to address the terrorism-civil war relationship. Sambanis (2008, 176) explores “under what conditions [it is] likely to see terrorism outside of civil war.” As Sambanis notes, this approach may require generating a typology of violence that creates bins for various kinds of violent conflict by identifying the attributes over which these types vary. The typological approach is difficult as these varieties of violence overlap and confusion can emerge. Despite the challenges, Sambanis (2008, 183-184) carefully analyzes the two phenomena and suggests that the major differences between terrorism and civil war are, “[v]iolent groups in civil wars are on average less unequal in terms of their capabilities; they are organized in more coherent, hierarchical structures; they have broader political goals and public support; and they can cause more destruction than violent groups engaged in terrorism.”

To investigate the conceptual distinctions, Sambanis then uses familiar models of civil war onset to explain terrorism outside of civil war. This choice makes terrorism separate from civil war by definition and restricts the enterprise to a more narrow question. His empirical analysis finds some similarities: the more people, the more terrorism or the more likely civil war is to occur. On the other hand, some differences
include: ethnic fractionalization seems to increase the probability of civil war (contrary to most other results in the literature) but no relationship can be discerned between terrorism and ethnic fractionalization. GDP influences civil war but not terrorism. The average level of democracy is higher for terrorism. While Sambanis’s (2008) analysis is a good starting point, we would like to understand the relationship among terrorism before civil war, terrorism during civil war, and terrorism after civil war.

2.1 Action vs. Actor Approaches to Conceptualizing Terrorism

Though not explicit in his analysis, Sambanis (2008) grapples with the distinction between actions and actors in the context of terrorism. Sánchez-Cuenca & De la Calle (2009) label explanations “action-based” if terrorism is defined as an action that many actors can use. It usually involves being defined as violence or threats of violence against civilians to persuade an audience in pursuit of a goal. Citing Hiroshima and Nagaski, Sánchez-Cuenca & De la Calle (2009) suggest that many kinds of violence are used to coerce an opponent by attacking civilians. They also maintain that much violence against the state and its uniformed forces might be considered terrorism; in other words, civilians are not the only targets.

An “actor-based” method of separating terrorism from insurgents or civil war relies on labeling participants rather than actions. For Sánchez-Cuenca & De la Calle (2009), guerrillas or insurgents differ from terrorists as guerrillas/insurgents hold territory, depend on support of the population, are not clandestine, and create larger amounts of violence. They contend that an actor-based approach is better than an action-based

\[\text{There are also some important limitations to Sambanis’s (2008) inferences. As noted above, his inferences are confined to terrorism outside of civil war, his data are from a now defunct database, he uses a very limited set of control variables that likely succumbs to misspecification or omitted variable bias, and his cross-sectional design does not help explain how dynamics influence these relationships. Correcting for some of these deficiencies is beyond the scope of our paper.}\]
approach as it avoids definitional ambiguity, conforms with current practice in war/civil war literature that establishes a 1,000 death threshold for labeling a conflict a war or civil war, and allows the researcher to label actors thus making it easier to create data sets of terrorism.

While definitional problems have plagued terrorism research for over forty years, there is an emerging consensus. While Sánchez-Cuenca & De la Calle (2009) attack this consensus, their critique is problematic for several reasons. First, definitional ambiguities can be explored by sifting events by the attribute in question. For example, other authors have excluded attacks against the military in their definition of a terrorist event and found little difference between these attacks and all attacks including military and nonmilitary targets (Findley & Young 2010, Young & Dugan 2011). Recent evidence suggests that the difference between transnational and domestic terrorism might matter and thus data should be sortable along this dimension (Enders, Sandler & Gaibulloev 2010). With increasing amounts of action-based data (ITERATE, TWEED, GTD), with rich sets of variables and supporting documents, this problem has become less acute.

Second, holding territory and receiving support from the population are what defines a guerrilla organization vis-a-vis a terrorist organization in the actor-based approach. This assumes that groups choose different strategies based on ideology or some goal like territorial control and this choice defines them. The problem with this assertion is that most clandestine groups want some massive change whether it be a policy change, a change in government or regime, or some other larger goal. Whether groups use terrorism or civil war is probably more associated with their relative capabilities than with ideology or goals. For example, as addressed in the introduction, the Weather Underground (formerly Weatherman), began in 1969 with the hopes of social revolution. According to the initial position paper, “You Don’t Need a Weatherman
to Know Which Way the Wind Blows,” the group contended that:

The most important task for us toward making the revolution, and the work our collectives should engage in, is the creation of a mass revolutionary movement, without which a clandestine revolutionary party will be impossible. A revolutionary mass movement is different from the traditional revisionist mass base of ‘sympathizers.’ Rather it is akin to the Red Guard in China, based on the full participation and involvement of masses of people in the practice of making revolution; a movement with a full willingness to participate in the violent and illegal struggle.

To spur this revolution, the Weathermen organized “Days of Rage” in Chicago where they hoped a national movement would lead to direct action against the war in Vietnam as well as a movement towards racial equality and regime change. Only a few hundred people showed up and violent clashes with police led to severed relations with larger organizations like the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Black Panthers. In response, the Weathermen went underground (e.g. becoming clandestine) and moved towards using what most scholars would label terrorism[3] As the above quote makes clear, the Weathermen wanted a revolution or civil war. They wanted support by the masses. They assumed that this was necessary for revolutionary change. Why use terrorism then? Is it because they did not want support or to control territory? This is the conclusion that an actor-based approach would suggest. Instead, thinking of why groups use tactics from a menu of choices suggests that they chose terrorism as a tactic based on their capabilities (or lack thereof). Had they been able to elicit support for a broad-based revolution, these groups might have chosen different tactics.

Third, the downside of using an actor based approach to defining terror is the strange conceptual containers that are developed. This requires us in some ways to

---

[3]Some have argued that their actions not be labeled as such as they tried to avoid killing people. Because they employed violence to influence an audience in pursuit of political goals, this label for their actions seems appropriate. Explaining why some groups tend to choose certain targets or try to maximize or minimize casualties may require analyzing ideology, but this is a different question than why individuals or groups use terrorism generally.
think about groups as ideal types who commit single acts rather than as dissidents, militants, or some other term to describe an individual willing to use violence in pursuance of a political goal who use a menu of tactics. Some uncomfortable questions follow: how many acts does one commit until they are labeled terrorist? If a group commits one terror act and ten guerrillas acts, yet holds no territory, what do we call them? This issue is most stark when we consider the term murderer. If a person kills someone are they a murderer forever? Or just when they do it? Or, assuming they have served their requisite prison time, only while incarcerated? We agree with Juergensmeyer (2001) that labeling actors is less useful theoretically and practically than labeling actions. Actions have causes; actors are more complicated. The actor based approach, for example, has us lump together Hamas, LTTE, the RUF and the Sandinistas into a bin we call Guerrilla, which makes many people who study insurgency/terror uncomfortable as each group chose a different mixtures of strategies. Putting all of these groups in the same bin is complicated whereas thinking about their reasons for using particular actions under certain conditions may be more plausible.

If we think about choices in a strategic framework, we can explain these actions without resorting to reifying certain kinds of actors. As Tilly [2004, 5] argues, “social scientists who attempt to explain sudden attacks on civilian targets should doubt the existence of a distinct, coherent class of actors (terrorists) who specialize in a unitary form of political action (terror) and thus should establish a separate variety of politics (terrorism).” We concur and, therefore, consider terrorism to be a strategy or tactic implemented by groups against an established state.\footnote{This does not deny the existence of state terrorism. We are just restricting our analysis in this piece to oppositional terrorism.} Thus, it is reasonable to consider why terrorism occurs prior to war, during war, or after war. We now consider some reasons why each of these might be the case.
3 Rationalist/Strategic Explanations for Terrorism

Theorizing about the strategic reasons oppositional groups use terrorism employs what some scholars call the rationalist approach. The rationalist approach to conflict has been applied to interstate war (Fearon 1995), civil war (Walter 1997), and terrorism (Lake 2003). While there are diverse arguments that fall under this rubric, most rationalist claims regarding conflict generally, and terrorism specifically, assume that violence is due, at least in part, to a breakdown in bargaining. Rationalists assume that both actors — states and dissidents — desire a particular policy outcome but disagree about how to divide the good or policy in question. Kydd & Walter (2006) offer five strategies of terrorism or rationalist reasons for using terrorism — provocation, attrition, intimidation, outbidding, and spoiling — which we consider in the context of civil wars. We summarize our expectations about the overlap between civil war and terrorism in Table I.

First, provocation is analogous to political jujitsu. As Lake (2002, 26) argues, in the course of a conflict, terrorism is used “to provoke the target into a disproportionate response, radicalize moderates, and build support for its ambitious goals over the long term.” This suggests terrorism will likely occur at the beginning of a violent conflict or before civil war to provoke the state, build support and capacity, and thus challenge the state.” Terrorism is generally considered a strategy of the weak and thus one that should occur as a group builds capacity rather than as a primary tool between comparable enemies. Whether terrorism might occur once civil war has begun or after the conflict subsides is unclear.

5Other notable approaches to understanding terrorism include focusing on the psychology of the perpetrators (Horgan 2005, Victoroff 2005), religious motivations (Juergensmeyer 2001), sociological explanations (Turk 2004, Goodwin 2005), or organizational dynamics (Asal & Rethemeyer 2008).

6This assumes that each actor is maximizing benefits and minimizing costs in pursuit of their desired policy outcome. In other words, violence is a strategic response to the opponent rather than caused by insanity, religious beliefs, or some other irrational factor.
Second, attrition relates to the need for a violent group to signal strength and resolve to its opponent. As Kydd & Walter (2006, 60) note, Pape’s (2003) work demonstrates how suicide terrorism can impose extreme costs on an opponent while signaling the strength of the group using the tactic. Pape’s (2003) claim is that suicide terror campaigns are most likely to occur against democratic occupiers. Attrition arguments suggest that this tactic may be used to spark a conflict or maintain it, but there should be little reason for the use of terrorism after the conflict ends.

Third, intimidation refers to violence by insurgents directed at members of the population. The objective of intimidation is control. While violence during conflicts can serve many functions, Kalyvas (2006, 28) claims that insurgent violence directed towards civilians “to generate compliance constitutes a central aspect of the phenomena.” This reason for terrorism most likely applies to ongoing conflicts or mostly to violence during civil wars. When both states and insurgents are struggling to maintain territory and control, this type of violence should peak. In contrast, dominance by one side should lead to less intimidation or coercive violence to control the population (Kalyvas 1999, Kalyvas 2006).

Fourth, Bloom (2005) suggests that suicide terrorism is a tactic used when groups find themselves in competition for public support. Kydd & Walter (2006) and Bloom (2005) call this strategy of terrorism outbidding. Bloom (2005) argues that this logic applies to the use of suicide terrorism in competitive environments characterized by hurting stalemates or conflicts that have endured. Outbidding should then apply to violence during civil war. It is unclear if outbidding should occur prior to or after the conflict ends.

Finally, Kydd & Walter (2002) argue that terrorism is used to “spoil the peace,” or to cast doubt on the credibility of peace processes and negotiations. Spoilers have an interest in maintaining conflict and provoking violence from the state. If Kydd &
Walter (2002) are correct, we should expect to see terrorism when civil wars end as groups who do not like the bargain struck between moderates will attempt to derail the peace process. Terrorism may occur during the civil war as well during periods of negotiation or lulls in violence. Table 1 summarizes the above discussion and the expectations for when and where we should expect to see terrorism in comparison to civil war.

In sum, terrorism is likely to occur in the context of a civil war in four of the five strategic reasons for terrorism. Terrorism is expected prior to civil war in two of the five strategies. Only one of the five (spoiling), expects terrorism to occur after civil war ends. In the next section, we investigate the dynamics of terrorism by leveraging some of the tools of geography. To probe whether these rationalist claims concerning terrorism and civil war are plausible, we geo-reference terror events and view them before, during and after civil war.

4 An Empirical Inquiry of the Conceptual Problem

Thus far, we have discussed why terrorism and civil war may be similar or different phenomena. Relying on a strategic approach, we offered expectations about when terrorism and civil war should overlap. Of the five mechanisms posited by Kydd & Walter (2006), four of the five suggest that terrorism should occur during ongoing civil wars. There are fewer expectations for terrorism before and after civil war. In what follows, we adopt a geographic approach to consider whether the terrorism is civil war related, either prior, during, or after civil war.
4.1 Patterns of Civil Wars and Terrorism

The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) defines terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation” (LaFree & Dugan 2007). The GTD contains approximately 60,000 terror events worldwide from 1970–1997 and an additional 7,154 from 1998–2004 collected separately (using a slightly different definition). The data cover both domestic and transnational terrorist events perpetrated by a diverse set of opposition groups against a variety of civilian, military, and government targets. Compared to other data sets on terrorism, such as ITERATE, the GTD contains at least five times as many events, making it the most comprehensive source of terrorism data available.\textsuperscript{7}

Our primary question in this paper surrounds the question of how similar or different civil war and terrorism are. Clearly not all terrorism is related to civil wars (or vice versa). Terrorist events in the United States, for example, are not related to a civil war in the U.S. Even terrorist events within a country engaged in a civil war might not be related to that war. Not all terrorist events in India, for example, are related to the conflict in Kashmir. Instead, many terrorist events can occur for other reasons such as the pursuit of limited policy change. This creates a problem of how to associate terrorist events with civil wars. In many cases, the groups perpetrating terrorism are identified in the data, and we can determine whether they are also rebel groups engaged in a civil war. In other cases, however, the perpetrators are not coded. To compound

\textsuperscript{7}The GTD needs to be accompanied by some caveats. According to LaFree & Dugan (2007), the 1970–1997 data were coded as terrorist incidents if they “substantially concur with the definition”. Thus, the measurement is largely consistent with the operationalization, but leaves open a subjective element in the coding process. Second, each incident required only a single source to be coded, whereas it might be desirable to cross-check each source. Third, as LaFree & Dugan (2007) outlines, the 1993 data were lost, but the GTD project has recovered “marginal” estimates of the overall number of attacks, though the marginal estimates are not helpful for us, because they cannot be geographically coded.
the problem of group identification, multiple groups could carry out, or claim credit for, a single attack. A group that did not, in fact, perpetrate the attack could also claim credit for the attack in an attempt to increase its status. Thus, relying exclusively on an actor-based identification strategy is likely problematic.

To identify which terrorist events are associated with civil war in a more systematic way, we coded geographic coordinates for nearly all of the terrorist events in the GTD 1.1 and 2.0 (about 50,000 of the events). The geo-referenced terrorist events contain the latitude and longitude of each event based on the city in which the event occurred or the city to which the event was closest. Once geo-coded, we merged the terrorist event codes with a database of geographically coded civil war zones as defined in the ViewConflicts software by Rød (N.d.). The terrorism data are precise to the daily level and the civil war coordinate data are precise at the monthly level, so there is a slight disconnect in the temporal unit of analysis.

In general, overlaying the data in such a way makes us confident that we are classifying the terrorist events accurately: terrorism occurring in civil war zones during ongoing civil wars is likely to be related to the civil war. This approach is fairly conservative because terrorist events related to the civil war could occur outside of the civil war zone, and our initial approach does not capture these events. The Moscow theater bombing and the Beslan school attack in Russia are both examples of terrorist behavior clearly related to the civil war in Chechnya, but both took place outside of the conflict zones. We also have obtained distances from each event to the conflict zone and, although imperfect still, future analyses could incorporate distance as a way of accounting for other attacks such as these. Given present constraints, it is nearly

---

8The GTD 1.1 database is available as study # 22541 from ICPSR at the University of Michigan: [http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/cocoon/TPDRC/STUDY/22541.xml]. The GTD provided preliminary geographic coordinates for a portion of the data set. We used many of these, but in conjunction with the coordinates we had independently coded. Also, we coded geographic coordinates for many more events than are in the GTD.
impossible to correctly classify all of the events. Our approach, we feel, does the best job given these caveats.

We first consider the percentage of terrorist events that are conflict related based on three different definitions. First, we report the overlap between terrorist events and civil war zones based on ViewConflicts (Rød N.d.) followed by the overlap with conflict zones as defined by the PRIO/Uppsala Armed Conflict Data (Uppsala 2006). Finally we consider terrorist events that occur in a conflict zone defined by either Rød (N.d.) or Uppsala (2006) as well as whether the perpetrator of the terrorist event is defined as a rebel group by Cunningham (2006) or Uppsala (2006). For terrorism occurring prior to, or following civil wars, we identify whether the event occurred in an area that later became a civil war zone or that was previously a civil war zone.

Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for these relationships. The percentage of events occurring in conflict zones as defined by Rød (N.d.) is roughly 44%, which is the lowest estimate. Based on the PRIO/Uppsala conflict zones and the estimate that connects rebel groups to the terrorist events, the percentage of war-related terrorism is 56% and 63% respectively. Although none of these measures is perfect, they demonstrate just how prevalent terrorism is in the context of civil war. Roughly half or more of terrorist events occur during ongoing civil war. These findings support the expectations identified above, based on the five strategies of terrorism.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Figure 2 offers a slightly different perspective than the simple descriptive statistics alone. In this figure we show the average number of terrorist events that occur during a war, in the five years prior to a war onset, and the five years after the war onset. We further separate this by Cold War and Post-Cold War. The results confirm the basic

9Appendix 7 shows additional descriptive statistics that addresses missing data issues more directly.
finding above that terrorism occurs frequently during civil wars. The average number of events per year during a conflict is over 23. The overlap between terrorism during the pre-war period and later conflict zones is mixed. During the Cold War, terrorism occurred more often prior to the war than after the war. But in the post-Cold War, the relationship flips and terrorism occurs more frequently following wars than before them.

A final perspective on the terrorism-civil war relationship considers simply whether a civil war experienced at least one terrorist event. Examining all civil wars, we find that 68 (73%) experience at least one terrorist event while the other 25 (27%) in our sample do not experience a terrorist event.

5 Case Comparisons

We created a series of country maps with three separate temporal periods to visualize better the connections between civil war and terrorism. Each map contains the political boundaries of a state with civil war zone overlayed. We then display the geographic distribution of these attacks (a) before the civil war, (b) during the civil war, and (c) after the civil war. [Note: gray scale versions of the maps have not yet been created, so it is best to view the maps in color (electronically or printing in color.)]

We used several criteria to select cases to investigate. First, the country experienced a civil war sometime between 1970 and 2004, which is the range for which we have coded geographic information for the GTD. Second, we selected cases where variation in levels of violence occur over time. A country, such as Colombia, is excluded because it is engaged in civil war during the entire time-period, thus precluding an examination of pre- and post-war terrorism. Third, we selected countries with variation in Gross

16
Domestic Product: the GDP per capita values vary from $400 (Bangladesh 1972, 1973) to $6,000 (Argentina 1978–1982). Fourth, the countries vary by region, covering Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Central America, South America, and Africa. Finally, the countries had varying levels of democracy prior to civil war and after. Based on these selection criteria, we chose to focus on Argentina, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Lebanon, Mozambique, and Peru.\(^\text{10}\)

Table 3 displays the country selected, the region the country is from, the range of GDP within countries that have experienced civil war\(^\text{11}\), the level of democracy according to the Polity scale prior to civil war, and the level of democracy according to the Polity scale after the civil war. We briefly discuss each case in turn to show that regardless of the variation among these key predictors of violence (democracy, region, GDP), similar patterns in the uses of terrorism emerge\(^\text{12}\). We also identify some disagreement across the cases and suggest some possible explanations and areas for further investigation.

**Argentina: High Development, South America, Autocracy → Autocracy**

A civil war occurred in Argentina from 1973–1977. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

---

\(^\text{10}\)If we can find similar patterns across these cases, we can cast doubt on alternative claims related to development (GDP), democracy, or regional effects.

\(^\text{11}\)As previous work has shown (Fearon & Laitin 2003, Collier & Hoeffler 2001), civil war is highly unlikely in the most developed countries in the world. Argentina has the highest GDP of a country that has experienced civil war.

\(^\text{12}\)These vignettes are not meant to be extensive case studies. In Gerring’s (2004) framework, our study is cross-unit and exploratory. That is we move beyond a single case or single comparison and are exploring relationships rather than confirming/disconfirming them.
terrorist events over these years was 14.667. During the years that Argentina was undergoing civil war, (1973–1977), 209 terrorist events occurred in areas that were part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 41.8. In the five years following the war (1978–1982), there were 52 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war. This averages to 10.4 terrorist events a year in the post-war period.

Terror events during and around the Argentine civil war were most prevalent during the war, followed by the pre-war years, and then the post-war years. These data suggest that terrorism might be most important as a tactic to fight a war. This accords with four of the five strategies of terrorism (all but provocation). But there appears to be evidence that terrorism may have contributed to civil war onset as well, consistent with the provocation and attrition strategies. The post-war period experienced the smallest amount of terrorist violence, perhaps casting doubt on the spoiling strategy. The Argentine military junta collapsed in 1983 after an ill-fated war against the British. This conflict may have contributed to a relative lack of terrorism events in 1981–1982.

These results are indicative of the global trends identified above, furthermore. During the Cold War, most terrorism occurred during civil wars, followed by the pre-war period, and then the post-war period.

**Bangladesh: Low Development, Asia, Democracy → Weakened Democracy** A civil war occurred in Bangladesh from 1975–1992. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

[FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE]

During the pre-war years that we considered (1972–1973), 0 terrorist events occurred in areas that were later part of the civil war. During the years that Bangladesh was undergoing civil war, (1974–1992), 5 terrorist events occurred in areas that were
part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 0.263. In the five years following the war (1993–1998), there were 0 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war.

In contrast to the Argentine civil war, relatively little terrorism occurred in Bangladesh. While the frequency of events across time and space was much less than Argentina, the patterns were similar. While only five terrorist events occurred, all of them occurred during the civil war. This gives support to four of the five strategies of terrorism (excluding provocation) that terrorism is a tactic used frequently during civil war and far less outside of this context.

**El Salvador: Middle Development, Central America, Autocracy → Democracy** A civil war occurred in El Salvador from 1979–1992. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

During the pre-war years that we considered (1974–1978), 97 terrorist events occurred in areas that were later part of the civil war. The average number of pre-war terrorist events over these years was 19.4. During the years that El Salvador was undergoing civil war, (1979–1992), 3002 terrorist events occurred in areas that were part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 231. In the five years following the war (1993–1997), there were 36 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war. This averages to 4 terrorist events a year in the post-war period.

A substantial amount of terrorism occurred in El Salvador before, and during the civil war with the post-war period still experiencing some attacks, albeit far fewer. The greatest frequency of terrorism occurred during the war itself, similar to Argentina and

---

13 As discussed previously, GTD data for 1993 were lost. This average only includes 1994-1997.
Bangladesh. And like Argentina, the next most frequent time period for terrorism is the pre-war period. These results again support expectations of four of the five strategies of terrorism (excluding provocation) for during-war terrorism, and the two strategies of terrorism that expect terrorism prior to war (provocation and attrition). Very little violence followed the end of the civil war, perhaps due to the robust negotiated settlement reached by the parties and third party involvement in overseeing the peace (Holiday & Stanley 1993). Likely little motivation existed for using terrorism to spoil the peace.

Lebanon: Middle/High Development, Middle East, Democracy → Unstable

A civil war occurred in Lebanon from 1975–1990. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

![FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE]

During the pre-war years that we considered (1970–1974), 19 terrorist events occurred in areas that were later part of the civil war. The average number of pre-war terrorist events over these years was 3.8. During the years that Lebanon was undergoing civil war (1975–1990), 175 terrorist events occurred in areas that were part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 11. In the five years following the war (1991–1995), there were 91 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war. This averages to 22.8 terrorist events a year in the post-war period.

Lebanon follows the pattern identified throughout that the greatest number of terrorist events occurred during the war. But it deviates from the other cases in that the average number of events is higher in the post-war period than in the pre-war period. The average number of terrorist events nearly doubles over the average during the war. Lebanon is a case that suggests the potential agenda of spoilers of the peace. Amal,
the most prominent Shia organization at the time, re-emerged after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978. Hezbollah, aided by Iran and Syria, also emerged and blossomed under the shadow of war with Israel in 1982. These groups vied for support within the Shia community in Lebanon. While Amal primarily took part in institutional politics following the end of the civil war, Hezbollah established itself in the parliament and continued violent resistance. Patterns of terrorism in Lebanon offer further support for the expectations of four of the five strategies of terrorism (excluding provocation) and, furthermore, appear consistent with the post-war spoiling strategy.

The difference between the pre- and post-war periods in Lebanon is mostly consistent with the findings in the global data overview above that in the post-Cold War period, terrorism occurs more frequently following war than before.

Mozambique: Low Development, Africa, Autocracy → Democracy A civil war occurred in Mozambique from 1977–1992. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

During the pre-war years that we considered (1972–1976), 0 terrorist events occurred in areas that were later part of the civil war. During the years that Mozambique was undergoing civil war, (1977–1992), 156 terrorist events occurred in areas that were part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 9.8. In the five years following the war (1993–1997), there were 13 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war. This averages to 3.25 terrorist events a year in the post-war period.

Overall, Mozambique had fairly low levels of terrorism. It follows the general pattern of more frequent terrorism during war, consistent with the strategies of terrorism

---

15 Again, this does not take into account 1993.
(except provocation). But in contrast to Argentina, Bangladesh, and El Salvador, more terrorism occurred following the civil war than before. Like Lebanon, these data are consistent with the global descriptive statistics, which show that terrorism is more likely following war than before. This relationship offers further support for the potential role of groups seeking to spoil the peace. According to Honwana (2002, 202), “the lengthy peace negotiations revealed that neither party [FRELIMO or RENAMO] had much confidence in the other’s good faith.” Terrorism during this period may be related to this commitment problem in implementing peace (Walter 1997).

**Peru: Middle Development, South America, Democracy → Weak Autocracy** A civil war occurred in Peru from 1981–1999. Figure 7 shows the distribution of terrorist events before, during, and after the war.

During the pre-war years that we considered (1976–1980), 74 terrorist events occurred in areas that were later part of the civil war. The average number of pre-war terrorist events over these years was 14.8. During the years that Peru was undergoing civil war, (1981–1999), 3659 terrorist events occurred in areas that were part of the civil war. The average number of terrorist events over these years was 203.3. In the five years following the war (2000–2004), there were 5 terrorist events in regions that were once part of the civil war. This averages to 1 terrorist event a year in the post-war period.

An enormous number of terrorist events occur in Peru; the vast majority of the events occur during the ongoing civil war consistent with the strategies of terrorism (except provocation). The next most frequent time period for terrorism is the pre-war period. This is similar to Argentina and El Salvador, which both experienced more terrorism pre-war and less following the war’s ending. Peru’s pattern of terrorist
violence, as relates to pre- and post-war terrorism — deviates from the global pattern, in which terrorism occurs more frequently after wars during the post-war period. It appears that there might be a regional trend in that terrorist violence is used to provoke and fight wars in Latin America.

6 Conclusion

Our data examination corroborates Tilly’s (2004, 6) notion that, “[m]ost uses of terror actually occur as complements or as byproducts of struggles in which participants — often including the so-called terrorists — are engaging simultaneously or successively in other more routine varieties of political claim making.” The overall descriptive statistics suggest that terrorism is most prevalent during war, followed by the post-war period. The least active period for terrorism is the pre-war period. The six cases we considered identify the importance of terrorism during wartime. On the other hand, in these cases, terrorism occurs more prior to the war’s beginning than following the war’s ending. The Cold War and Post-Cold War dynamics at least partially account for the differences.

Overall, the global patterns and specific cases demonstrate the tight connection between terrorism and civil war. Studies of civil war and terrorism have historically produced islands of cumulative knowledge but have rarely been integrated. As Sambanis (2005) suggests, the most-cited explanations for civil war (e.g., Collier & Hoeffler 2001, Fearon & Laitin 2003) are silent about the relationship between this form of violence and crime, terrorism, coups, genocide, etc. Most & Starr (1984, 383) suggest a similar problem with research related to foreign policy. Just as states can choose from a menu of tactics when dealing with other states, dissident organizations may use different strategies given varied conditions. As Most & Starr (1984) suggest
the implication is “that all of the behaviors that tend to be studied in fragmented fashion need to be conceived from the outset not as separate and distinct phenomena, the understanding of which will eventually be integrated but rather as commensurable behaviors or component parts of abstract conceptual puzzles.” Although civil war and terrorism are by no means the only choices available to violent or nonviolent opponents of the state, these are two of the most prominent disconnected portions of the study of violent politics that could usefully be integrated. In the future, this could also be applied to violent protests, riots, ethnic conflict, and other related forms of political violence.\textsuperscript{16}

To accomplish this task, a more careful assessment of the contexts that give rise to terrorism is warranted. We have primarily considered the pre-, during-, and post-war periods. Other factors could be considered, such as, whether terrorism events and homicides are spatially autocorrelated, whether terrorism tends to occur in urban versus rural areas as some scholars and practitioners of violence have suggested, or whether patterns of violence in and out of war differ based on military vs. non-military targets.

7 Figures and Tables

\textsuperscript{16}For an example, see Tilly (2003).
Figure 1: Terrorism during the Angolan Peace Process
Table 1: When to Expect Strategies of Terrorism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Pre-War</th>
<th>During War</th>
<th>Post War</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provocation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attrition</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbidding</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoiling</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Percentage of War-Related Terrorist Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ViewConflicts</th>
<th>PRIO/Uppsala</th>
<th>Rebel Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-conflict</td>
<td>56.15% (25,848)</td>
<td>43.97% (20,241)</td>
<td>36.81% (20,439)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>43.85% (20,189)</td>
<td>56.03% (25,796)</td>
<td>63.19% (35,090)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2: Average Number of Terrorist Events: Pre, During, Post War
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>GDP</th>
<th>Democ (Pre)</th>
<th>Democ (Post)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>South America</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Autoc. (-9)</td>
<td>Autoc. (-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Democ. (8)</td>
<td>Democ (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Weak Autoc. (-3)</td>
<td>Democ (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>High/Middle</td>
<td>Weak Democ. (5)</td>
<td>Unstable (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Autoc. (-8)</td>
<td>Democ (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>South America</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Democ. (7)</td>
<td>Weak Autoc (-1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Argentina: Pre, During, and Post Civil War Terrorism
Civil War Zones (1974-1992) and Terror Events (1972-1997) in Bangladesh

Pre-Civil War Terror Events, 1972-1973
Terror Events During Civil War, 1974-1992
Post-Civil War Terror Events, 1993-1997

Number of Terror Events per Location
1 - 5
6 - 10
11 - 15
16 - 20
21 - 30
31 - 45
80

Figure 4: Bangladesh: Pre, During, and Post War Terrorism

Conflict/Civil War Zones (1979-1992)

Pre-Civil War Terror Events, 1974-1978

Terror Events During Civil War, 1979-1992

Post-Civil War Terror Events, 1993-1997

Number of Terror Events per Location
1 - 5
6 - 15
16 - 20
21 - 30
31 - 75
76 - 175
1280

Figure 5: El Salvador: Pre, During, and Post War Terrorism

Figure 6: Lebanon: Pre, During, and Post War Terrorism

Pre-Civil War Terror Events, 1970-1974
Terror Events During Civil War, 1975-1990
Post-Civil War Terror Events, 1991-1995

Number of Terror Events per Location
1 - 5
6 - 10
11 - 15
16 - 20
21 - 50
51 - 110
690
Civil War Zones (1977-1992) and Terror Events (1972-1997) in Mozambique

Figure 7: Mozambique: Pre, During, and Post War Terrorism

Conflict/Civil War Zones (1981-1999)

Pre-Civil War Terror Events, 1976-1980
Terror Events During Civil War, 1981-1999
Post-Civil War Terror Events, 2000-2004

Number of Terror Events per Location
1 - 5
6 - 10
11 - 30
31 - 60
151
354
1699

Figure 8: Peru: Pre, During, and Post War Terrorism
Appendix

Because geographic information could not be identified for a number of terrorist attacks, we also address the missing data problem in three additional ways: (1) excluding missing data altogether; (2) assuming that missing data fall in the conflict zone; and (3) assuming missing data fall outside of the conflict zone. Table 4 displays the raw counts and percentages of terrorist events that fall into each of the three categories, further subdivided by the different measure of civil war.

The data do not appear to be missing in noticeably systematic ways; most countries have amounts of missing data roughly in proportion to their overall terrorism levels relative to other countries. Thus, excluding missing data is our baseline, which is how we record it in the main text. But we report the two additional statistics — assuming all missing observations relate to the conflict vs. none of them relating — which become something of a confidence interval regarding how much terrorism is related to the civil war. Assuming that the missing observations relate to the conflict, the percentage of conflict-related terrorist events is much higher than reported in the paper. And assuming that the missing observations do not relate to the conflict, the percentage of conflict-related events is much lower than reported in the paper.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage in Conflict Zones (ViewConflicts)</th>
<th>Percentage (Drop Missing)</th>
<th>Percentage (Missing in Zone)</th>
<th>Percentage (Missing Out of Zone)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-conflict</td>
<td>56.15% (25,848)</td>
<td>37.76% (25,848)</td>
<td>64.98% (44,487)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>43.85% (20,189)</td>
<td>62.24% (42,612)</td>
<td>35.02% (23,973)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage in Conflict Zones (PRIO/Uppsala)</th>
<th>Percentage (Drop Missing)</th>
<th>Percentage (Missing in Zone)</th>
<th>Percentage (Missing Out of Zone)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-conflict</td>
<td>43.97% (20,241)</td>
<td>29.57% (20,241)</td>
<td>49.79% (34,088)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>56.03% (25,796)</td>
<td>70.43% (48,219)</td>
<td>50.21% (34,372)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage in Conflict Zones or Committed by Rebel Group</th>
<th>Percentage (ViewConflicts)</th>
<th>PRIO/Uppsala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-conflict</td>
<td>36.81% (20,439)</td>
<td>31.05% (17,241)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>63.19% (35,090)</td>
<td>68.95% (38,288)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


