MILITARY-AGE MALES IN U.S COUNTERINSURGENCY AND DRONE WARFARE

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Abstract

In 2012, *The New York Times* reported that the Obama Administration excluded all Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count in areas where the U.S engaged in drone warfare/ Though the Military-Age Male (MAM) category references the draft, the term is applied to all boys and men, including civilians, who are aged sixteen years and older. The Military-Aged Male category is not synonymous with 'combatant,' but marks boys and men for differentiated treatment in conflict zones, to the point where male bodies are used as a shorthand for 'combatant' when assessing the collateral damage count.

This dissertation seeks to answer an empirical puzzle. *The U.S Army/Marine Corps Counter-Insurgency Field Manual* (2006), a document which emerged from the American intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, emphasizes that militants vie for the civilian population's support as a way to win the war against a stronger and better-resourced military force. These documents state that the United States cannot rely on military prowess alone and that, in fact, "non-military means are the most effective" way to win an irregular war against militant groups.

Both the Bush Jr. and Obama Administrations used the Military-Age Male category to structure military strategy, meaning that civilian protection was applied asymmetrically and that military violence was legitimized when directed against male civilians. These security practices would seemingly cause resentment from a large segment of the population and undermine the success of U.S foreign policy.

This dissertation documents the political ecosystem that legitimized violent military action against the 'Military-Age Male.' Specifically, I examine Military-Age Males under the Bush and Obama Administrations and illustrate how counterinsurgency and drone warfare became practices that were sustained by an elaborate bureaucracy that interpreted the battlespace—and combatant from civilian—by using assumptions about gender.

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There are many others who helped me along my journey—many of you were not involved in Political Science at all, but you always had time to ask me questions about my research. You made me recognize that I could write in a way that appealed to different audiences. You looked over my papers for typos. You consoled me when I felt stressed. You were compassionate. To all those who witnessed me on the high of a research finding, or on the low of a burnout: thank you.

This dissertation is dedicated to the civilian dead.

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Introduction: Who Counts?

In 2012, *The New York Times* reported that the Obama Administration excluded all Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count in areas where the U.S engaged in drone warfare (Becker and Shane 2012). Though the Military-Age Male (MAM) category references the draft, the term is applied to all boys and men, including civilians, who are aged sixteen years and older. The Military-Aged Male category is not synonymous with 'combatant,' but marks boys and men for differentiated treatment in conflict zones, to the point where male bodies are used as a shorthand for 'combatant' when assessing the collateral damage count. Though this revelation in *The New York Times* attracted much short-lived attention, less notice was paid to the Military-Age Male's origins and that this category had also been used extensively during the Bush Administration.

The United States often highlights its own superior conduct during wartime, juxtaposing the behavior of norm-violating actors against U.S attempts to protect civilians. The U.S has institutionalized criticism against norm-violating actors through, for example, congressional resolutions condemning militant organizations for their use of civilians as human shields (H.Con. Res 107, 113th Cong. 2014). Pentagon officials have criticized ISIS for forcing civilians to act as human shields (BBC News 2016). Similarly, U.S Central Command (CENTCOM) has criticized Taliban fighters for forcing civilians to remain in villages that were at risk of being bombed by Coalition Forces. While U.S and Afghan military forces were "committed to [protecting the lives of Afghan citizens" the Taliban was "deliberately [placing] civilians in harm's way" (Garamone 2009). Considering these foreign policy stances, the decision made by both the Bush and Obama Administrations to direct military action against civilian boys and men during counterinsurgency operations and then to omit them from the collateral damage count is especially perplexing and distressing.

This dissertation seeks to answer an empirical puzzle. *The U.S Army/Marine Corps Counter-Insurgency Field Manual* (2006), a document which emerged from the American intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, emphasizes that militants vie for the civilian population's support as a way to win the war against a stronger and better-resourced military force. These documents state that the United States cannot rely on military prowess alone and that, in fact, "non-military means are the most effective" way to win an irregular war against militant groups. Foreign policy documents like the *Counterinsurgency Joint Publication 3-24* emphasize that counterinsurgencies are involved in competing for the civilian population's support (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009). Yet despite moving away from the conventional warfare that characterized the early stages of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, Military-Age Males continued to face differentiated treatment from U.S armed forces.

Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama have sought to reassure domestic and international audiences that avoiding civilian deaths is an American imperative. Bush, referring to the ground war in Afghanistan, stated that the Principle of Distinction, the principle under international law that differentiates between combatants and civilians, still applied (Kinsella 2005, 163). In his Nobel Peace Prize speech, Obama stated that: "I believe that the United States of America must remain a standard bearer in the conduct of war. That is what makes us different from those whom we fight" (Obama

2009).

These statements are deeply puzzling when examined against foreign policy practices that occurred under both the Bush and Obama Administrations. Both Administrations used the Military-Age Male category to structure military strategy, meaning that civilian protection was applied asymmetrically and that military violence was rendered more justifiable against male civilians. These security practices would seemingly cause resentment from a large segment of the population and undermine the success of U.S foreign policy. So far, surveys that have documented local attitudes towards drone strikes illustrate that this style of warfare does not do much to 'win hearts and mind.' A 2014 report from the Pew Research Center found that 46% of Pakistani citizens who were surveyed disagreed that drones were necessary for defense and that 67% believed drone strikes killed too many innocent people. (Pakistan experienced the highest rate of drone strikes under the Obama Administration.) Despite documented resistance from local populations and U.S statements that highlighted the importance of civilian protection, U.S drone strikes continued to increase across both Administrations. While there were 57 strikes under the Bush Administration, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) reports that the Obama Administration issued a total of 563 strikes (Purkiss and Serle 2017).

And at the very least, the United States does not want to *appear* as though its Drone and counterinsurgency (COIN) programs impact civilian life. The CIA has argued that no civilians died from drone strikes in 2011 and, then in 2012, U.S government officials stated that civilian deaths that resulted from drone strikes were in the "single digits" (Becker et al. 2002). Though counting the dead is notoriously tricky business, a number of organizations have sought to quantify the number of civilian deaths in some, if not all, war theaters. These organizations include the Long War Journal, the New America Foundation, the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism. All sources indicate that the United States severely underestimates its collateral damage count (Crawford 2013, 126). The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ), the organization referenced most frequently in this dissertation, found that between 2004 and 2014, civilian deaths ranged from 416 to 957, of which between 168 to 202 were children. TBIJ categorizes all persons under the age of 18 as 'children' and all those who do not wield arms as 'civilians' (Bureau of Investigative Journalism 2014).

In 2016**,** after intense legal pressure from advocacy groups like the American Civil Liberties Union, the U.S admitted to between 64 and 116 civilian deaths from 2009 to 2015 in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Libya—countries "outside areas of active hostilities" (Monaco 2016). These numbers were released because of "the president's commitment to transparency," according to a White House official (*ibid*). Yet, TBIJ estimates that the civilian death count is six times higher than the U.S claims: between 380 to 801 civilians. The minimum *total* number of dead—meaning the combined total of combatants and civilian deaths—provided by the Government and the Bureau were "strikingly similar," with the White House counting 2,436 dead persons and TBIJ recording 2,753. As I have written elsewhere, the decision to count boys and men as civilians is a "little definitional difference [that] translates to a big difference in the numbers" (Shoker 2017).

Some authors claim that drone strikes were thirty-five times more deadly in the non-conventional

battlefields of Yemen, Pakistan, and Somalia when compared to conventional airstrikes that took place in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan (Zenko and Wolf 2016). Other researchers dispute these findings for methodological reasons, but still argue that the precision of drone strikes has been exaggerated (Barela and Plaw 2016). Finally, in an in-depth report that covers all security theaters, The Roosevelt Institute at Columbia University estimates that approximately 1300 civilians were killed out of a total of 8000 dead (Davis 2017, 1). Steven Braela and Avery Plaw note that the quantitative data for civilian deaths caused by drone strikes remains poor, and go so far as to state that "the administration's case for the relative precision of drones has always relied more on a intuitive appreciation of drones' unique capabilities—a fixed visual target for the crew, extended loitering times, combined with small laser-guided munitions—than the statistical evidence available" (Barela and Plaw 2016).

Why do these numbers matter? Given the secrecy surrounding drone warfare, the quest for accuracy—by counting the dead and debating who counts—becomes a substitute for gauging the legitimacy, character, and methods that are used to wage war. Importantly, miscounting can lead to very different answers when scholars ask, "what happened in this war?" If boys and men are excluded from the collateral damage count, then the social and political consequences of warfare remain shielded. Investigating the criteria that informs a quantified civilian death count can hint at the norms that were used for civilian protection. The goal of this project is not to quantify how *many* civilian have been killed, nor to make pronouncement about which advocacy organization made the best assessment. Rather, I argue that U.S agencies consistently underestimated civilian deaths caused by drone strikes and that this omission had serious political consequences. The focus on counting civilians is meant to illuminate *how* policymakers excluded Military-Age Males and what factors made this decision seem reasonable.

Counterinsurgency and drone warfare have highlighted the crucial role of data production and surveillance in the exercise of U.S military power. Like any other bureaucracy, defense and intelligence institutions create categories in order to measure and act on populations. These categories highlight certain traits as important for managerial purposes while rendering other traits invisible. While increased media attention on issues like Big Data may create a temptation to associate data collection exclusively with drone warfare, the push towards more sophisticated Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) technologies were also crucial to U.S COIN tactics. According to the US Air Force, counterinsurgency required three to four times more ISR than major combat operations (Gregory 2010, 193). Indeed, Michael Flynn, writing as Director of Intelligence at CENTCOM and who would then later serve as Donald Trump's National Security Advisor, stated that "intelligence *is* operations" because the "enemy is a low-contrast foe easily camouflaged among civilian clutter, unlike high-contrast targets such as airfields and warships...the insurgent's ability to hide in plain sight demands persistent collection in order to detect his presence " (Flynn, Jeurgens, Cantrell 2008, 56-57). While some commentators have stated that the transition from counterinsurgency to drone warfare marks a paradigmatic shift, my dissertation illustrates that security practices under the Bush and Obama Administrations were connected by a commitment to identifying the enemy through programs designed to socially sort insurgents from the larger population.

These programs were often crafted with the help of academics, as evidenced by the controversy surrounding the Human Terrain System (HTS), a program where social scientists were deployed in the

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field of conflict and instructed to gather anthropological information about local populations for military use. The HTS, which emerged from the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), was a much discussed but short-lived feature of counterinsurgency and only one practice from the ISR toolbox. HTS Specialists, who ideally held a Master's degree or a PhD, were instructed to collect knowledge that would support coalition brigades and decrease U.S 'kinetic operations.' (Kinetic force is understood as physical, often lethal, violence. Non-kinetic force is military action that is not designed to inflict physical harm.) By developing an "educated and culturally agile military," U.S forces could reduce civilian casualties, a claim that was met with spotty evidence and eventually led to the program's cancellation (Zehfuss 2012, 178).

Importantly, Maja Zehfuss notes that "[t]he promise of reducing harm to people caught up in warfare through particular capabilities is familiar not least from the discourse on smart weapons" (*ibid*, 176). Advocates position the development of these capabilities as a response to taking seriously the protection of civilians in a climate where combatants refuse to self-identify. Whether discussing counterinsurgency or drone warfare, U.S policy officials cite the current climate of transnational insurgency to justify persistent surveillance at home and abroad in order to create 'actionable' intelligence.

In military parlance, the transition from efficient and precise reconnaissance to deploying violent action through weapons systems is known as the "sensor to shooter" sequence (Chizek 2003). These maneuvers may begin with HUMINT (human intelligence) via on-the-ground interactions with the local population, but they extend to aerial surveillance platforms like drones. Today, the sheer volume and speed by which drones can collect data has prompted an explosion of 'Big Data' management techniques within U.S security institutions. In 2009 alone, the Air Force collected about twenty-four years worth of video footage (Drew 2010). Within the 'sensor to shooter' sequence, human presence has been identified as the bottleneck of the data analysis process and, increasingly, the targeting process. The 'sensor to shooter' sequence, deemed too slow because individuals could not analyse data at the pace of its collection, has now prompted a move towards automation in order to bypass human limitations. But just as the 'Unmanned Aerial Vehicle' hides the human in the machine, so too does the word 'autonomous.' Drones that hovered over populations for forty-two hours transformed populations into unwilling cyborgs perpetually connected to an appendage that placed them under surveillance. Moreover, and according to the Air Force, 168 people were needed to keep a Predator flying for 24 hours, while a Global Hawk required 300 people. In contrast, an F-16 fighter aircraft required 100 people per mission. Drones, therefore, do not necessarily translate into a smaller military footprint (Cloud 2011). They were staffed by soldiers and contractors who were required to interpret the data collected by the drone. Similarly, the Military-Age Male functioned as a code that instructed individuals where to look when conducting counterinsurgency operations.

For the 2017 fiscal budget, the Air Force allocated $551.9 million in research and development into drone technology (Gettinger 2016, 1). Audiences are told that drones like the Predator B ER can monitor targets for over forty-two hours before refueling (General Atomics Aeronautical 2018) and that some drones have an "*Unblinking Eye*" (Flynn, Jeurgens, Cantrell 2008, 59) that can spot a milk carton from 60, 000 feet (Haddal and Gertler 2010). Yet despite these pronouncements, U.S security practitioners still could not correctly sort between friends and foes, often returning to gendered ideas

about violence that stretch back to Hugo Grotius, the Dutch jurist often credited for laying the foundations for international law and who ascribed civilian status to women because of their perceived intellectual deficiencies (Kinsella 2006). The Military-Age Male is a category that threatens to subvert the Principle of Distinction, which Samuel Jones described as "perhaps the greatest triumph of international law" due to its success at "mitigating the evils of war...Indeed, the purpose of those rules is to specify for each individual a single identity; [the person] must be either a [combatant] or a civilian" (Jones 2006, 262). However, Jones also cites that if civilian and combatant categories are dissolved, and if all parties in a conflict do not adhere to these classifying standards then "total war becomes imminent as these conditions enable insurgencies" (Jones 2006, 264). By directing military action at civilian boys and men, the United States widens the very war theater it seeks to contain.

A few scholars may argue that the United States abandons its commitments to international law when the legal code constrains its ability to wage war. When John Brennan stated that "one could argue that never before has there been a weapon that allows us to distinguish more effectively between Al-Qaeda terrorists and innocent civilians," then we should certainly be critical (Brennan 2008). The drone's surveillance function is allegedly unparalleled, yet despite its sophistication, the technology cannot sort between Military-Age Males and combatants. I cite this contradiction as a puzzle worth solving. However, I am not content with citing 'hypocrisy' and ending the story there.

I argue that U.S warfighting is informed by liberal norms, including a respect for civilian immunity, and that the application of liberal norms led to paradoxical consequences. These norms influenced the 'turn' to counterinsurgency and towards increased investment in drone technologies. The Military-Age Male is emblematic of a "future-oriented power" that is common in (neo)liberal democracies that use "knowledge discovery" in the practice of security. This multi-step process includes uncovering "hidden patterns and subtle relationships in data and to infer rules that allow for the prediction of future results," (Gao 2007, quoted in Guzik 2009, 6). For counterinsurgency and drone warfare, data about Muslim-majority populations was mined in order to regulate and manage these groups with the hopes of pre-empting insurgent violence. The drone's technological capabilities may have been powerful, but the term 'unmanned aerial vehicle' hides the lengthy human chain-of-command that uses gender norms and bureaucratic procedure to choose 'legitimate' targets. The attempt to extract adversaries from a civilian population or, in other words, the practice of interrogating data in order to precisely target combatants, also meant that entire populations were imbued with risk and became sites worth monitoring. Being monitored, being 'called out' as suspicious, was not a passive process and placed male civilians at risk of military harm.

One of this project's methodological contributions is examining how gender works to inform the direction of International Relations. A number of scholars have referenced the Military-Age Male category in their work and have noted that the United States uses gender and race to orient its security policy (Zenko 2012; Wilcox 2017; Schwarz 2017; Williams 2011). However, prior research often treats gender as a black box, a category that is cited rather than explained. As I mention in Chapter 5, relegating the exercise of power to a placeholder called 'gender' does not inject clarity into the state's black box. At worst, stating that the U.S targets MAMs because 'gender, probably' illustrates the failure of critical IR to treat gender as something other than peripheral. Very little work has been done to

investigate what movements or 'Patterns of Life' turn civilians into combatants. The methods I chose, a hybrid of discourse analysis and object-oriented analysis, are designed to "show the actual working of power rather than assuming it on the basis of uneven structural relations" (Muller 2015, 33). From spokespersons who cite women and children in order to justify intervention in Afghanistan, to military decision-makers who use the Military-Age Male as a code to orient tactics and strategy, gender remains a governing code in the practice of warfare which, in turn, shapes the character of the international system.

After discussing my methodological commitments, I move on to chapter 3, where I illustrate how liberal norms and the laws of war have become, as David Kennedy writes, "a vocabulary for marking legitimate power and justifiable death" (Kennedy 2016, 260). In order to delegitimize their opponents, the United States condemned the Taliban and Al-Qaeda for killing civilians and recruiting children to act as suicide bombers. U.S foreign policy makers positioned militants who used and attacked children as especially heinous. But if civilians generally, and children specifically, are used to bolster U.S intervention abroad, then how do U.S officials make sense of a collateral damage count that excludes adult and child civilians? This puzzle goes beyond omitting boys and men from the collateral damage count and covers the detention of minors in Guantanamo Bay and other U.S military prisons, where male detainees under the age of eighteen were tortured. Instead of citing "hypocrisy," this dissertation argues that the U.S goes to great lengths to justify its policies and ensure compliance with the law. The result is that the erosion of civilian immunity is mediated by bureaucratic institutions and the production of technical knowledge. Instead of positioning the War on Terror as an extension of American lawlessness in an international system, I argue that the United States advances its military practice through the law, rather than around it. My research comes to a troubling conclusion by illustrating that liberal norms, rather than contributing to democratic peacefulness, can actually enable warmaking by democratic states.

Chapter 4 positions the U.S decision to move towards counterinsurgency in a history of colonial counterinsurgency practice. Counterinsurgency, prompted after an initial period of conventional war in Afghanistan and Iraq that proved disastrous, was motivated by a 'population-centric' approach to warfare. In practice, a population-centric approach meant synthesizing military action with economic and social development. The move towards using social incentives, with the ultimate goal being to reinforce support for U.S presence, meant that the household became a site of military intervention. The paradoxical turn towards what some academics have called "humanitarian war" resulted in an explosion of data collection and anthropological knowledge used to decrease the risk that populations would side with insurgent groups. While I situate U.S counterinsurgency practices within a history of colonial policing, I also note that modern counterinsurgency is distinguished from its predecessor in notable ways. This chapter highlights how liberal subjecthood was expanded to include civilian groups, who were described as rational, self-interested, and subjects in search of Hobbesian security— with women and (some) children explicitly marked for protection by foreign policy practices.

Crucially, by citing the human security of 'women and children' as worthy of protection, home life and domestic relationships became sites for military intervention. As feminist geographers have noted, counterinsurgency, by intervening in daily domestic life, tries to "secure the intimate" (Belcher 2017,

96). Gender, first used to bolster the intervention's legitimacy and thereby create a stable link between policy and discourse, was used again to orient counterinsurgency practice. The 'population-centric' approach that characterized counterinsurgency meant that local populations were treated as rational economic subjects who would side with U.S intervention if offered adequate culturally-sensitive incentives. The population became a site for data mining, where social scientific facts about the population were understood "less as sociological constructs than as instruments for coercion," (*ibid*). Physical space was transformed in order to monitor and contain Military-Age Males from engaging in violence and, in conjunction with viewing populations as a group that harbored 'raw data,' policymakers developed ISR technologies that could monitor civilian networks. Said otherwise, social, economic, and political life—the human terrain—was reorganized in order to pre-empt violence. The Military-Age Male category became central to the way risk was assessed in the human terrain and how 'non-kinetic' means were used to reduce risk in the civilian population. These practices, however, were conditioned by commitments to International Humanitarian Law, which instructs military-decision makers to assess, then justify, the risk directed at civilians while pursuing strategic gains.

Chapter 5 details how drone technology acted as a visual regime that prompted an explosion of data and knowledge production, and explains how norms require a material infrastructure to diffuse globally. Instead of positioning drones as 'unmanned' technologies that pursue security goals objectively—which, by extension, would imply that individuals were accurately targeted by drones—I chronicle how drone crews used gender as a governing code to determine strike decisions. Against the backdrop of a transnational insurgency that used civilians for cover, U.S foreign policy officials argued that drone strikes were a form of technology that led to higher civilian immunity. Drone technology became a crucial surveillance technology where alleged combatants were marked for death if they exhibited a 'Pattern of Life' that was above the acceptable risk threshold. Because security threats were interpreted as insurgents who blended into the population, the need to distinguish between civilian and insurgent led to further investment in drone sensors and batteries, which in turn meant that drones could collect more footage (data) and loiter for longer periods of time. The raw data collected by military drones, however, required interpretation by a host of analysts, a process that has been a source of consternation for the U.S military and which has led to research into Big Data management and automating the intelligence analysis cycle.

As I illustrate, removing humans from the knowledge production cycle did not introduce objectivity into the target-selection process, and this chapter details how automating the target-selection process may replicate human bias. Given that drones are sustained by a Distributed Common Ground System that transmits data across 27 locations in the U.S and internationally, the norms that inform civilian targeting and hyper-surveillance are sustained by a physical architecture of state power, all directed towards producing information about populations with which it wars. Data did (and does) political things because it allocated moral and material value (Johnson 2015). The United States used the Military-Age Male as a salient category to reorganize the social and political life of Muslim-majority populations to suit military needs.

Though this project focused on security practices under the Bush and Obama Administrations, I conclude by reflecting briefly on the Trump Administration's foreign policy. I suggest that the Trump Administration marks a pronounced discursive shift from the two previous Presidential

Administrations. The change in rhetoric, however, has not stopped U.S defense and intelligence agencies from adopting autonomous weapons platforms and other AI technologies. While the move towards automation is troubling, I end this dissertation by providing a few optimistic notes and explain how researchers, policymakers, and activists may move towards reducing civilian casualties and convincing foreign policymakers to see boys and men as worthy of protection.

The Military-Age Male, rather than describing a biological reality, is a mode of thought used by security professionals to assess the global landscape. Understanding, predicting, and containing violent conflicts are major themes in the study of International Relations. One of the major contributions of this project is documenting how foreign policy actors identified 'maleness' as an important category in the practice of warfare and insurgency. Given that the Military-Age Male operated within the context of an transnational insurgency fought by a hegemon, the impact of this norm should not be underestimated. Gender, rather than being on the periphery of international relations, is central to how the United States orients security policy against transnational insurgencies. These findings are salient for any scholar who seeks to understand how liberal democracies make foreign policy decisions. Though the Bush and Obama Administrations have been described as paradigmatic opposites, the foreign policy differences between these two administrations begin to appear more ideologically aligned when gender is taken seriously. From counterinsurgency to drone warfare to automation, the Military-Age Male remains crucial to orienting the state's response to external threats, regardless of presidential party affiliation.

These findings come with a number of implications. Since the early 1990s, United Nations officials, academics, and politicians have called for Human Security to be taken seriously. These calls have been echoed by prominent counterinsurgents like David Kilcullen, who argue that military practitioners need to integrate human security into the practice of war (Packer 2008). Civilian vulnerability, and its prevention, are important agendas to international liberal organizations. In practice, however, civilian protection is applied asymmetrically. IR does not often position boys and men as vulnerable subjects, but a gendered analysis finds that wars render all civilians vulnerable and that persons experience injury differently depending on their gender identity. The stakes are high: If boys and men are considered worthy security referents, then a state that directs violence at male civilians may lose its legitimacy or face pressure to reorient its military practice. These findings come with a very serious challenge to liberal democracies who take seriously their own behavior in violent conflict. Feminist IR can provide scholars the tools to use gender as an analytical framework. Unfortunately, current security practitioners have used gender as a cognitive shortcut instead. This is an ethical challenge that states must confront; the alternative is a global order where the U.S uses gender to eliminate those it deems threatening before they have committed a combat function, thereby punishing individuals before a wrong has been committed.

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Chapter 2
Methods, Methodology, and Literature Review

i. Who Speaks for IR?
I collided with IR's disciplinary boundaries when I defended my Master's degree in 2012. I had opted to examine why male and female fighters joined the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (also known as the Tamil Tigers) and if there were gendered differences in the organization's recruitment methods. The culmination of this project ended with a thesis defense in 2012, where a committee member asked why my research should be considered Political Science.

I highlight this incident to illustrate that not all research questions are equally prioritized within International Relations. Questions posed by disciplines are also mechanisms for creating boundaries and, within IR, some questions have been perceived as legitimate lines of inquiry while other questions have been characterized as outside disciplinary practice (Shaw 2002, 55). The question posed by the committee member left me rattled, especially given the renewed post-9/11 focus on terrorism and radicalization that characterized IR at the time. (For those interested, I muttered something about Hobbes and security.) The dissertation defense is, of course, an invitation to explain the contributions of one's work to the field and scholars should expect to hear difficult questions from their committee members. Yet the questions asked in dissertation defenses do not follow standardized, pre-determined templates. The questions that are asked of scholars, whether at dissertation defenses or at conferences, often betray deeply held prejudices about what and who matters in the practice of international relations.

What had shunted my thesis to the margins of political science, and probably IR, was my decision to focus on everyday fighters in a discipline that, as Swati Parashar writes "is so deeply engaged with war yet seems to have an estranged relationship with it" (Parashar 2013, 616). By centering my research question on individuals involved with war, who had "experienced the international on their bodies... [and had] an intimate 'everyday' relationship with international relations," (*ibid*) my project risked being classified under that pejorative term known as 'sociology.' (I say this tongue-in-cheek, but there are some unfortunate accounts suggesting that sociology is often disparaged, as those who witnessed Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper—who stated that he would never "commit sociology" —can attest.)

Most IR scholars, regardless of ideological orientation, agree that research traditions establish boundaries "by insisting on strong consensus on enduring and irreconcilable foundational truths," which as a result privilege and reward certain concepts while also ignoring large swaths of social reality (Rudra and Katzenstein 2010, 413)**.** Despite the recognition that all theories are partial reflections of the world, Feminist IR scholars have spent considerable time justifying their value within the discipline, a type of labor that sometimes competes with time spent on research work. But IR is notorious for its paradigmatic debates, many of which extend far beyond the scope of whether or not feminist questions should be included in the discipline. For instance, John Gerring describes the difference between quantitative and qualitative researchers as a "chasm," a division that is an "over-arching cleavage…in evidence for well over century [that] continues to provoke and offend…quantoids

and qualtoids have developed different languages and different approaches to their topics. They are accustomed to arguing with each other or ignoring each other" (Gerring 2012, 4). James Mahoney and Gary Goertz describe methodological differences as a "tale of two cultures" (Mahoney and Goertz 2006, 227). The Third Great Debate of IR is characterized by what Alexander Wendt calls a "deep epistemological rift" between positivist and post-positivists (Wendt 1998, 2). Given IR's history of methodological bickering, where, then, is this project situated?

This dissertation is part of what Spike Peterson's termed feminist IR's "reconstructive project," a movement that begins with tracing traditional IR's "androcentric bias and cultural codification of men as knowers" and leads to "recovering ourselves to critically examining the world from the perspective of this recovery...a move from margin to center" (Peterson 1992, 8). I make no claims to solve IR's methodological divisions, but I do note that this dissertation is situated within a chaotic history of excluding feminist questions from the discipline. However, and as is mentioned several times throughout the course of this project, gender is at the center, not the margins, of international relations. Taking gender seriously means moving beyond highlighting androcentric bias in existing research and using gender to inform the questions that scholars ask. Fortunately, and as noted by other scholars, IR has witnessed increased theoretical pluralism in recent years, and appears more prepared to study "societal-level variables…[and]...the role of social relations in explaining state behavior" (Caprioli 2004, 255). Given recent disciplinary openings for alternative theoretical explanations, the time seems right to claim space at the core of disciplinary IR.

This research journey began by establishing an empirical puzzle. *The U.S Army/Marine Corps Counter-Insurgency Field Manual* (2007), a document which emerged from the U.S interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, emphasizes that militants vie for the civilian population's support as a way to win the war against a stronger and better-resourced military force. Prominent counterinsurgents like David Petraeus state that the United States cannot rely on military prowess alone and that, in fact, "some of the best weapons do not shoot" (Sewall 2007). Foreign policy documents like the *Counterinsurgency Joint Publication 3-24* emphasize that counterinsurgencies are involved in competing for the civilian population's support (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009).

These statements are deeply perplexing in the context of the Obama Administration's decision to remove Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count, a decision that increased bodily risk for civilian boys and men. This puzzle intensifies upon examining how both the Bush and Obama Administrations subjected boys and men to differentiated and burdensome, described sometimes as 'non-kinetic,' treatment during wartime, a decision that would seemingly cause resentment from a large segment of the population and undermine the success of American foreign policy. Situated in this context, my initial research question became: Why were unarmed 'military aged' boys and men excluded from the collateral damage count?

I had identified this puzzle by exercising what Cynthia Enloe calls "feminist curiosity" (Enloe 2004, 3). The existence of the Military-Age Male category indicated that security practitioners *used* gender in the practice of foreign policy. U.S foreign policy officials signaled that gender was an influential category in the practice of war. Though, when I first asked this question, I did not anticipate the extent that

gender mattered to U.S foreign policymakers and in what ways. From the beginning of the project, however, there was convincing evidence that U.S officials used gender to inform "normative judgments about effective and appropriate policies" (Bleich 2002, 1063). The existence of the Military-Aged Male category hinted that gender was a socially meaningful category in foreign policy circles, potentially operating as a kind of perverse 'gender mainstreaming' in the practice of war.

Why should IR scholars care about gender? There are several reasons, but two will be highlighted for the purposes of this project. First, foreign policy, security, and defense officials care. As this project developed, the reams of collected data pointed to an overwhelming social fact: the state uses gender to understand and practice war. Ignoring gender analyses means adding an additional layer of abstraction between IR scholarship and decision-making within foreign policy circles. Second, IR has a poor record for predicting world events for the simple reason that most scholarship, as Enloe notes, underestimates the amount and varieties of power required to sustain international relations which, in turn, "exaggerates the simplicity of the entire political system (Enloe 2004, 23). Christine Sylvester elaborates on this theme and notes that

> "[m]uch of IR actually seems unprepared for the presence, let alone the power of ordinary people in international relations, whether those people walk through the Berlin Wall and help shift the Cold War polarity, or toss out autocrats in the Arab Spring Revolutions. Ordinary people are overwhelmingly absent in IR because they are not seen as key stakeholders in IR's version of international relations" (Sylvester 2012, 485).

Very simply, taking gender seriously can be a corrective for a discipline that routinely fails to predict shifts in the global order because of its focus on large-scale actors. If scholars choose to take gender seriously, then they must next contend with *how* to take gender seriously. How do we interrogate the existence of gender in International Relations? This project's epistemological commitments are geared towards using a feminist methodology, though several methods that are used in this project were not necessarily borne from feminist scholarship. The terms 'methodology' and 'method' are defined in the same tradition used by J. Ann Tickner (2005) and John Gerring (2002) to mean the difference between "a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed...[whereas a method is] a technique for gathering and anlayzing evidence frameworks" (Tickner 2005, 3). As Tickner, Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True (2008) have explained**,** feminist IR methodology does not prescribe a specific set of methods. Rather, "the feminist research ethic is a commitment to inquiry about how we inquire" (Ackerly and True 2008, 699).

Ackerly and True identify four pillars that are crucial to the feminist research process. First, feminists should be aware of their epistemological commitments. Second, feminist scholarship should recognize how disciplines shape the research process by establishing boundaries that prioritize, marginalize, and silence certain topics and questions (see the discussion above.) Third, scholars should examine how the research process is influenced by power asymmetries between people working on the project. Finally, reflexivity should extend beyond thinking about our identities as researchers and "thinking through silences in epistemology, boundaries, and power dynamics (of the research process itself) from a range of theoretical perspectives" while we do our research (Ackerly and True 2008, 695). These suggestions informed the direction of this project, beginning at the formulation of the research question, where I opted to study non-elite boys and men—Military-Age Males. Ackerly and True's suggestions also

informed the decision to conduct interviews; feminist IR scholarship highlights non-elite individuals as worthy sources of foreign policy knowledge.

ii. Methods: Notes on Interrogating Problems

Feminist methodology can be appealing to those confronted by a research problem that cannot be solved by one method. As I noted in the introduction of this dissertation, this project's primary commitment is towards solving a problem. For that purpose, this project used theoretical insights from feminist research, but also draws upon constructivist scholarship and Actor-Network Theory (ANT). I was inspired by Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein's work on analytic eclecticism (AE), an approach that is attractive to scholars who seek to create "diverse and flexible frameworks organized around a concrete problem...[the] problem drives the construction of the framework" (Sil and Katzenstein 2010, 415). Notably, AE can only exist as a *consequence* of different paradigms and research agendas. I cannot use the tools of Actor Network Theory or Constructivism without giving thanks to the initial labor that went into building this scholarship. So by its very formulation, AE cannot be a 'solution' to paradigmatic disputes, only a detour—and a rather luxurious one at that, given that John Gerring described the divisions in the social sciences as a "chasm" (Gerring 2012, 4).

AE should not be confused for a solution to 'filling' the gaps in other existing research agendas. Instead, AE's commitment is to viewing a problem and then using other frameworks as a 'grab bag' of tools. Neither can AE instruct scholars on how to *identify* problems. Notably, problems in IR vary based on one's methodological commitments. What IR scholars identify as 'threatening' has been conditioned by lengthy debates on the definition of security (see: Buzan 1997; Heller and Kahl 2013). AE, therefore, is not necessarily a framework that tries to question or push against the boundaries of IR, but is a short-term solution for scholars looking to answer a question that cannot be answered by adhering to one method or theoretical framework.

My methods are drawn from the qualitative tradition since the research question first established a consequence, an outcome of a policy decision. We know that the Obama Administration removed Military-Aged Males from the collateral damage count (CDC). We know that 'Military-Aged Male' category was used by U.S foreign policy officials to make sense of the security terrain. As James Mahoney and Gary Goertz explain, qualitative scholars often "start with cases and their outcomes and then [by] moving backwards toward the causes, qualitative analysts adopt a "causes-of-effects" approach to explanations (Mahoney and Goertz 2006, 230). This approach is not unique to the social sciences and constitutive relationships are also used in natural science communities.

Qualitative research also encompasses two branches of inquiry: positivist and interpretivist approaches. Causal relationships fall under the purview of the positivist qualitative tradition, while scholars who engage with the interpretivist tradition try to establish constitutive relationships (Chih Lin 2005, 162). Positivist qualitative traditions seek to "identify qualitative data with propositions that can then be tested or identified in other cases, while interpretive work seeks to combine those data into systems of belief whose manifestations are specific to a case" (Lin 1998, 162). Statistical approaches usually use controlled experiments to gather data and are often held as the archetypal method for studying causal relationships in the social sciences, though this approach falls under the quantitative and not qualitative

label. The outcome of controlled experiments are not known prior to being tested and the goal of a controlled experiment is to observe the outcome or effect of the test. In contrast to the quantitative model, Mahoney and Goertz describe the statistical paradigm as an "effects of causes" approach (Mahoney and Goertz 2006, 231).

Instead of using a qualitative or quantitative positivist model, this project uses the qualitative, interpretivist approach. This approaches uses a "context-specific setting," sometimes described as a small-n case study, "where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest," (Patton 2001, quoted in Golafshani 2003, 600). Said otherwise, causal relationships try to determine what will happen, while constitutive relationships seek to explain what has happened. One can, quite literally, imagine this process as a detective encountering a (state-sanctioned) murder scene and then trying to determine how the dead bodies appeared. The activity of examining evidence "that contributes to supporting or overturning alternative explanatory hypotheses" is sometimes known as process tracing, and authors like Andrew Bennett have also used the analogy of a detective "attempting to solve a crime by looking at clues and... piecing together a convincing explanation" (Bennett 2010, 209).

I followed the term 'Military Aged Males' from military manuals, participant interviews, journalistic pieces, and history tracts with the goal of finding the origins of the term, if any justification had been given for its use, and how the term was deployed to make sense of security and defense practices. There were a few constraints with this approach. On one hand, having a technocratic category made certain bodies visible when tracing bureaucratic documents and journalists accounts. On the other hand, technocratic categories highlight certain characteristics that are important to policymakers while rendering other traits invisible. The politics surrounding data production is a main thematic concern of this project, so I turned a similarly critical eye at how my methods risked highlighting certain variables for analysis while obscuring other factors. As Bennett writes, there is "no guarantee that researchers will include in their analyses the variable(s) that actually caused [the phenomenon], but process tracing backward from observed outcomes to potential causes...allows researchers to uncover variables they have not previously considered" (*ibid*, 2010). The Military-Age Male category highlights age and gender (and its connection to military service) but omits race and religion, two factors that were the focus of media coverage after September 11, 2001. The MAM category also contains no mention that this term was used by coalition forces in countries that were also former western colonies. Focusing exclusively on gender and age could have potentially resulted in a project that uncritically reproduced what the U.S security apparatus found important.

Yet scholars who trace the history of the Military-Aged Male will find themselves in countries with a history of colonial policing, like French Algeria and British Kenya. U.S forces in Vietnam also used the term 'Military-Age Male' to describe Vietnamese males they encountered during counterinsurgency operations. In Chapter 5, a participant reveals that the military names Military-Aged Males as persons of interest by using anthropological knowledge about Muslim culture and Islamic practice that governs the age of majority. These factors are not self-evidently portrayed by the words 'Military-Age Male.' Moreover, these insights could not have been uncovered if the project examined the existence of the Military-Age Male as a causal relationship which, by definition, involves the "systemic conjunction of two factors, one of which, all things being equal, is argued to follow logically from the other"(Lin

2005, 165). Part of this project's aim was to recover data about the drone program, which remains shielded from public and scholarly scrutiny. Since the program was shrouded in secrecy, the best method for solving this problem required flexibility and the ability to explore variables that may have, at first glance, appeared tangential.

Scholars who use constitutive approaches are committed to uncovering rich detail in small cases, but this process should not be mistaken for 'description.' Constitutive relationships do not describe events or conflicts, but seek to explain "how things [that] are put together makes possible, or even probable, certain kinds of political behavior and effects" (Finnmore and Sikkink 2001, 394). Most scholars, regardless of methodological commitments, try to ensure that their work is an accurate reflection of how the world functions. As Wendt notes, most scholars are "'tacit realists' in their empirical research" (Wendt 1998, 17). While scholars who work in the interpretivist approach may make claims that rely on pointing at a 'cause' or 'consequence,' this is different from a capital-C 'Causal relationship.' Constitutive scholars will use the word 'because' or 'influence' or 'effect.' The manner of reaching these conclusions, however, is different than those found in the positivist tradition. Said otherwise, there is a difference between a cause and a *Cause*.

> we cannot interpret and explain human interaction without making some type of what might be construed, very broadly, as causal or consequentialist attributions. But the position of most post-positivist scholars is that strict linear causal models do not enable us to "see" and understand what we find most interesting and important about human relations (McCann 1996, 464).

Since constitutive explanations have sometimes been charged with being insufficiently rigorous (see: Kurki 2006; Thies 2002), this project uses multiple safeguards to strengthen the integrity of its conclusions. Scholars who seek to establish constitutive relationships can ensure that their conclusions are accurate by using counterfactual hypotheses (alternative explanations that answer the empirical puzzle) and by using data triangulation. After all, "for qualitative researchers, a theory is usually only one critical observation away from being falsified" (Mahoney and Goertz 2006, 241).

One counter-factual argument that I anticipated, and subsequently experienced when describing my project at conferences or to colleagues, is what I call the 'PR defense.' To summarize, people who use the PR defense state that the Obama Administration lied about the collateral damage count in order to further the 'national interest' (however vaguely defined) by quelling any opposition that would stand in the way of U.S security goals. This argument assumes that public support impacts the direction of foreign policy and that publics are sensitive to civilian deaths caused by U.S troops.

I tackle this position directly in chapter 3, but will also address this position briefly now. First, the Obama Administration made a decision to exclude *boys and men* from the collateral damage count. If the goal was to reduce the collateral damage count in order to further the 'national interest', then excluding girls and women aged 16 and over would have further deflated the number. The PR defense, however, cannot explain why the collateral damage count was reapplied along gendered lines. When I mention this rebuttal to well-meaning and curious people, the automatic response is that the U.S officials cannot *reasonably* omit girls and women from the collateral damage count because public

perception would not accept the possibility of female combatants, especially after post 9-11, when discourse focused on the oppression of women and children at the hands of Islamist militants. However, this response merely reinforces my point that U.S foreign policy officials used gender to parse through the chaos of data and to cut through the 'fog of war'.

Second, Obama Administration officials did not announce that boys and men were excluded from the collateral damage count—this revelation was aired in a piece of investigative journalism published in *The New York Times,* as explained in the introduction. The MAM category was not part of a communications or 'PR' strategy. Throughout the duration of this research process, I did not once encounter a spokesperson who used the Military-Age Male term in order to sell policy. Even if one could plausibly claim that a low collateral damage count helped sustain U.S drone warfare, the omission of Military-Age Males from the CDC was not a fact designed for public consumption.

The PR defense cannot explain why the MAM category was useful for the the internal bureaucratic machinations of policymakers. The MAM category was not a term that U.S foreign policy officials used with the public, after all, but a term that was used inside U.S security institutions. Said otherwise, while someone could plausibly say that lower collateral damage counts are generally useful for presidential administrations, and that an incentive exists to release an artificially low civilian death count, this justification cannot explain why the Military-Age Male category exists, almost exclusively, outside of communications and press releases—the term was not *only* used when counting dead bodies, but as a way of surveilling and managing living bodies.

Sometimes, individuals would diverge from the 'PR defense' and instead opt to argue that the MAM category allowed U.S Administrations to pursue the national interest, regardless of PR agenda. The 'national interest' is prominently featured in policy documents. The problem is that the 'national interest' functions as a stable placeholder, whereas the contents inside this placeholder have changed throughout U.S history. The term does not reflect the bureaucratic wrangling that determines what becomes the national interest. For example, as Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton announced that protecting women's rights abroad was part of the 'national interest.' Under the Carter Administration, however, women's rights in Afghanistan did not influence the decision to covertly support the Mujahideen (Hudson and Leidl 2015, 8). The 'national interest' argument does not explain how foreign policy changes, nor can this argument explain how gender became a salient norm within foreign policy circles. The 'national interest' argument, said simply, does not show the actual working of power.

These hypotheses are what qualitative researchers describe as possible but not sufficient causes. As a hypothesis, the PR defense's explanatory power cannot sufficiently explain how the 'MAM' category was made reasonable or the decision-making process that led to excluding boys and men from the CDC. While U.S foreign policymakers may have used the language of the 'national interest,' to justify their policies, this language is used consistently across various U.S administrations that implement policies that diverge from their predecessors. Consequently, as an explanatory variable, the 'national interest' does not explain very much.

Data and Theories
In addition to considering counter-factual explanations for my empirical puzzle, and in order to ensure that this project's findings were rigorous, I relied on multiple theoretical tools and on varied sources of data. This process is known as data and theoretical triangulation. Triangulation is a process by which scholars use "multiple methods of data collection [and/or] multiple methods of data analysis...to test the validity and reliability" of their research (Lauri 2011, 35). Scholars can use different methods to interpret a phenomenon, multiple investigators to fix for personal bias, or multiple theories to help interpret data (*ibid*).

The decision to use data triangulation was informed by the project's commitment to unite discourse analysis with object-oriented analysis. This combination may initially appear counter-intuitive, but foreign policy is the combination of both ideational and material factors, an interaction so entangled that these factors cannot be separated **(**Hansen 2006, 15**)**. A theory that focuses solely on discourse risks obfuscating that these ideas are rendered coercive through the physical instruments of power. A theory that focuses only on objects ignores that "war alters relationships...[N]ew relationships are fostered between bombs and guerrillas, and bodies take on a variety of new meanings; the martyr, the terrorist, the hero(ine), the collateral" **(**Parashar 2013, 619). Added to this list: the Military-Aged Male. Combining these two theoretical approaches required an expanded methods toolbox that went beyond one school of thought.

Theoretical Considerations
This dissertation is indebted to prior work by David Campbell and Lene Hansen, who have used discourse analysis to assess American foreign policies in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia. The strength of this constitutive approach lies in uncovering the relationship between structures, agents, identity, and (in this case) foreign policy (Hansen 2006, 17). Foreign policies rely on situating certain actors/groups/states as threats, security problems, or in the midst of crisis. In *Writing Security: United State Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, David Campbell argues that American foreign policy, through the inscription of "foreign-ness," helps produce and reproduce the political identities of actors (Campbell 1998, vii). Foreign threats are not objectively defined but are the consequence of language, and it "is also through discourse that these problems and subjectivities are constructed in the first place" (Hansen 2006, 17).

Scholars who focus on the links between foreign policy and identity do not exclude objects/materials Rather, the focus on ideas, norms, and discourse is a corrective for IR's traditional preoccupation with state power as measured by military weaponry and other physical tools of power. As Finnemore and Sikkink argue, "constructivism's main analytical competitors have [included] materialist theories, which see political behavior as determined by the physical world alone" (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, 393**)**. Recently, the role of material weapons in IR has also been subject to scrutiny**.** A 2017 special issue in *Critical Security Studies* indicates that International Relations is moving towards, as the editors of the issue suggest, viewing weapons as "technical beings in perpetual formation" rather than "static material objects" (Bousquet, Grove, Shah 2017, 1)**.** Though most IR traditions view the acquisition of weaponry as a pre-determined move that reflects rational self-interest, the special issue calls for a renewed scholarly engagement with *how* objects become weapons.

I bridge these two approaches—discourse and object-oriented analysis—using feminist methodology. Gender interacts with what William Walters calls the 'objects of security' and these materials "mediate relationships of power, agency, and governance...and shape social and political processes" (Walters 2014, 102). While scholars usually opt for either a discursive or object-oriented approach, this decision should not be interpreted as a disavowal of alternative theoretical approaches. There are important nods to hybrid approaches in Carol Cohn's 1987 ethnographic work on nuclear defense intellectuals. Though Cohn's ethnographic account is often leveraged as a notable contribution to discourse analysis in security studies, Cohn coins the term 'technostraegic' to "represent the intertwined, inextricable nature of technological and nuclear strategic thinking…[S]trategic thinking seems to change in direct response to technological changes…[and] nuclear strategic thinking are imbued with, indeed constructed out of, modes of thinking that are associated with technology." Cohn identified these modes of thinking with mathematical modeling, systems analysis, game theory, linear thinking, and programming (Cohn 1987, 690).

Sources of Data

My first source of data involved document analysis. I scanned pedagogical training manuals and bureaucratic reports to assess how policymakers used gender to interpret the security theater and how gender was central to enacting security. This choice was partially motivated due to my small interview sample size. In an effort to maintain theoretical rigor, I cross-examined documents with interview statements. However, this decision was also motivated by a recognition that security is a "configuration of professionals in competition for the categorization of threats and the priorities and forms of the struggles against them" (Bigo 2001, quoted in Frowd 2014, 229). For example,the reluctant shift from conventional warfare in Iraq to counterinsurgency, as described in chapter 4, illustrates the often protracted struggles that take place within bureaucratic institutions, where elites vie to define 'the national interest.'

Counterinsurgency and drone warfare are pedagogical approaches, supported by training manuals, policy learning (mostly from British and French colonial experiences), and 'think pieces' crafted by 'soldier-scholars' who publish in academic or mainstream presses and who try to chew on the contradictions and challenges of U.S foreign policy. Notably, these documents include work by David Kilcullen, whose work appears in the Field Manual (FM) 3-24, and Montgomery McFate, an anthropologist who was also the Social Science Advisor to the U.S Army Human Terrain Program. The intellectual labor that informs counterinsurgency doctrine, more readily apparent in COIN than in U.S drone operations, illustrates that interests and objectives are not obvious or self-evident to policymakers. Rather, these ideas are contentious and subject to change, as evidenced by the rise and failure of the Human Terrain System. As a result, this dissertation treats peer-reviewed and mainstream publications in a different manner if there was evidence that these pedagogical materials were inducted into military policy. Certain objects (materials) "become significant through their interaction with others" (Meiches 2015, 481). Not all academic ideas are integrated into the state security apparatus, but those that are used by the military reveal how the contents inside the placeholder known as the 'national interest' are subject to influence. Peer-reviewed work that is integrated into military planning is used as evidence for the research puzzle, whereas other academic works in this project help with analysis and criticism.

My second source of data were the objects of war, which involved assessing the technological capacity of drones to determine how the human-drone interaction produced gendered outcomes. What Bruno Latour and then William Walters call 'object-oriented democracy' is born when an object becomes a site of contention, where people form political assemblages precisely because these objects are controversial (Eg. drones, polluted rivers, nuclear reactors). "Each object gathers around itself a different assembly of relevant parties. Each object triggers new occasions to passionately differ and dispute" (Latour 2005, quoted in Walters 2014, 105). These political disagreements, Walters notes, often focus on the technological specifications of the drone as a way of either supporting or condemning drone warfare—the political argument exists by referencing the object (*ibid*, 107). The move towards mapping objects is most often credited to Actor-Network Theory, which began as an anthropological study of scientific life in the laboratory. Actor-Network Theory's most notable contribution to IR is its ascription of agency to both humans and non-humans. Called 'actants,' agency is ascribed to all objects and persons who have the ability to make a difference. The ascription of agency is made possible by removing intentionality (or will) from the person and by prioritizing the ability to make a consequence instead of intending a consequence (Frowd 2014, 229).

Early iterations of (and most of today's) Actor-Network Theory have been criticized for excluding gender from its research focus. Judy Wajcman argues that this exclusion is the result of ANT's focus on 'agents' that "influence the form and direction of technological design" but which do not take into account how technology can have an impact on groups that are omitted from technological development (Wajcman 2000, 452). Importantly, MAMs were not responsible for developing drones, though they were still captured by counterinsurgency and drone networks. Similarly, most counterinsurgents and drone crews were not responsible for authoring training manuals or developing the judicial framework that justified drone strikes. Though these groups were not involved in the development of pedagogical materials or drone technology, they still retained agency and the ability to influence the direction of foreign policy, as will be explained below. Despite its initial gender blindness, feminist scholarship has 'rehabilitated' ANT for a few key reasons. Anette Vivian Lagesen argues that ANT is a "suitable analytical tool" because it subverts the idea of gender as a static, binary concept that remains unaltered when confronted with new objects (Lagesen 2012, 6). ANT avoids gender essentialism by focusing on how gender performance is made in a network of human and non-human actions (Quinlan 2012, 3).

For my third source of data, I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews. Policies, ideologies, justifications for foreign policy "cannot enter a room. They are carried by rhetors, who, in turn work with inherited words" (Murphy 2004, 10). Examining language, ideas, norms, is not an exercise in uncovering psychological motivation but a move towards understanding how language makes "it possible for strategic planners and other defense intellectuals to do their macabre work" (Cohn 1987, 695). As a result of these theoretical considerations, I opted to conduct semi-structured interviews with individuals who had been involved in counterinsurgency or drone operations. What I found replicates insights made by scholars like Robert Dean, who writes that gender was not "an independent cause of policy decisions, but... part of the very fabric of reasoning employed by officeholders" (Dean 1998, 30).

There were practical considerations for opting to interview individuals who had been involved in counterinsurgency and/or drone operations. In contrast to elite foreign policy officials who are bound to 'toe the party line,' I expected greater frankness from individuals who had honorably discharged and were not bound by contract to remain silent. Additionally, the majority of persons I interviewed were retired. Compared with personnel who are actively enlisted in a military apparatus, retired personnel do not face the same regulatory obstacles if they want to speak with a researcher. Most, though not all, of those who agreed to be interviewed had left military service in part because they were critical of counterinsurgency or drone operations. Some may argue that the size of my interview pool places me at risk of selection bias, since my sample size mostly contains individuals who are critical of U.S drone warfare. While I explain how I controlled for this risk below, I would also counter by saying that most of the individuals who provide statements to the media are policy officials; statements about drone warfare and counterinsurgency are already filtered through a lens decided by the Department of Defense and the White House's communications strategy. As feminist scholars are keenly aware, some voices in foreign policy are amplified, while others are excluded; the production of knowledge, view points, and dominant narratives are often dependent on the social and material resources that are available to actors. Interviewing persons who were critical of counterinsurgency and drone warfare, therefore, could act as a corrective to what is often a heavily edited view of foreign policy. Moreover, given that the drone program has been demonstrably sold to the public in rather generous and euphemistic terms, the inclusion of critical voices adds, rather than detracts, to the rigor of what we know about U.S foreign policy.

From the beginning of this project, I recognized that interviewing a large pool of participants was not possible for a project of this character. The largest challenge was locating participants, since most veterans of the drone program do not self-identify publicly. I placed participant calls on Reddit forums that catered to the military population, but these requests largely went unanswered, though a few (anonymous) users responded by telling me that gaining access to current military personnel would be difficult if I did not first gain permission from their commanders, and the likelihood was that I would not be given permission from the command structure either. Contacting individuals who had already self-identified in the media was a more successful tactic, and these individuals introduced me to others that they knew. I also leveraged my own social networks; I knew individuals who were active in online communities that focused on war and these spaces are often home to individuals with prior military experience. Once I had someone else vouch for my character, the road to interviewing participants became much easier.

My field work consisted of telephone calls using the Signal application, which uses end-to-end encryption for both text and phone conversation. The interview times ranged from 1.5 hours to 3 hours. There were two exceptions: I conducted one face-to-face interview and another interview where the participant did not want to use an encrypted device. In total, I interviewed six participants, some of whom self-identified as whistle-blowers and others who were more supportive of American or Coalition foreign policy goals. While those I interviewed had a diversity of viewpoints on the moral justice of American intervention abroad, the empirical observations they offered never contradicted one another or other accounts found in journalistic media. Here I make a distinction (that I recognize might be viewed as problematic by some, but is necessary for the sake of this section) between normative

statements and positive statements. While participants disagreed on what the direction of U.S foreign policy should be, they did not disagree about what happened 'on the ground.' Given that my interview sample was small, I cross-referenced participant answers with statements made in the press by other veterans that I did not interview.

I was clear that I did not expect participants to break their non-disclosure agreement or place themselves in a legally precarious position. Most of my participants agreed that they would not divulge information that would jeopardize their legal standing while others were comfortable ignoring these restrictions. A few of my participants also did not see the need for pseudonyms. However, given that I used the snowball method to find interview participants, using real names for some participants may have revealed the identities of those who wanted to remain anonymous. I provided everyone with a unisex pseudonym and have opted to use the word 'their' as replacement for 'he' or 'she' as a further barrier against identification.

Writing in *Foreign Policy,* Rosa Brooks stated that "just because you've worn a uniform doesn't make you uniquely qualified to offer political judgment on matters of state," (Brooks 2016). Brooks's main point was that while veterans may have a "personal stake" in foreign policy, their time spent in the military did not make them foreign policy experts. Some readers may question my decision to interview low-ranking military personnel, given that they were not responsible for crafting doctrine or foreign policy direction.

This position returns to IR's methodological clash: who matters in international relations? To repeat Cynthia Enloe's point, IR has routinely underestimated the "myriad strains of power" required to sustain international relations. I reject Brooks's position and instead use Parashar's approach to validating knowledge: "Ordinary people are repositories of knowledge about wars and their memories are crucial log-books in constructing a war narrative" (Parashar 2013, 626). Contemporary warfare and military practice is sustained by individuals at all levels and outside the chain of command. These individuals engage in routine, mundane, and often boring practices (boredom is a sensation that many drone crew members report experiencing). Similarly, the decision to conduct drone strikes is negotiated across various geographical locations. As Walters reminds readers, drones "broker relationships of governance at a distance and distribute relations of authority" (Walters 2014, 105). *Legal authority*, of course, is rigidly hierarchical—Obama famously had a monitor in the Oval Office so that he could witness drone operations as they were happening; he could also annul or give permission for a strike. However, the process which informs the strike decision relies on a number of workers. As Peter Asaro succinctly explained when examining surveillance and drone warfare (though I expand his insights to include warfare more generally) drone and counterinsurgency operations are a form of labor that are sustained by

> an elaborate and intentional bureaucratized structure...constituted by the kind of bureaucratic labor organization developed within the military to do things like generate lists of bombing targets, in combination with the more "hands on" work of deciding when and where to pull the trigger that more closely resembles the killing work of the sniper (Asaro 2013, 198).

Most scholars aim to research timely, relevant problems that are connected to the way the world works. This project aims to solve an empirical puzzle on a topic that has been shielded away from public scrutiny. If scholars are dedicated, as Muller says, to "showing the working of power" (Muller 2015, 33) then decentralized networks of soldiers, bureaucrats, NGO staff, and local people all become worthy subjects of analysis. Moreover, academics who place arbitrary restrictions on their research by excluding the experiences of 'everyday' people (code for 'non-elite') from IR contribute to the problem of imperfect information. The discipline risks producing knowledge dedicated to spreading misinformation, in hiding more than revealing international relations.

iii. The Public and Private Spheres in Crisis: A Literature Review
This dissertation is heavily influenced by research categorized as 'feminist IR,' though this scholarship is often quite varied and theoretically diverse. For the purpose of my research, I focus on feminist scholarship that has highlighted the gendered processes involved in nation-building, warfare, international law, and technology. This scholarship addresses these issues by using gender as an analytical lens, instead of applying 'gender' or 'women' as an extension to other pre-determined theoretical approaches (eg. liberalism, Marxism.) I have also used feminist work outside of IR by drawing heavily from work in geography and technology studies, for the simple reason that these fields have distinguished histories examining ecosystems that network gender, ideas, and objects.

"How many sources do I need?" Most educators are familiar with this question from students preparing to write their term essays. As a student I often received—and then gave as an educator—frustratingly inaccurate responses. At its core, however, the question speaks to fairness in the research process. How do I distinguish between dominant and fringe ideas? Literature reviews describe the state of the discipline and assess the dialogues that are occurring within the field. This process allows scholars to determine research gaps that should be filled, identify "a home" or epistemic grouping for their own research, and to assess the boundaries that exist within International Relations and what conversations have been excluded.

In order to represent these conversations accurately, I used 'concept saturation' and 'citation tracing.' Concept saturation is simply the "moment during the analysis of the data where the same themes are recurring, and no new insights are given by additional sources of data" (Quirkos 2016). I interpret the saturation point to mean that the data yields no new insights that are in service to my research question (since there are always new scholarly insights that expand IR). To ensure that my work included contemporary discussions, I set an alert function with Google Scholar and was sent weekly updates on new academic publications that fit the search term. These terms were: Drones, Critical Security Studies, Gender and International Relations, Counterinsurgency, Norms and International Relations.

I was conducting this project during a socio-political moment where discourse on automation, surveillance, AI, and robotic warfare was gaining mainstream attention due to organizations who were part of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots urging the United Nations to take the issue seriously. This necessarily meant that 'keeping up' with debates and research became a process of daily data collection rather than a one-time experience that occurred at the beginning of the project. Fittingly, I wrote half of this literature review prior to undertaking my field work and the latter half after I had written chapters

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three to five. The addition of new work was informed by my participants, who answered my questions in ways that I had not initially considered and who pointed me to alternative hypotheses and, consequently, different sets of literature. For instance, interview participants often spoke about about how the drone's technological restrictions clashed with statements made by foreign policy officials, which directed me towards research in science and technology studies.

Citation tracing is the process of identifying "which authors cite which work, and the relationships across these sites" (Pacheco-Vega 2016). Using citation tracing, for example, I noted that scholarly work on counterinsurgency rarely cited work from those writing on drone warfare. The literature across both traditional and critical IR (with a few notable exceptions, like work done by Ian Shaw) has assumed a clean paradigmatic transition between both styles of warfare. Unsurprisingly, the dialogue between critical and traditional scholars, regardless of subject matter, was scarce. Given the theoretical diversity that is contained within this project, I hope to help bridge the gap that exists between several fields in IR.

Men Without Bodies: An Brief Overview of Feminist IR
Spike Peterson characterizes feminist IR as a "continuum of overlapping positions" that range from empirically-minded positivist approaches to constructivist approaches (including post-modernism & post-structuralism), which use gender as an analytical tool to "study how masculinity and femininity… produce, and are produced by [international relations]" (Peterson 2005, 499). Feminist IR, therefore, contains a number of epistemological positions. Despite an increase of IR scholarship that mentions 'gender' and includes women, Peterson writes that 'adding women' to already established analytical frameworks "tends to have little impact on the core of mainstream scholarship, where the gender of bodies…is presumed not to have epistemological consequences" (*ibid*, 504). Peterson argues that mainstream scholarship often focuses on gender as a solely empirical category, which "tends to become a synonym for women, who are used as a category in already prevailing analyses" (*ibid*, 500). In contrast, constructivist or post-structuralist approaches are required to understand gender as an analytical and "governing code that pervades language and hence systematically shapes how we think, what we presume to know, and how such knowledge claims are legitimated" (*ibid*). As a result, I borrow Laura Shepherd's definition of gender: Gender is "a noun, a verb, and a logic that is product/productive of the performances of violences and security" (Shepherd 2009, 209).

In practice, using gender as an analytical category has led to research like Robert Dean's 1998 examination of how masculinity was central to John F. Kennedy's decision-making. "For Kennedy and his national security managers, self-conceptions of masculine toughness were inseparable from calculations concerning, for instance, the threat of communism in Latin America or the strategic dangers of appeasement in Vietnam" (Dean 1998, 30). More recently, Carol Cohn, Felicity Hill, and Sara Ruddick have authored work with the Swedish Government's Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission on the relevance of gender to eliminating WMDs (Cohn, Hill, and Ruddick 2005).

Like Peterson, I view gender as an analytical tool because this approach has the potential to problematize epistemological issues, and interrogate discourse, subjectivities, and culture. "[T]here is typically more evidence of theoretical discussion and debate [in constructivist approaches], and more

self-consciousness about analytical assumption and how they frame the questions we ask" (Peterson 2005, 504). Moreover, conflating the categories of 'gender' and 'women' often erases how gender impacts boys and men and can reinforce the idea that maleness is an unaffected viewpoint, natural, or outside the realm politics and international relations. Because men are the standard to which all are compared, they are often omitted from accounts that focus on gender, further contributing to the otherness of 'femininity' and reinforcing a standard/framework that positions itself as 'neutral' or 'genderless' but is, actually, the result of highly gendered processes. Stated differently, theoretical approaches that are presented as genderless, or which 'add women' as an analytical corrective are highly suspect, as gender is not merely an object that should be analyzed, but influences how theories are produced.

Joane Nagel chronicles a number of seminal titles relating to nation-building and gender, noting that most classical works omit women entirely from their theoretical discussions. She lists them one-by-one (Ted Gurr's *Why Men Rebel*, Seymour Martin Lipset's *Political Man,* T.H Marshall's *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*, Karl Deutsch's *Nationalism and Social Communication* etc.), calling them a "tale of one gender" (Nagel 1998, 242). These titles do not merely ignore the role of women in the making of nations, but reify the naturalness of men in politics. "The scripts in which these roles are embedded are written primarily by men, for men, and about men, and... women are, by design, supporting actors who roles reflect masculinist notions of femininity and of women's 'proper place'" (Nagel 1998, 243).

Why, then, would feminist IR scholars choose to study masculinities when, as Nagel writes, IR scholarship has focused almost exclusively on men? Perhaps the strongest criticism comes from Marysia Zalewski's 2007 article "Do we understand each other yet? Troubling feminist encounters with(in) International Relations." Zalewski chronicles the turn from feminist IR scholarship to neo-feminist scholarship, the latter which aims to study gender from a non-feminist perspective. These criticisms came after scholars like Charli Carpenter (who is cited at length in chapter 3) and Mary Caprioli called for the expansion of feminist IR scholarship because the feminist project was "increasingly charged with being an ineffective vehicle for producing comprehensive and effective gender analysis" (Zalewski 2007, 303)**.** Zalewski describes neo-feminism as a "democratic remedy" designed to redress gender as being of equivalent injury to men. But the more damning argument is that neo-feminism, as a performance, "injects a sense of normality back into the the feminist/gender IR interruption" through a "cruel regendering wherein feminist projects [are] tamed to replicate male desires and interests" (Hawkesworth 2004, quoted in Marysia Zalewski 308).

Both Zalewski and Nagel present a rich critique and a serious challenge to IR feminists who seek to study boys and men. As a document located within disciplinary IR, the time spent writing a dissertation about Military-Age Males carves out even more space in a discipline that has an asymmetric focus on men. However, I do not approach this project by adopting a neo-feminist standpoint, but through an explicitly feminist methodology. From the beginning, feminist IR has included men and boys in its scholarship. Notably, Marysia Zalewski co-edited a volume with Jane Parpart called *The Man Question in International Relations,* which examined how "men and masculinities are implicated in international relations theories and practice" (Zalewski and Parpart 1998). I understand Zalewski's criticism as

directed toward specific scholarship that positions men as recipients of injury, not at scholarship that focuses on how masculinity is used to promote certain norms within the international system.

Yet I am not convinced that a focus on racialized men, vulnerable men, marginalized men, replicates "male desire and interests" in a field that often omits (forgets?) bodily injury from its theorizing on war. I think that Zalewski's description of Caprioli is perhaps uncharitable, given that Caprioli's main argument has been that "quantitative methodology and feminism are not mutually exclusive" (Caprioli 2004, 253). Instead of disavowing feminism, Caprioli argues that excluding men from a gender analysis would "provide an equally biased account of international relations as those that are male-centric" (*ibid,* 255). Her argument, therefore, calls for resistance to theories that attempt to constrain analysis by excluding men, but this position does not mean that gender must be studied from a non-feminist standpoint.

Moreover and as Carol Cohn (2013) has noted, vulnerability should be viewed as a universal trait at the core of human experience, though it is often ascribed to women and children (Cohn 2013, 53). "Human vulnerability's absence, denial, and displacements have characterized much of Western social and political theory...IR's rationalism denies vulnerability as anything other than a problem to be solved" (*ibid*, 52). In practice, this means that UN resolutions that focus on 'vulnerable groups,' like Security Council resolution 1325, "communicates that there are specific categories of people...understood as inherently vulnerable," due to their biology or physiology even when vulnerability is also acknowledged as a social phenomenon (*ibid*, 61). As work on gender and technology illustrates, gender is not an essential, static concept and it is possible, through the technologies of war, to render boys and men into recipients of injury. The drone monitor, for instance, is a visual technology designed to highlight male bodies for the purpose of directing harm. Men are, quite simply, the targets of injury within international relations.

As Sandra Whitworth notes, "militaries and multilateral institutions...are constituted in part through shared ideas that give them meaning. Feminist theory contributes to these kinds of arguments by noting the ideas that constitute nations and institutions are also inevitably gendered" (Whitworth 2004, 27). The Military-Age Male was fundamental to the practice of war, acting as a poor description of persons and instead revealing a "mode of thought" used in U.S foreign policy (Cohn 2013, 47)**.** My work uses feminist insight to move beyond describing the Military-Age Male as a category that reinforces gendered stereotypes about who is most likely to be violent. As mentioned in the "Methods" section, one counterfactual hypothesis that I anticipated hearing was that U.S foreign policymakers omitted MAMs from the collateral damage count because this policy decision was more likely to resonate or receive less pushback. While policymakers often pursue agendas that are politically appropriate, part of this project's goal is to examine why and and how these ideas *became* appropriate and how gender was used to reason through a Clausewitzian fog of war.

International Relations may be a story about men, but the discipline is also a story about men without gender, whose bodies are treated simultaneously as peripheral and identical, and where masculinity is interchangeable with 'humanness'.In my previous research on male militancy, I found that interviewers and academics who interviewed militant boys and men shied away from including 'gender' as a

motivation for becoming politically violent (Shoker 2009, 56). Because male militants are considered the norm, their gender was precluded as a motivation for violence. Female actors who are politically violent, however, found themselves inundated with questions about their femininity (*ibid*, 56). Being a man in International Relations, therefore, is being a person whose activities are unaffected by the presence of a body—the body becomes tangential to IR scholarship. All men become the same; masculinity is not treated as a condition that governs relationships (certainly not differentiated relationships) between men. The inclusion of women in IR is marked by the addition of difference, and this difference is measured by the realization that the female body is important to analyze. Very often, including women into IR also means marking them as 'other.' The act of inclusivity, therefore, is also the act of differentiation. IR theories are standardized and then amended to include difference, but the very content of the standard remains outside gendered interrogation.

In *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War*, Laura Sjoberg writes that "the resilience of masculinity as a mode of making sense of global politics reflects the amount of analysis and normative work it accomplishes" and that gender is not merely located in war, but is inseparable from and fundamental to its practice (Sjoberg 2013, 13). Sjoberg also highlights that feminist inquiry must go beyond highlighting the omission of gender and instead must "make feminist sense" of war and international relations, both in practical and disciplinary spaces (*ibid*, 15). Men, and their bodies, can no longer be ignored by IR scholars as empirical evidence suggests that bodies and bodily behavior have become guiding principles in the War on Terror. There are, of course, notable exceptions that take male bodies seriously and which provide early foundations for making sense of the 'Military-Age Male.' For example, Adam Jones's 1994 work on "Gender and Ethnic Conflict in ex-Yugoslavia" illustrates how the UN did not allocate civilian protection to male bodies during the Srebrenica massacre (Jones 2013, 227). Similarly, Charli Carpenter (2003) expands on Jones's work by interviewing Red Cross and UNHCR officials who were responsible for overseeing civilian evacuation in former Yugoslavia, finding that officials often relied on gendered stereotypes to determine who was or was not vulnerable (2003, 663). More recently, Lauren Wilcox argues that the Obama Administration omits Military-Aged Males from the collateral damage count using techno-optical processes. This process uses a Pattern of Life analysis to create digital profiles through surveillance technology, where analysts label certain bodies as 'militant' based on behavioral patterns "and gendered embodiment…as well as a certain set of norms that ascribe meaning to certain bodies" (Wilcox 2015, 129). Sjoberg, writing in *Gender, War, and Conflict,* states that one soldier she interviewed was taught to "assume that all men of military age were combatants," (Sjoberg 2014, x). And, finally, an early advocacy paper written by Ray Acheson, Richard Moyes and Thomas Nash lists questions that are worthy of further research as little information exists that can provide an empirical answer. Namely, is "maleness...an indicator of militant status" when deciding to launch a Signature Strike? (Acheson, Moyes, Nash 2014, 6).

How does using gender as an analytical category allow scholars to understand the shifting categories of 'combatant' and 'civilian'? In "Gendering Grotius: Sex and Gender in the Laws of War," Helen Kinsella writes that much of the scholarship that focuses on the intersection between gender and the Laws of War analyzes the "protection of women rather than the production of women in the law and, importantly, the production of the laws of war themselves" (Kinsella 2006, 170). In *The Image Before the Weapon* (2011), Kinsella offers a genealogy that traces the production of 'civilian' and 'combatant'

categories and the intellectual labor that was required to elucidate differences between persons in conflict zones. Kinsella argues that Hugo Grotius was foundational to providing the theoretical justifications for what is now known as the Principle of Distinction in international law, codified in the 1949 IV Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Grotius argued that nation-building was a task left for men as women could not "devise wars…The difference in sex that authority is not held in common but the husband is the head of the wife…[t]he woman under the eye of the man and under his guardianship" (Kinsella 2006, 171). Consequently, women did not possess sufficient authority to wage war because they were under the guardianship of their husbands. Grotius compares women and children with the absence of reason, authority, and the inability to combine these two traits into leadership. However, while children may develop and lose these disadvantages through education and maturity, women remain permanently deficient due to their feminine nature.

> Therefore, while children might ever seem the more 'natural' innocents, in fact it is women who are made innocent as if by nature…What we find in these passages…is that in order to enable and stabilize the otherwise indeterminate distinction between those who may and may not be killed, Grotius turns, in the end, to discourses of gender...Discourses of gender establish sex as an ontological basis for distinguishing between the two while, simultaneously, affirming a social and political order within which this understanding of sex is given meaning (Kinsella 2004, 3).

Given that the Military-Age Male category encompasses individuals who have not yet reached the age of majority by the standards of most international conventions, I opted to include literature from the growing field of childhood in IR. The production of knowledge about children, especially children in the developing world, provides a crucial rhetorical and narrative tool for security practitioners. This literature is used heavily in chapter 3 and features work by notable founding authors like Erica Burman (1994), who writes that "[t]he disaster imagery made by northern public policy makers is a major source of information about people in the south" (Burman 1994, 238). Similarly, Karen Wells argues that images of children are critical sites on "which narratives about the legitimacy, justification and outcomes of war are inscribed" (Wells 2007, 55). Importantly, this work fits into recent constructivist research that examines how liberal democracies violate human rights norms. As Regina Heller and Martin Khal note, liberal democracies are not in the habit of arguing that torture and arbitrary detention of young people is a 'good' norm that should be promoted. Rather, through the very act of justification, "actors primarily accept their responsibility for action that is usually assumed to be 'wrong', but deny the validity of the behavioral norm in the case at stake. They may also deny its applicability to all individuals...In all instances, narratives of "exception are created" (Heller and Khal 2013, 419). While targeting children can often act a shared site of outrage on the international stage, the United States has carved a rhetorical space where children, especially racialized boys, are not necessarily the recipients of apoliticized grief when they are harmed.

As discussed in chapter 5, the presence of women *with* children becomes a crucial factor in distinguishing between risky and non-risky children. These distinctions operate today, and Kinsella points to international outrage directed towards the American bombing of an Afghan wedding party, and how discourses on gender were central in identifying the attack as illegitimate. The wedding party was identified as a civilian assembly due to the presence of women and children, and American

military actions were deemed barbaric due to the targeting of these bodies (Kinsella 2004, 4). Additionally, and as Lauren Wilcox writes in her work on algorithmic war, the drone operators who made "the eventual decision to 'call out' the presence of women and children [when viewed through the drone monitor]...sheds light on the ways in which race and gender are visually and affectively incorporated into decision making" (Wilcox 2017, 24). Women and children become civilian casualties that are differentiated from male civilian casualties—though the Military-Age Male category reveals that some children are more 'child' than others. These empirical cases complicate what Cynthia Enloe once described as "womenandchildren." Traditionally viewed as victims, the term 'womenandchildren' is a "caricature that reinforces the sense that women's connections entail unchosen obligation" (Enloe 1990, quoted in Sisson Runyan 1992, 160). These obligations are then further denigrated by presenting women as "family members" who are naive about international affairs, instead of political actors who are crucial to maintaining or changing the international system (*ibid*). While this project will reveal that this description still holds for children who are in the same physical space as women, the Military-Age Male Category reveals that childhood is contested during wartime, especially if those children are in the presence of older men.

Grotius' work was later expanded by John Locke, who separated "work" from reproductive and productive labor within the household, a division that is commonly understood as the split between the public and private spheres. Work becomes central to identifying culpability. Locke's work showcases an ideological separation between family, economy, and politics, with the consequence that women's traditional labor becomes dissociated with state politics and war (*ibid*, 154). The public-private sphere dichotomy was essential to understanding how men and women were categorized in counterinsurgency and drone warfare. Culpability, or becoming a 'legitimate target,' required leaving the private sphere and entering into public life**.** As indicated in both chapters four and five, space became a crucial marker to understanding, as the military called it, the 'human terrain' and for deploying tactics like 'draining the swamp' in counterinsurgency zones.

Counterinsurgency and Its Critics
As David Martin Jones and M.L.R Smith write, insurgencies and "low intensity wars" have been the regular, dominant feature of war since 1945. Yet U.S military studies have been hostile to treating counterinsurgency as a primary area of study. This kind of warfare is instead described with terms— like 'irregular' or 'unconventional'—that highlight its status as aberrant political violence **(**Jones and Smith 2010, 82). Lieutenant General Sir John Kiszley from the British attributed this malaise to counterinsugency's "features with which the the pure warrior ethos is uneasy" (*ibid*, 83). Or, as David Kilcullen famously stated, counterinsurgency is "armed social work" (Kilcullen 2006, 33). Kiszley went on to state that counterinsurgency has been negatively associated by military establishments to unfairly constrain military operations with

> over-tight rules of engagement, negating the use of its trump card-firepower...[and]...the need to accommodate the media. Moreover, in the eyes of the warrior, counterinsurgency calls for some decidedly un-warrior like qualities, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, subtlety, sophistication, nuance, and political adroitness (Jones and Smith 2010, 82).

These descriptions have led critical scholars like Patricia Owens to note that counterinsurgencies are spaces where traits traditionally associated with femininity gain status and where "domestic work is not necessarily disavowed" (Owens 2016, 11). This 'soft approach' has been understood to mean that non-violent, or non-kinetic, military solutions are required to win 'hearts and minds.'

In his assessment of the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual JP 3-24* Ben Anderson writes that counterinsurgencies are understood as competing for the host population's support. "The population thereafter becomes the "center of gravity" (Anderson 2010, 209). The population is a focal point throughout military publications that focus on counterinsurgency. *The Marine Corps Small Unit Leaders' Guide to Counterinsurgency*, for example, states that "most insurgencies are fighting a war of ideas and attempt to mobilize a population towards a single line of thought or ideology (Marine Corps 2006, 5). Anderson writes that the recent counterinsurgency guides position the population as the 'prize' to be won if the enemy is defeated.

> Insurgencies not only damage or disperse into [populations], but also emerge from and are sustained [by them]…
> The population becomes key to war because, at the most basic level, it is assumed to be capable of "rearing up"
> and mounting an effective challenge to sovereignty. The population…is taken to be capable of an overthrow of
> existing power structures, specifically contingent forms of sovereignty (Anderson 2010, 209).

Counterinsurgency's focus on non-kinetic (as defined by U.S military planners) military solutions gave rise to a renewed research focus on population and culture. As Montgomery McFate, the Social Sciences Advisor to the U.S Army Human Terrain System and a contributor the FM 3-24 explained, the Department of Defense issued calls for "'cultural knowledge'...Primarily because traditional methods of warfighting have proven inadequate in Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S technology, training, and doctrine designed to counter the Soviet threat are not designed for low-intensity counterinsurgency operations where civilians mingle freely with combatants in complex urban terrain" (McFate 2005, 24). Frank Hoffman adds that the Revolution in Military Affairs, conceptualized as high-technology conflict against a traditional state adversary, was ill-suited to "the emergence of nontraditional adversaries pursuing 'complex irregular warfare'" (Hoffman 2006, 395). According to McFate, the lack of cultural knowledge in the U.S military can be attributed to the absence of anthropology which, after its "fruitful" relationship with the U.S military apparatus during the Cold War, apparently took a "sudden plunge into the abyss of postmodernism" (McFate 2005, 24). Despite this vivid and fantastical definition of academic life as one that 'captures' academics and prevents them from 'helping out,' the Human Terrain System still managed to be the largest social scientific project funded by the United States (Sims 2016). The Human Terrain System was designed to produce data about populations who resisted U.S intervention due to culturally specific norms but were nevertheless framed as rational by documents like the JP 3-24. Given the proper set of incentives, these populations could be persuaded to support U.S foreign policy goals in the region.

Critical scholars have, unsurprisingly, framed U.S intervention in less benevolent terms. Derek Gregory describes counterinsurgency zones as 'borderlands,' which are imagined geographical spaces, usually in the global south, where according to "metropolitan actors and agencies," wars are brutal, uncivilized, and destroy social fabric (Gregory 2011, 239). These wars are distinct from rhetoric about 'our' wars, which are positioned as "surgically sensitive and scrupulous" (*ibid*). David Campbell, instead of using

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the term 'borderlands,' argues that the 'frontier' is a powerful image that dominates American foreign policy discourse. Henry Kissinger has called himself the 'Lone Ranger' of diplomacy; Vietnam and Iraq have been described as 'Indian country'; Similarly, 'the high frontier' is applied to space exploration and plans for the Strategic Defense Initiative. "The dominant themes of this mythology are those concerned with American history as a full scale Indian war in which race fights race as part of the rites of modernization and the development of the nation-state" (Campbell 1998, 165).

The language of human rights and human security is crucial to the deployment of counterinsurgency. Noted Just War theorist Michael Walzer writes that terrorism is deplorable specifically because civilians have not chosen to enter public life, nor can they choose their national or ethnic identity. "Ordinary citizens are killed and no defense is offered in terms of their individual activity" (Walzer 2007, 37). Citizens cannot be targeted because of who they are, but because of what they have done. The idea that there is a difference between those who wield arms and those who do not is based on the normalization of liberal social contract theory, which remains immensely powerful both inside and outside the United States. Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama have sought to reassure audiences that avoiding civilian death is an American imperative. This alleged regard for civilian life gives the United States its moral authority (or so its officials claim) and facilitates the language of condemnation that surrounds male militants.

Bush uses 'difference' to demarcate militants as exceptions to civilized norms, which thus necessitates different treatment, a move that has historical ancestry in past colonial wars. In 1894, John Westlake, an international legal scholar, argued that "savages of half-civilized tribes" should be treated quite differently in combat (Kinsella 2005, 180). Though this harsh language is not (often) found in contemporary doctrine, the Military-Age Male category was justified by policymakers as necessary due to 'cultural differences'. These arguments are further complicated by U.S reassessment of 'asymmetrical' or 'irregular' warfare post-Afghanistan and Iraq invasion. At the U.S Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Kilcullen argued that security could not only be defined in military terms, but also needed to include "human security and building a framework of human rights" (Kilcullen 2006, 10).

Because of its focus on 'winning hearts and minds,' counterinsurgency is often branded as a kinder, gentler type of warfare. This characterization has been met with serious skepticism from critical scholars who cite counterinsurgency's colonial policing origins. For example, in its war against the Mau Mau in Kenya, the British strategy of separating insurgents from their support base led to internment camps that became known as "Britain's Gulag in Kenya" (Markel 2006, 36). In Malaya, over 500 000 Chinese from the "squatter population" were forcibly interned in "New Villages" (*ibid*). Scholars like Benjamin Meiches have chronicled how the "paradoxical turn in colonial warfare to target a population in need of 'human treatment'" has led to the development of materials (like barbed wire) designed to regulate the mobility of a *potentially* risky population into a governable assemblage (Meiches 2015, 483). The rise of more 'humane warfare' also instigated investment into new technologies that could manage and coerce recalcitrant and marginalized populations. These technologies were the consequence of a U.S "global counterinsurgency" (Kilcullen 2006) where, partially in an effort to comply with the Principle of Distinction, both Administrations pursued surveillance technologies that could socially sort insurgents from a general civilian population. The pursuit of precision, however,

was not always effective nor was the pursuit of this technology immune from the anthropological influences that informed the Human Terrain System.

The revival of "militarized anthropology," as described by Roberto Gonzalez, and as illustrated in the pedagogical handbooks drafted by U.S military branches, could look "incredibly banal...at times it resembles a simplified introductory anthropology textbook" (Gonzalez 2007, 15). Gonzalez, however, notes that these handbooks feature an important gap: "the notion of culture as a product of historical processes—in spite of the fact that for at least the last quarter century anthropologists have stressed that culture has been profoundly shaped by capitalism, colonialism, and other political and economic forces on a global scale" (*ibid*). Gonzalez notes that though manuals often draws lessons from COIN campaigns in Malaya, Vietnam, Algeria, and China, there is no mention of empire. Occupying forces are referred to as "'the host nation (rather than indirect rulers)...[the] *FM 3-24* generally reads like a manual for indirect colonial rule" (*ibid*, 16). This criticism is enforced further by charges that "anthropologists in military uniforms cannot possibly be getting voluntary informed consent –a principle at the core of the disciplines code of practice—from their research subjects" (Glenn 2007). Indeed, if colonization is understood as a set of practices that included military policing, policy transfer from the colonial period risks uncritically replicating the colonial encounter. Counterinsurgency advocates have not explained the differences between the practice of colonization and common counterinsurgency efforts, indicating that a chasm still exists between IR's theoretical traditions. I should note that McFate had the opportunity to respond to Gonzalez in *Anthropology Today*. Unfortunately, McFate's response sidestepped the question about empire and instead framed the Human Terrain program as "common sense" (McFate 2008, 27).

Throughout this project, I highlight how foreign policymakers use national identity to "constrain the ways by which leaders will seek to legitimize policies" and how liberal norms are essential to democracies and their foreign policy agendas (Roselle 2011, quoted in Katz 2017, 54). Though democracies frequently condemn their adversaries for targeting civilians, a number of scholars have contested the hypothesis behind the Democratic Peace Thesis and have questioned whether democracies are any better at adhering to the Principle of Distinction. The stakes are high. Samuel Jones states that the Principle of Distinction is "perhaps the greatest triumph of international law" due to its success as "mitigating the evils of war…Indeed, the purpose of those rules is to specify for each individual a single identity; [the person] must be either a [combatant] or a civilian" (Jones 2006, 262). However, Jones also cites that if civilian and combatant categories are dissolved, and if all parties in a conflict do not adhere to these classifying standards then "total war becomes imminent as these conditions enable insurgencies" (Jones 2006, 264). Unfortunately, the empirical evidence does not seem to support democratic peacefulness. In an extensive study on civilian victimization spanning from the Second World War to the founding of the Israeli state, Alexander Downes finds that "[d]emocratic regime type by itself increases the likelihood that a state will victimize enemy noncombatants in warfare" (Downes 2008, 5). While counting civilian death is notoriously tricky (Lauterbach 2007; Spagat, Mack, Cooper, Kreutz 2009) there is widespread evidence that U.S policymakers routinely underestimate the civilian death count caused by drone warfare, according to work done by The Long War Journal, The New America Foundation, the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (Crawford 2013, 126). Moreover, the very existence of the Military-Age Male category adds confusion to the civilian-combatant distinction.

Some constructivists argue that crises like September 11th, 2001 provide a rhetorical space for policy officials to push foreign policy that would otherwise be rejected in times of emergency (Jackson 2007b, 421 quoted in Heller and Kahl 2013, 417). Those who defend targeted strikes argue, for example, that international law has insufficiently foreseen the rise of non-state actors (Guiora 2004, 8). "Because the fight against terrorism takes place in what has been referred to as the 'back alleys and dark shadows against an unseen enemy,' the state, in order to adequately defend itself, must be able to take the fight to the terrorist before the terrorist takes the fight to it" (Guiora 2004, 9). This rhetoric relies on creating a ghostly specter, levying the fear of the unknown and the inability to adequately pinpoint an opponent as a justification for pre-emptive action. George W. Bush has described the War on Terror as a "different war than any our nation has ever faced," one that requires a "new paradigm…new thinking in the laws of war" (Kinsella 2005, 166).

Much of this "new thinking," however, was not particularly new and might be better described as a resurgence. For instance, the Military-Age Male category has been used by the United States since the Vietnam War (Powell 1996, 144). Bush's "new thinking about the laws of war" should not be confused with an abdication of law. Though much post-9/11 rhetoric seems congruent with what Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde, and Ole Waever called "panic politics" (Buzan, Waever and de Wilde 1998, 34) that framed the War on Terror as an existential emergency, this project also highlights the role of defense and foreign policy intellectuals in producing data that made the security theater decipherable and thus governable. The production of the Military-Age Male category was a technocratic creation designed to add 'shades of gray' to the Principle of Distinction. Rather than framing counterinsurgency and drone warfare as a lawless space, this dissertation positions U.S foreign policy after 9/11 as an extension, not an abandonment, of liberal politics.

In doing so, this dissertation advances a notion initially stated by Frank Sauer and Niklas Schornig in 2012. "Instead of naively taking supposed democratic peacefulness at face value," democracies wage war in distinct ways and are motivated to follow a "specific set of normative rules" (Sauer and Schornig 2012, 365)**.** These normative rules include following the rule of law and integrating civilian immunity into its military practice, though the way this integration manifests is not initially self-evidence. In practice, "this performative spacing works through the law to annul the law," as Ian Shaw and Majed Akhter note in their work on drone warfare in the FATA valley (Gregory 2007, quoted in Shaw and Akhter 2012, 1503). Fleur Johns reaches a similar conclusion in her work on Guantanamo Bay, where she notes that instead of a site that "embodies law's absence," Guantanamo Bay should be "read as the jurisdictional outcome of exhaustive attempts to domesticate the political possibilities occasioned by the experience of exceptionalism" (Johns 2005, 615). These positions are not necessarily self-evident, but as this dissertation illustrates, the legal procedures cited by the Bush and Obama Administrations shaped the character of U.S wars; exceptional security measures were not spaces carved outside of the law, but zones that were enabled through the law.

Drone Warfare: Where did the People Go?
Drone warfare is sometimes viewed as a doctrinal shift from counterinsurgency. Indeed, Peter Singer was told by a security analyst in 2007 that "technology doesn't have a big place in any doctrine of

future war" (Singer 2009, 27). The U.S military's call for cultural knowledge, repeatedly juxtaposed against a traditional paradigm of technological supremacy, is a distinction that my project refutes. As the story goes, the 2003 Iraq War revealed that the Revolution in Military Affairs, credited for U.S success in the first Gulf War, contained theoretical gaps that made the paradigm ill-equipped for the War on Terror (Cohen 1996; Hoffman 2007). My dissertation dispels this myth and illustrates that, instead of abandoning technology, counterinsurgency actually led to the proliferation of ISR technologies.

Drone warfare, like counterinsurgency, is sustained by both discursive and material devices. As noted in chapter 5, the discursive push from counterinsurgency to drone warfare continued to rely on a narrative that positioned civilian immunity as crucial to U.S foreign policy goals. However, the binary between counterinsurgency and drone warfare crumbles when examining the historical record. As Shaw highlights, the U.S war in Vietnam was highly reliant on a physical architecture of state power that "crystallizes the state's ability to enclose—sometimes violently—the atmospheres in which living beings are born, become, and die" (Shaw 2016, 691). Surveillance drones were first deployed by the United States in Vietnam (Whittle 2014, 21), and Vietnam was also a primary site of "the electronic battlefield, the bureaucratic world of the Phoenix Program, and the aerial surveillance orbits of Lightning Bug drones" (Shaw 2016, 691). Instead of a counterinsurgency characterized by U.S troops creeping through jungles, Shaw notes that Vietnam War was a "'technowar...defined as a technologically intensive, managerial conflict, fought with spreadsheets and statistics as much as soldiers and bombs" (Shaw 2016, 695).

I do not claim that drone warfare and counterinsurgency are conceptually identical. There are serious distinctions between counterinsurgency and drone warfare, especially when bodily injury is the center of theoretical inquiry. This body of work includes research on the changing nature of military life. Feminist scholars have long noted that contemporary warfare "seems to require, as much as physical aggression, a tolerance of boredom or the ability to operate a computer under stress, characteristics that are neither distinctly 'masculine' nor heroic" (Ruddick 1989, quoted in Blanchard 2003, 1299). COIN manuals seem to agree, and acknowledge that in comparison to traditional warfare, counterinsurgency exposes soldiers to more bodily risk and potential for harm (U.S Army and Marine Corps 2007, 241).

Importantly, drone warfare re-establishes a long U.S tradition of reducing bodily risk to U.S soldiers. Jean Bethke Elshtain notes that U.S military policy, in its quest for riskless warfare, has sought technologies that avoid damage to its own troops while the brunt of those harmed and killed by U.S bombing campaigns have been foreign civilians (Elshtain 2000, 447). However, U.S attempts to 'unman' and automate war technologies in order to protect U.S soldiers from injury collide into media accounts that relay the high trauma rates suffered by drone crews. A 2011 study found that almost one third of air force drone pilots suffered burnout, while seventeen percent of pilots showed signs of "clinical distress" (Warrior 2015, 97-98). Timothy Cullen's 2011 ethnographic account of U.S drone systems operators from the 29th Attack Squadron provides further insight into how the drone work environment was a space where "physical bodies and imperfect cognitive abilities merged with computers...to impose unfamiliar demands and constraints on each other" (Wilcox 2017, 17).

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Alison Williams notes that there is a "reality gap" between the rhetoric that surrounds military drones and the experiences of drone crews (Williams 2011, 385). Though described rhetorically as machines that enable "persistent presence," drone are fundamentally reliant on on human subjectivity. Williams describes the drone as a cyborgian assemblage, a "hybrid of machine and organism" (*ibid*, 384). Though U.S military planners seek to 'unman' war by removing their troops from harm's way, "the aerial realm is not "some asocial realm or 'non-place,' but a space whose embodied emotional and practical geographies [need] to be charted" (*ibid*, 385). Though military planners now respond to mental trauma, this form of harm is treated differently than bodily injury. The 'Force Protection Norm,' understood as bodily protection of U.S troops (Gentry 2010, 13), is a guiding principle that informs military practice and strategy. Mental trauma, on the other hand, is met with a medicalized response and does not seem—for the time being—to be a deciding factor in the direction of foreign policy.

When measured against the span of history, the addition of military drones to counterinsurgency operations is a relatively new technological intervention, whereas counterinsurgency's history spans centuries. What I am trying to establish, however, is that instead of framing these two kinds of warfare as paradigmatic opposites that illustrate a stark philosophical 'turn' between the Bush and Obama Administrations, both forms of warfare are linked by a similar military rationality designed to produce 'actionable' and predictive data about the populations they seek to manage. To this end, both anthropological and geographical knowledge are used as pre-emptive war fighting techniques in order to assess and avert the risk of an insurgent attack. Though much of the research on drones focuses on its legality under international law, other scholars have argued that drone warfare is "better read as an extension of a certain mode of future-oriented power...referred to as 'security' or 'government,' and which is symptomatic of (neo)liberal "risk society" that operates through the prediction of behavior and minimization of risk" (Guzik 2009, 5). Katherine Hall Kindervater adds that the emergence of drone technology is "part of a larger set of practices of knowledge production and control" (Kindervater 2017, 29). This practice is especially apparent when drone crews use 'Patterns of Life' to investigate civilian assemblages for signs of future disruption; these disruptions are then edited by Signature Strikes. The Military-Age Male category, which has existed since at least Vietnam and was used extensively by both counterinsurgents and drone crews, became a category that used gendered assumptions about men to predict future violence. Importantly, these predictions were often wrong.

Finally, feminist scholars have highlighted that gender, rather than being a static state of being, is mediated and changed by technological encounters. This insight is especially important given the move towards automating drones and other military technologies, a policy change that may further obfuscate the role of human subjectivity in high-tech warfare. For example, Mary Manjikian's work on drones notes that traditional maneuvers to leverage the innocent "women and children of Iraq," as the Bush Administration did when justifying the War on Terror, are potentially erased when discussing 'unmanned' aerial warfare (Manjikian 2014, 49). As Kinsella succinctly writes, "insofar as the war on terror can [be] claimed as war in defence of civilization, it must be constituted as a way in defence of civilians" (Kinsella 2005, 163.) What happens to the practice of warfare, however, when the humans are hidden within a vast network of software?

Manjikian's research examines documents released by U.S agencies and finds that language changes

when humans are excluded from the war theater. "We have previously considered changing gender roles in war by asking what might happen if women were added to the battlefield, but we have not thus far asked what might happen if men and women were removed...[R]emoving the body of the warfighter from the battlefield could thus decisively change the construct of warfare and therefore the state itself" (Manjikian 2014, 49). This change is especially important in a climate where U.S policymakers cite 'civilians' as the reason these technologies are being deployed in the first place. If scholars like Vivian Anette Lagesen (2012) and Andrea Quinlan (2012) are correct, then technological changes can potentially subvert the practice of warfare by renegotiating what bodies are targeted for injury or protection. There is, however, a more somber possibility that is borne from the evidence collected throughout this project. The inclusion of more sophisticated military technology has served to reaffirm traditional ideas about who is guilty and innocent during wartime. Instead of creating a visual atmosphere designed to impose constraints on warfighting, drones and counterinsurgency expanded the security theater to bring military life into what was previously known as the private sphere. Precision technologies do not unman the battlefield, nor do they adequately highlight the difference between civilians and combatants. Instead, my research finds that modern warfare subjects foreign populations to the cognitive shortcut known as the Military-Age Male.

Chapter 3
Producing the Not-Civilian: Military-Age Males as Technocratic Category

i. Introduction
Visual cues have always been central to the laws of war. Wearing a military uniform becomes a visual guide to distinguishing combatants from civilians. Insurgencies, however, frustrate this distinction. According to both the American and International laws of armed conflict, combatants and civilians occupy distinct categories. This difference is known as the Principle of Distinction.
In an insurgency where combatants intentionally disguise themselves as civilians, the United States uses an alternative visual vocabulary to highlight combatants who seek to blend into a civilian background. For instance, insurgents have been described as 'low contrast' targets (Flynn, Juergens, and Cantrell 2008), language often associated with photography. The Military-Age Male (MAM) is a designation that reasserts the importance of visual signifiers in the practice of war; it is category that acts as a social sorting device to transform the security theater into a high-contrast environment.

However, the Military-Age Male should not be thought of as an objective description, but as a mode of thought (Cohn 2013, 47) that reveals how technocratic categories influence the direction of warfare. Language upholds a visual regime that tells counterinsurgents, drone crews, and military planners where to look. Political language acts as a surveillance technology, institutionalizing masculinity and its link with violence as a relationship worth monitoring. The Military-Age Male category acts as a cognitive shortcut that allows policymakers to see the security theater. Unlike the uniform, where combatants self-identify based on their role—their behavior—during wartime, the Military-Age Male is a category that uses physiology to reorder social life during wartime. Boys and Men are targeted with differentiated treatment, not because of what they have done, but because of who they are.

But where does the Military-Age Male come from, and how does this category influence the practice of war? The link between masculinity and political violence is not self-evident, and the term is not found in international law. Rather, the category is found under U.S policy, though the term is not unique to the United States, as other NATO allies use similar designations within their own military structures. Under current domestic and international legal conventions, civilian status is applied to all those who are not combatants, regardless of age or gender. Yet the Military-Age Male category destabilizes the idea that civilians are equally protected under international and domestic conventions. Moreover, the MAM category highlights how gender is used to direct military activity at civilians during wartime. Importantly, the United States self-identifies as a liberal democracy and, as shown in the introduction of this project, takes the protection of civilians seriously. Moreover, in order to delegitimize their opponents, the United States condemned the Taliban and Al-Qaeda for killing civilians and argued that children were especially vulnerable to being recruited as suicide bombers. Yet, the Military-Age Male category includes male civilians who have not reached the age of majority. But if civilians generally, and children specifically, are used to bolster U.S intervention abroad, then how do U.S officials make sense of a collateral damage count that excludes adult and child civilians? And how, as will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5, did U.S military practitioners use the Military-Age Male category to orient the direction of counterinsurgency and drone warfare?

The purpose of this chapter is to address how the Military-Age Male became a salient, legitimized category within U.S foreign policy. Consequently, all the case studies in this chapter—from the Bush-Cheney Torture Memos to the treatment of Omar Khadr in Guantanamo Bay—have been selected because they reveal the MAM mode of thought in practice. I come to the conclusion that the subversion of civilian immunity is mediated by bureaucratic institutions who take legal conventions seriously; the Military-Age Male is not a symptom of U.S lawlessness that some scholars have argued characterizes the War on Terror (Johns 2005; Shaw, Ronald and Akhter 2012).

The chapter begins by examining historical narratives that connect civilian protection with civilizational progress and documents how the United States has appealed to these narratives, by mentioning civilians generally and children specifically, in the pursuit of its foreign policy goals. Legal protections for civilians are not a self-evidently important foreign policy goal. Rather, the U.S took this legal norm seriously due to historical events like the Vietnam War, which led to further bureaucratic entrenchment of civilian protection. Yet despite a historical shift towards legality, civilian protection has not been applied evenly across all demographic groups and male civilians were at greater risk of military violence under the Bush and Obama Administrations.

The chapter then examines how historical ideas about gender, civilian status, and childhood in the Global South can help make sense of the Military-Age Male category's existence. Foreign policy actors appealed to audiences by trying to use language that their constituents found persuasive. "Ideologies...cannot enter a room. They are carried by rhetors, who, in turn work with inherited words," (Murphy 2004, 10). This language was often on display during times of social crises, where officials were more often asked to justify contentious policies. Subsequently, more data exists about cases like the Torture Memos or the treatment of Omar Khadr. These cases illustrate, as Robert Dean notes in his examination of masculinity and U.S foreign policy, that "gender must be understood not as an independent cause of policy decisions, but as part of the very fabric of reasoning employed by officeholders" (Dean 1998, 30). This chapter uses the controversy surrounding the Bush-era Torture Memos, the detention of male children at Guantanamo Bay, select counterinsurgency operations, and failed drone missions to make the case that gender acts as a governing code to make sense of warfare.

Crucially, however, U.S officials continued to justify the treatment of Military-Age Males—whether they were subjected to torture, detention, or death—by appealing to legal codes and bureaucratic procedure. Instead of stripping civilian status from Military-Age Males, which would have been more obviously illegal, U.S foreign policy marked boys and men as risky subjects who were more likely to be involved in political violence. Consequently, Military-Age Males technically kept their civilian status, but were highlighted as a risk factor, which enabled conditions for monitoring and profiling. This bureaucratic decision 'made sense' precisely because of historical intellectual labor that sustained the connection between masculinity and political violence. The act of surveillance allowed the United States to maintain a commitment to its legal agreements while simultaneously placing civilian boys and men at greater risk for violent targeting. Instead of avoiding the law, the U.S enacted security practice by working through the law.

ii. The History of Civilian Protection

Despite the intellectual labor that has justified the Principle of Distinction, the Geneva Protocols do not attempt to unpack the term 'civilian.' Instead, civilians are defined relationally, as whatever a combatant is not (Crawford 2015, 18). Protocol I states that civilians are any persons who do not fall into categories 4A(1)-(3) and 4A(6) of Geneva Convention III and Article 43 of Protocol I. Protocol I also states that "[i]n case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, the person shall be considered a civilian" (*ibid*). Under these articles, combatants are persons who are members of armed forces, militia or volunteer corps, and include members in organized resistance movements. These persons are combatants, whether or not they are allied with an unrecognized authority and/or whether they are operating inside or outside their territory (Crawford 2015, 17). The Geneva Protocols also ensure that children aged fifteen and older who participate in international armed conflict are entitled to "prisoner-of-war" status. Children under the age of 15 share the same special protections as those children who are not combatants (Jamison 2005, 144).

In this chapter, I discuss boys and men that fall under the Military-Age Male (MAM) category, but also minors who fall under the minimum age requirement of this category. While my main focus is on the MAM category, participants I interviewed indicated that children younger than 16 had been killed in COIN and drone strikes and that, additionally, collecting this information was notoriously tricky because not everyone in Afghanistan chronicles their age (Taylor, interview with author, January 2017). Boys under the age of sixteen, therefore, were sometimes considered Military-Age Males. This problem was further complicated by the technological limitations presented by drones. While dead bodies can be counted on a screen, determining age through a drone screen is almost impossible (Linebaugh 2013). In my own interviews, Taylor confirmed that boys younger than sixteen were killed in drone strikes, though this policy was not officially endorsed (Taylor, interview with author, April 2016).

Though I will ultimately argue that the MAM designation erodes civilian protection, I note that examining the Military-Age Male category in relation to 'civilians' and 'combatants' is crucial if we are to determine how policymakers made sense of the security landscape. The idea that civilians and combatants fall under differentiated categories has well-documented historical and intellectual roots. Protecting civilians has long been associated with civilizational progress. For instance, the St. Petersburg Declaration of 1868, the successor of the First Geneva Convention of 1864, the preamble states that:

> The progress of civilization should have the effect of alleviating as much as possible the calamities of war; [t]he only legitimate object which States should endeavour to accomplish during war is to weaken the military forces of the enemy (International Military Commission 1868).

On assassination, the Lieber Code, also known as Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field, states that "civilized nations look with horror upon offers of rewards for the assassination of enemies as relapses into barbarism" (Grobklaus 2015, 8). The preambles of UN declarations are free of terms like 'barbarism.' Instead, the 1945 UN Charter prefers the term 'social progress' and 'development,' terms which stretch to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the latter two explicitly stating that the additional protections afforded to children and women are a form of social progress and development (UN General Assembly 1989; *ibid* 1979).

Narratives that link civilian protection with civilizational progress extend to contemporary wars in the Middle East, South and Central Asia. Both George W. Bush and Barack Obama have sought to reassure domestic and international audiences that preventing civilian death is an American imperative. Bush, referring to the ground war in Afghanistan, stated that the Principle of Distinction still applied. In his Nobel Peace Prize speech, Obama stated that: "I believe that the United States of America must remain a standard bearer in the conduct of war. This is what makes us different from those whom we fight" (Obama 2009). Moreover, American foreign policy actors routinely link civilizational progress with gender and children. When former First Lady Laura Bush spoke on the issue, she centered gender and childhood as central to violent conflicts and as a moral standard of conduct within foreign policy.

> Afghan women know, through hard experience, what the rest of the world is discovering: The brutal oppression of women is a central goal of the terrorists. Long before the current war began, the Taliban and its terrorist allies were making the lives of children and women in Afghanistan miserable (Bush 2001).

Ironically, the United States has been criticized by human rights organizations who use civilian death as a standard to judge other countries. In 2013, a coalition of advocacy organizations that included Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union, and Human Rights Watch, submitted an open letter to the Obama Administration, where they asked for accurate information about civilian casualties and how U.S officials defined 'civilian' and 'combatant' (ACLU et al. 2013). The letter contested the "factual basis" of John Brennan's characterization of drone warfare as one that led to "exceedingly rare" civilian casualties (*ibid*).

International actors routinely condemn states for military actions that result in disproportionate civilian deaths. The Principle of Proportionality differently is generally understood as the weighing of military activities in relation to expected civilian death—civilian immunity is not a form of absolute protection but is better understood as protection from intentional targeting or targeting that would not be justified in relation to anticipated military gains. Long-standing historical support from both states and liberal institutions indicates that civilian death resonates internationally as a legitimate arena for criticism.

The U.S Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, (herein called '*The Manual*') a document which emerged from the military failure of the 2002 Iraq War, states that the goal of U.S forces should be "securing the civilian, rather than destroying the enemy, their top priority" (Sewall 2007, xxv). The *Manual* describes insurgent groups as entities that do not conform to international norms guiding the practice of warfare. The U.S Army is "unprepared for an enemy…[that]…chose to wage war against America from the shadows" (Nagl 2007, xiv). Aware that the Field Manual may be construed as a "marketing campaign," the introduction's author admits that this skepticism has its roots in history and cites the "rogue atrocities" of My Lai, where the administration spoke of winning "hearts and minds" but did not match its rhetoric with military actions on the ground (Sewall 2007, xxxiv). To convince the audience of the doctrine's sincerity, the author cites how the Carr Center for Human

Rights Policy co-sponsored the "Doctrine Revision Workshop" and how military leadership pledged that the doctrine would "embrace the Geneva Conventions and highlight the risks inherent in COIN (*ibid*, xxxiii). The commitment to IHL was corroborated by a participant, called 'Alex' for this project, who stated that the Geneva Conventions were covered in COIN training.

> We went over the Geneva Conventions. I know there were distinctions made between International Conventions and Conventions that the U.S is not a party to, but it was more or less an overarching blob of things we don't do in war. There was less emphasis on things we do. Rather, there was more talk on the things you cannot do and these are the things that you go to jail for. But I don't really remember. I'm sure somewhere there are books and training publications…but as a 23, 24, 25 year old, I was focusing on the don't rape, don't kill children line. I remember that ignorance wasn't an excuse for poor behavior and the onus was on you to pay attention or else you'd go jail (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

Within *The Manual*, there are indications that civilizational progress should be a concern to U.S foreign policy makers. The word "honor", always in relation to proper U.S military behavior, is used several times within the introduction. The Manual also invokes history as moral arbiter and warns against the temptation to use overwhelming military force and "annihilation" as a strategy, which would create an unforgivable demand. This tactic would ask "Americans [to] abandon their core values. To save ourselves, we would destroy our souls. History can be a harsh judge of such choices" (Sewall 2007, xxxvii).

The Manual contends that the Western tradition of warmaking, as espoused by the Just War tradition, sees war as a tragic necessity, but that ethical frameworks seek to fairly constrain military decision-making. Insurgents, however, are not bound by these constraints and "we need only consider insurgents' eagerness to kill civilians" (Sewall 2007, xxxiv) to see the evidence. This logic has, of course, been criticized by scholars like Eyal Weizman and Derek Gregory, the former who pointed out that "Western militaries tend to believe that by moderating the violence they perpetrate, they might be able to govern populations more efficiently" (Weizman 2011, 11). Gregory, for his part, argues that counterinsurgency zones are framed as 'borderlands', which are imagined geographical spaces, usually in the global south, where according to "metropolitan actors and agencies," wars are brutal, civility abandoned, and social fabric is destroyed (Gregory 2011, 239). These wars are fought in 'failed states,' characterized by, according to one popular interpretation offered by Mary Kaldor, a "loss of control over and fragmentation of the instruments of physical coercion" (Kaldor 2007, 97). In contrast, successful states possess "unquestioned physical control over the defined territory...an administrative presence throughout the country and the allegiance of the population to the idea of the state" (Herbst 2010, 234).

This description is in contrast to rhetoric about 'our' wars, which are positioned as "surgically sensitive and scrupulous" (Gregory 2011, 239). These narratives often highlight the role of technology, especially aerial technologies, in limiting civilian casualties. "[T]he imminent arrival of so-called nonlethal or disabling technologies may offer an even more appealing prospect: war without casualties" (Cohen 109, 1994). As will be discussed in chapter 5, the link between high-technology precision weaponry and civilian protection becomes crucial to legitimizing drone warfare under the Obama Administration. Of course, these assertions are at odds with the decision to exclude Military-Age Males

from the collateral damage count, which erodes civilian immunity and seriously undermines the idea that U.S wars are fought with precision, especially given that foreign policy actors have demonstrated that ideas governing childhood and innocence are highly precarious during wartime.

Children, Specifically

Civilian status rests on shaky ground, while discourse that highlights the importance of civilian immunity remains a key feature of policy statements made by U.S military personnel. U.S respect for civilian immunity is a narrative that remains popular with American foreign policy actors. General Petraeus, the lead architect of *The Manual*, condemned the Taliban's targeting of civilians. But Petraeus did not merely reference civilians generally; he specifically mentioned children as a way to denigrate the Taliban's conduct in the Afghanistan war, insinuating that the mobilization of children was a sign of unrestricted warfare which, in turn, implied that the legitimacy of the conflict was (in part, anyway) dependent on whether the methods employed by both sides were moral. As former Commander of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Petraeus reported: "No tactic is beneath the insurgents; indeed, they use unwitting children to carry out attacks, they repeatedly kill innocent civilians, and they frequently seek to create situations that will result in injury to Afghan citizens" (Petraeus 2010). This sentiment was reiterated by ISAF's Lieutenant Colonel David Accetta who stated that "[i]n the past, we have not seen the Taliban sink that low, to use children as suicide bombers…they are deliberately putting civilians—women and children—at risk by bringing the combat into close proximity with them" (Islamabad 2007). Both Petraeus and Accetta mentioned civilians generally, but then chose to make explicit that women and children are part of this category—even though unarmed men are also civilians under IHL and U.S laws of war.

In fact, much of the discourse on children positions their protection as an obligation for all civilized states, while their deaths are markers of barbarity. Though the field of childhood in International Relations is under-researched, scholars like Alison Watson have astutely argued that children are not on the fringe of global affairs and that the way states treat children is an indication, especially from 'developing' states, of legitimate behavior (Watson 2006, 241). As illustrated by Laura Bush's comment, when states fail to support children within their borders, then this failure can become a justification for international intervention. As further discussed in chapter 4, citing women and children as part of a global membership of liberal values became crucial to navigating the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Moreover, because children are often positioned as outside politics, the narrative of innocent victimhood becomes "an important source of moral and political legitimation" (Duschinsky 2011).

In "Slaughtered Innocents," Robbie Duschinsky gives the example of Mohammed al-Durrah, who died in 2000 after being filmed hiding from Israeli gunfire with his father. The discourse surrounding the case of Mohammed al-Durrah is especially notable because Al-Qaeda mentioned his death in a press release following 9/11, stating that his murder was one reason the organization attacked the United States. Both the PLO and the Israeli government released statements emphasizing that Mohammad al-Durrah was a child victim, but the Israeli Government blamed the PLO for using civilians as human shields (*ibid*, 39). Under IHL, civilians are simply those who are non-combatants, a category that is not exclusive to children or women. However, as Duschinsky notes, the grief directed towards children often emphasizes their innocence and "places the child as of higher moral value than an adult." Actors

use "their death as [an] apolitical resource in a struggle for the status of victim" (*ibid*, 45).

This narrative is not unique to one conflict. In 1991, nearly half of all people in Somalia, approximately 4.5 million, were suffering from starvation, severe malnutrition or related famine-induced disease. The UN's peacekeeping mission in the region, UNITAF, was under the direction of the United States. The intervention was seen almost universally as a failure, but the mechanisms used to mobilize support for U.S involvement are instructive. Lorraine Macmillan writes that the U.S was "entreated to come to the aid of a specific group—children—not simply a monolithic block of civilians" (Macmillan 2015, 68). While meeting with the House Select Committee on Hunger, the Assistant Administrator for the US Agency for International Development stated that "the real tragedy was that of the starving Somali children" (*ibid*). And Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger would eventually state that in addition to pressure from Congress, George H.W Bush was motivated to intervene by "pictures of those starving kids" (*ibid*). Indeed, and as will be seen in chapter 4, citing children (and women) as justification for U.S intervention is rhetorically effective due to recent efforts that expand liberal membership to include women and children from states that have been previously colonized.

Though childhood has been traditionally under-examined in IR, Cecilia Jacobs writes that "increased visibility of children in the civil wars of the 1990s spurred the growth of civil society and advocacy networks" and that the work done by these actors influenced policy makers to consider childhood as a legitimate foreign policy issue (Jacobs 2015, 15). This increased focus culminated into a recent issue of *Critical Studies on Security*, which focused exclusively on childhood in IR (Beier et al. 2015). In other spaces, research on childhood in IR has highlighted how children are used to institutionalize ethical values, and that the space "given to children's rights in international strategies illustrates how normative approaches are becoming influential in international relations" (Pupavac 2001, 97). Additionally, authors like Erica Burman have persuasively shown that images of children can facilitate intervention, especially when they are framed as "principal focal objects...of distress" and that this kind of disaster imagery crafted by policy makers in the Global North is a "major source of information about the [Global] south," (Burman 1994, 238). Similarly, in her work on child soldiers, Katrina Lee-Koo writes that these images can also construct knowledge about the Global North's obligations to the Global South, and that these 'obligations' are often understood as either humanitarian programs or warmaking (Lee-Koo 2011, 725).

The Puzzle
But if children are used to strategically bolster the legitimacy of interventionist policies, and if their deaths are particularly distressing and more likely to cultivate global outrage, then why and how has the United States omitted some children and most men (as most men are civilians) from the collateral damage count? *The Manual* states that "civilian deaths create an extended family of enemies—new insurgent recruits or informants—and erode support for the host nation" (Sewall 2007, xxv).

Except the position found within *The Manual* contradicts what Taylor heard while working in the Drone Program. Taylor relayed that their colleagues often described child deaths as "cutting the grass before it grows," a phrase meaning that children would eventually become extremists once they aged, possibly to seek revenge. When I asked Taylor to expand on this theme, they said:

> But also, the boys, if you kill one of their fathers then there's a likelihood that they'll eventually grow up [and take the militant role the father left behind]…Oftentimes, the boys are much more willing to become Jihadis. They look up to the people, to the older Jihadis and martyrs. [Like] in Palestine, lower Lebanon, they're treated like superstars whenever they kill themselves so there's that incentive to have some kind of meaning in their life besides eating stale bread…In a war situation, a lot of people are looking for meaning. Also, boys are recruited (Taylor, interview with Author, April 2016).

I think we should reject the temptation to dismiss discourse that prioritizes civilian protection as only dishonesty, though I am sympathetic to those who may want to solve this puzzle by arguing that the United States will say anything to further 'national interests' (often vaguely defined, of course). George W. Bush's administration, after all, orchestrated the necessary intelligence to claim Saddam Hussein harbored Weapons of Mass Destruction. Indeed, Mel Gurtov notes that every U.S administration has been dishonest in furthering its foreign policy goals, whether one looks at Truman's deception about Soviet involvement in the Greek Civil War, Carter's lie about the human rights conditions under the Iranian Shaw, or Reagan's infamous deception in the Iran Contra scandal (Gurtov 2006, 66).

Yet labeling the discrepancy between dialogue and action as hypocrisy is insufficient because it does not explain why this discrepancy occurs or, even, why the U.S goes to such lengths to ensure that its justifications and actions comply (even if only by appearance) with the laws and rules set by bureaucratic institutions. Rather, I want to draw attention to how the erosion of civilian immunity is mediated through bureaucratic institutions and the production of technical knowledge. The answer to this puzzle is not that foreign policy actors will say one thing and do another in pursuit of some nebulously defined 'state interest.' The more interesting question is how this discrepancy is perceived as rational by foreign policy actors.

Because despite a well-documented history of deception, U.S emphasis on civilian protection is a policy issue that administrations take seriously, whether that emphasis is on bolstering these protections or contesting them. In fact, the extent to which U.S administrations have institutionalized civilian protection indicate that these ideas and discourses have influenced the direction of foreign policy. As illustrated below, American military and intelligence institutions take the law and technical procedures so seriously that, instead of ignoring legal institutions, these actors argue through them to justify policy change. The very creation of the Military-Age Male category demonstrates the power of technocratic knowledge to shape policy outcomes. These institutions, however, do not operate in a vacuum and are influenced by historical ideas that link men, and even children, with political violence. The erosion of civilian immunity, therefore, is not sudden or inexplicable.

iii. Lawfare: Bureaucratic Procedure and the Making of War

As mentioned earlier, foreign policy interests are not objectively determined, nor are they self-evident. One theme that can be gleaned from this chapter is that civilian protection is a consequence of history, emerging from the bureaucratic wrangling designed to constrain war. Within U.S history, the disastrous consequences of the Vietnam War influenced U.S administrations to avoid military operations that

would lead to high civilian casualty rates (John Gentry 2010, 12). John Gentry calls this the casualty aversion norm, and the term 'casualty aversion' also appears in *The Manual*. White House records indicate that the Johnson Administration was aware that the high civilian casualty count was unwelcome in the United States and could lead to a loss on the "home front" (Dill 2015, 155). Additionally, a sizable American population believed that the Vietnam war had been horribly mismanaged under the civilian leadership of Lyndon Johnson and Robert McNamara, which propelled the idea that the protection of U.S troops should be a military objective (called the 'force protection norm.') Gentry argues that both the casualty aversion and force protection norms have become institutionally entrenched, meaning that U.S Presidents now "micro-manage" air strike campaigns. "In Iraq in 1991, and in every major U.S operation since, lawyers played such prominent roles that military [officials] lamented that warfare has devolved into 'lawfare" (Gentry 2010, 13).

Similarly, Janina Dill chronicles the rising importance of legality from Vietnam to the 2002 Gulf War and asks her readers: "Does the legal definition of a legitimate target of attack make a difference for how US military decision-makers define a legitimate target?" (Dill 2015, 143). This question is important, since the answer provides us with information on whether or not legal codes constrain U.S foreign policy. Dill answers that, yes, legal codes are demonstrably influential in U.S Foreign Policy and uses the following evidence to reach her conclusion. Target selection between 1965 and 1972 contained almost no involvement from legal experts. In the Vietnam War, the '94-target' list was compiled by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and then sent to the Seventh Air Force. The latter group then nominated targets that came mostly from this list, which would then be returned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for approval. Secretary Robert McNamara's civilian staff vetted these choices and the final targets were sent to the White House. "Johnson and his advisors chose the targets…at the White House's weekly Tuesday luncheon" and there was no legal presence at these luncheons (Dill 2015, 147).

However, both Gentry and Dill note that the Vietnam War instigated an institutional change. The My Lai massacre and the court martial that succeeded the incident resulted in the Pentagon issuing Directive 5100.77 in 1974. It tasked Judge Advocate General Corps (JAGs), with "ensuring that all US military operations compiled strictly with the Law of War" (*ibid,* 148). JAGS were first included in Operation Just Cause in 1989. The first Gulf War also introduced a no-strike list and created a contact phone-number for United Nations agencies and NGOs to submit objects that would become immune from attack. While these steps were new and seemingly a large departure from Vietnam decision-making, the number of legal experts deployed in the first Iraq war pales in comparison to the Second Iraq War. In 1991, 350 attorneys and lawyers deployed with the allied troops in Iraq. In the 2002 Iraq War, there where over 2,200 JAGs, 350 civilian attorneys, and 1,400 enlisted paralegals who accompanied military troops (*ibid,* 149).

The Bush Jr. Administration continued to depend on legal counsel and bureaucratic procedure to further their policies on detainee torture. Notably, these detainees included Omar Khadr and other minors below the MAM age-range, persons who, under the Geneva Conventions were entitled to Prisoner of War Status (in the case of Omar Khadr) and civilian status, for the children who were younger than fifteen years. Yet, the Geneva Conventions were also central to the Bush Administration's decision to keep them confined in Guantanamo Bay. Speaking on the question of how to treat detainees, Bradford

Berenson , the Associate White House Counsel from 2001-2003, stated that "the good news is that the United States Government has people within it who are experts in virtually every aspect of the law, and this case was no exception" (Berenson 2005). And, opting to clarify the President's stance on the Geneva Conventions, argued that the president "did not announce that the Geneva Conventions applied to these detainees. He announced the opposite: "that as a matter of law, these folks were not covered by the Geneva Conventions" (*ibid*). In a statement by the Press Secretary in 2002, the Administration affirmed that Article 4 of the Geneva Conventions did not apply to detainees because "[t]he Taliban have not effectively distinguished themselves from the civilian population of Afghanistan" thereby violating the Convention's prescription that military members should be uniformed or wear distinctive signs. Because Al-Qaeda is an international terrorist group its members were not covered by the Conventions "and are not entitled to the POW status under the treaty" (Statement by the Press Secretary on the Geneva Convention 2002).

These tactics were mirrored by the CIA when it defended the use of torture to the Department of Justice. The CIA was uniquely responsible for briefing the Office of Legal Counsel in the Department of Justice, where CIA attorneys stated that "a novel application of the necessity defense "could be used" to avoid prosecution of U.S officials who tortured to obtain information that saved many lives" (Senate Select Committee on Intelligence 2014, 7). In this case, the law was used as a shield against prosecution, indicating that the CIA took the position that the law was relevant and useful for officials acting on precarious ethical grounds. Moreover, when addressing the Department of Justice, the CIA used legal precedents to justify their use of torture. The Senate similarly used the law to argue that the CIA mismanaged their program. Whether the CIA was promoting torture or the Senate disputing its use, the boundaries of appropriate behavior were mediated by legality.

Ironically, the necessity defense was first used by a group of men and women who engaged in civil disobedience by walking into the office of the Honeywell Corporation to protest the company's manufacturing of cluster bombs in the Vietnam War. These protesters would later be known as the "Honeywell 8." In 1971, they were charged with trespassing and used English common law to argue that their crime was a "necessity" to stop Honeywell from making bombs and propagating war (Sledge 2014). The CIA invoked the same ruling, showing, if anything, that the language invoked to stop a greater evil can be used by both elites and grassroots activists.

For our purposes, the examples listed above are important because they illustrate how state officials will pursue agendas by leveraging the severity of a social crisis and how choices are oriented towards norms about "what constitutes a legitimate polity and what goals it [the state] should legitimately pursue" (Koenig-Archibugi 2010, 28). Bureaucracies have a strong ability to create rules and define social knowledge. They have, for example, the ability to define words like "development" and create categories like "refugees" and even create interests for actors like "protecting human rights" (Barnett and Finnemore 1999, 707). Likewise, the Military-Age Male category is an intentional social construction crafted by policy makers. Bureaucracies are, in short, a body of organized knowledge that can create or dismantle relations of power (Porter and Webb 2009, 51). These institutions are especially persuasive because they embody a form of "rational-legal authority that modernity views as particularly legitimate and good…modern legitimacy is invested in legal codes" (Barnett and

Finnemore 1999, 707). Even the process of measuring, data production, and standard setting can make certain activities visible and legitimate and obscure other possibilities (Porter and Webb 2009, 51).

The very act of creating the Military-Age Male category standardizes ideas about masculinity and violence into a bureaucratic apparatus. The link between masculinity and violence is not self-evident, as the MAM category does not exist in the Geneva Conventions that outline the differences between combatant and civilian statuses. Rather, MAMs are a policy creation embedded within U.S security institutions, designed to interact with the "physical architecture of [state] power" (Shaw 2016, 680) to direct the practice of warfare The institutionalization of the MAM category is dependent on cultural characterizations of the demographic that is being described. These characterizations "are normative and evaluative, portraying groups in positive or negative terms through symbolic language, metaphors and stories" (Ingram and Schneider 1993, 334). The way these demographic groups are portrayed, whether or not those portrayals are factual, will enable policies that are either beneficial or disadvantageous to them. For example, and speaking on the evacuation of Fallujah in Operation Al-Fajr, one military official stated:

> One of our biggest challenges…was who do you let out and who do you not? What are the rules and the screening procedures? And when they're let-out, where do they go? So the bottom line answer was that military-aged men, defined as 16 to 55, would not be permitted to leave, but children and women certainly could leave…So one of the tasks we faced was this 'humanitarian' task of folks that want to flee this unbelievable combat environment. How do you do that so you didn't put your soldiers at risk and you didn't let a key target out? (Leilah Khalili 2010,1480).

Constructivist scholars like Kathryn Sikkink have also illustrated how social shocks can further destabilize dominant ways of thinking, making American officials more likely to embrace the erosion of previously entrenched norms. "[E]ven a quite firm commitment to international law, signaled by ratification and implementation in strong domestic statutes, can be undermined by a relatively small group of political operators in the context of a security threat, a compelling anti-terrorism discourse, and domestic indifference to the rights of others" (Sikkink 2013, 162). A social shock, like the 9/11 attack, can signal a return to entrenched ways of thinking about gender during warfare, thereby highlighting the precarity of a civilian immunity norm that professes to protect all civilians equally. Yet the existence of the Military-Age Male calls into question whether civilian immunity, an allegedly entrenched norm of international relations, was ever applied evenly across populations affected by war. The Military-Age Male does not emerge from the War on Terror, after all, but has roots at least as far back as the Vietnam War. This, despite *The Manual's* repeated assurances that the U.S, ready now to face the lessons of the past and to confront its more recent failures in Iraq, would not replicate the counterinsurgency tactics of Vietnam. Yet Colin Powell, writing in his autobiography, describes how Military-Age Males were used as a shorthand for enemy combatants.

> I recall a phrase we used in the field, MAM, for military-age male. If a helo spotted a peasant in black pajamas who looked remotely suspicious, a possible MAM, the pilot would circle and fire in front of him. If he moved, his movement was judged evidence of hostile intent, and the next burst was not in front, but at him. Brutal? Maybe so. But an able battalion commander with whom I served at Gelnhausen, Lieutenant commander with whom I had served at Gelnhuasen, Lieutenant Colonel Walter Pritchard, was killed by enemy sniper fire while observing MAMs from a helicopter. And Pritchard was only one of many. The kill-or-be-killed nature of combat tends to dull fine perceptions of right and wrong (Powell 1996, 144).

U.S Rules of Engagement (RoE), the directives that outline the rules under which soldiers can engage in combat with their opponents, change—sometimes mid-battle according to one participant (Corey, interview with author, January 2017). Not all U.S warfare mimics the practices undertaken in Vietnam, of course, and this project documents how security practices directed at Military-Age Males changed based on military goals. Rather, I highlight this incident to illustrate that the Military-Age Male has endured as a way of making sense of war for decades, surviving both conventional and non-conventional warfare—and the post-Vietnam decision to limit civilian casualties. Importantly, the Military-Age Male was crucial to understanding violent conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq prior to the Counterinsurgency 'turn.' Rather than viewing the Military-Age Male as a new and unforeseen development that emerges from the War on Terror, the category exists as a prevailing normative architecture, as a cognitive shorthand that is used to make sense of security theaters.

Military-Age Males in Guantanamo Bay
Importantly, the security theaters in question are former colonies in the 'Global South,' where the age of majority is swept away in favor of a hierarchy that determines culpability by linking 'coming of age' with military violence. Though the Pentagon eventually released its three youngest prisoners, aged 13 to 15 years, from Guantanamo Bay to UNICEF in Afghanistan, it refused to release minors aged sixteen and older. In a Department of Defense news briefing in April 2003, Donald Rumsfeld stated that "these [detainees] are not children" (Rumsfeld and Myers 2003). The most famous of these detainees is probably Omar Khadr, who was the first child soldier prosecuted for war crimes in U.S history and since the Nuremberg trials (Jennifer 2010, 252).

Contemporary research on childhood seeks to reinforce the idea that, despite hegemonic narratives within the Global North that view aging as natural, childhood is actually socially constructed (Tisdalla and Punch 2012), that children are political agents, and that adulthood is not self-evidently the best standard for measuring political agency (Holt and Holloway 2006). Unfortunately, a number of security actors have also subverted ideas that regard childhood as a time of idyllic play and have been eager to remove certain bodies from the category of childhood precisely by acknowledging the political agency of (Middle-Eastern, Central and South Asian) minors. As opposed to children in the Global North, child detainees and even children who merely exist in conflict zones become ascribed with a kind of agency that does not exist for Western children. U.S officials have admitted to, not only detaining juveniles in Guantanamo Bay, but arguing that this detention is deserved. Take, for example, the U.S military official who opted to characterize minors captured in Afghanistan by referencing baseball:

> I would say despite their age, these are very dangerous people…Some have killed, some have stated they're going to kill again. So they may be juveniles, but they not on a Little League team anywhere. They're on a Major League team and it's a terrorist team. And they're in Guantanamo for very good reason; for our safety, for your safety (Jamison 2005, 138).

Over and over, military PR spokespersons confer with journalists and justify their tactics, a speech-act that Reus-Smit calls a "legitimacy claim." The success of these legitimacy claims rest "on the prevailing architecture of social norms, upon the cultural mores that govern appropriate forms of rhetoric, argument and justification, and upon available technologies of communication" (Reus-Smit

2007, 163). This official tried to extract children in Guantanamo from the category of childhood by referencing and excluding them from common signifiers of U.S childhood, namely, baseball leagues for children. Because actors are socially constrained, they use language strategically in order to convince audiences that their policies are legitimate. Metaphors, especially, are used to to create cognitive shortcuts by invoking inter-subjective meaning. In policy-making, metaphors are used to "limit what we notice, highlight what we do see, and provide part of the inferential structure that we reason with" (Lackoff 1992, quoted in Opperman 2013, 46). Metaphors, in other words, help the audience sift through large volumes of data by simplifying complex reality into terms that are more easily understood. This process, however, often relies on pre-established prejudices and what the audience recognizes as 'common sense.'

Since audiences already exist within a prevailing social context, they will be more inclined to accept certain justifications over others. Stated otherwise, audiences will not believe everything that elites tell them, so state actors must be careful to use language that resonates by drawing upon already-existing ideas. When definitions of childhood are contested, state actors can only convince their audiences that some children should indeed be omitted from the collateral damage count by using language that is tailored to the already-held convictions of the audience. Whereas childhood in the Global North is often framed as a "sentimentalized time of leisure, learning, dependence and tutelage" (Park 2014, 49), the discourse on Muslim boys and men often emphasizes patriarchy and aggression (Hopking 2014, 337), as indicated by the official who argued that the minors in Guantanamo were outside innocent, non-competitive play. Moreover, the social construction of masculinity is often reinforced by repetition, whether by political elites or media, that can "achieve a remarkable durability" and influence the "dominant imagination"(Dunn 2001, quoted in Hopking 2014, 338).

U.S (and Canadian) governments were reluctant to describe Omar Khadr as innocent, even though he was the youngest detainee in Guantanamo Bay for several years. The case of Omar Khadr is notable in several ways. His trial was only one of four held at Guantanamo Bay, which meant that in comparison to other detainees there was increased press coverage about his imprisonment. As expected with legal cases that capture international attention, foreign policy actors were called upon to justify their policy decisions, and the case therefore provided a rare opportunity to witness the intersection between civilizational discourse and the appeal to law in the War on Terror.

During his trial in military court, Khadr's participation in violent conflict was again framed in civilizational terms by Dr. Michael Welner, the psychiatrist testifying for the prosecution. He described Omar as a "rock star" at GITMO, "a remorseless, unrepentant murderer regarded by radical jihadists as 'al-Qaeda royalty' who [given his] credibility, pedigree, charisma, and proven record as a killer, could be expected to take a leadership role in the violent struggle to destroy Western civilization" (Koring 2010). Though captured at the age of 15, Omar Khadr, removed from the category of childhood by security elites like Donald Rumsfeld, had been transformed into a political agent responsible for the continuation or subversion of civilization. Given the controversy surrounding Omar Khadr's detention, at least some portions of the population found this discourse persuasive.

In a leaked video that documented Omar Khadr's interrogation by CSIS agents, he is shown sobbing

and asking for his mother (CBC News 2008), but when the video was shown to Sgt. Layne Morris, who was present during the firefight that killed Sgt. Christopher Speers, he responded by denigrating Omar's comportment and refusing to acknowledge his childhood status, instead opting to call him a man. "Whoever has sympathy for a young sniveling, whining, crying Omar is misplaced sympathy because this is not a man who deserves any sympathy" (*ibid*). Moreover, he directed his sympathy towards three other civilians, two of which keep their 'child' status. "I use all my sympathy for Chris Speer's widow and her two children. I have none left for Omar Khadr" (*ibid*).

The MAM category obfuscates innocence by imbuing male bodies with predictive potential; MAMs are "at-risk" of becoming violent. Children, in particular, are often measured in terms of potential. In the case of Omar Khadr, his identity as an allegedly charismatic and unrepentant murderer is rooted in his allegedly abnormal and frustrated childhood development. One Canadian foreign service official present during the filmed interrogation, described Omar as "abused or betrayed by everybody who had been in authority above him — his father, the Americans, the people in the cages or the cells with him. He was screwed up" (*ibid*).Children are pictured as physiologically and morally incomplete, and possess the ability to do great harm if socialized incorrectly (Park 2014, 49). For instance, in the *Small-Unit Leaders' Guide to Counterinsurgency*, David Kilcullen advises soldiers to "keep children at arm's length" because "children are sharp-eyed, lacking empathy, and willing to commit atrocities their elders would shrink from" (Kilcullen 2006, 121). Kilcullen writes that although soldiers may be homesick and missing their own children, they cannot treat children in insurgencies in the same way that children 'back home' are treated. As products of war, their childhoods are framed as instruments of the insurgency.

Risky Bodies and the Potential For Violence
Importantly, the Military-Aged Male category is not interchangeable with the 'combatant' category, meaning that MAMs are institutionally important precisely because they identify boys and men as more likely to be involved in political violence. The very act of identifying Military-Age Males as a category within the context of a conflict situation indicates that policy actors measured civilian boys and men in terms of their potential for guilt.

> This does not mean...that every man in the tribal zones is a terrorist...the permission to carry out signature strikes is not a carte blanche to declare war on the tens of thousand of armed males in Pakistan or Yemen's tribal zones where owning a gun is a sign of manhood...a potential target has to be engaged in suspicious activity...that makes him stand out enough to be selected by the CIA to be killed in a signature strike (Glyn Williams 2013)

Rather, the term is better thought of as a category that helps make sense of the security theater. Moreover, and contrary to the statement above, one participant stated that being a man and possessing a gun informed a scenario where he 'pulled the trigger' on a drone strike (Kris, interview with author, January 2017). As I have and will continue to demonstrate, the MAM designation influenced the decision to conduct a drone strike or a counterinsurgency operation in a way that being a woman did not. The presence of boys and men in a space changed the calculation made to ensure that attacks were 'proportional.' Even when boys and men were not targeted for death, they faced differentiated treatment that severely impacted their health and mobility (as will be discussed in-depth in chapter 4.) The MAM

category is a highlighted risk factor that enables conditions for monitoring and profiling precisely because men are framed as more likely to enact violence. So while omitting Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count is not a "carte blanche" on targeting male civilians, the category does place them at greater risk for violence and monitoring.

The U.S Army, for example, now has biometric data on over 800,000 Afghans. The Economist reports that in areas of high violence, all "fighting-age males" are subjected to iris and fingerprint scans, which then give U.S soldiers a quantified assessment of the person's risk profile. "This means that sometimes patrols will "call all men from a village out of their homes and line them up by a mosque to be logged. At other times buses are stopped arbitrarily and all the men are taken off and scanned" (The Economist 2012). This process was further explained by Jon Boone who witnessed and documented this process for The Guardian. After an Afghan man who was a goat herder was taken aside by U.S soldiers, the device that scanned his iris and fingertip "gave the operators a steadily rising percentage chance that the goat herder was on an electronic 'watch list' of suspects. Although the device never reached 100%, the risk was great enough for the man to be taken to the nearest US outpost for interrogation" (Boone 2010). So while U.S soldiers could not, obviously, point a gun at a Military-Aged Male without justification (and the justifications will be examined), the category enabled population control along gendered lines. In other cases, this demographic category justified the exclusion of Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count. MAMs, therefore, were civilians until they became not-civilians.

Ironically, when Michael Walzer, a prominent Just War theoretician and a scholar featured in *The Manual,* condemned terrorism, he did so because it targeted civilians for who they were and not for what they had done. Though Walzer believes that public officials and soldiers are fair targets for terrorists, civilians are not. Officials choose to enter public life, whereas civilians cannot choose their national or ethnic identity (Walzer 2007, 203). And while *The Manual* is often problematic, the document at least emerged from a social context that recognized the often disastrous ways the United States wages its wars. As a doctrine, however, *The Manual* remains silent on the gendered differences experienced by civilians during wartime. The continued existence of the Military-Aged Male category indicates that a liberal democracy is directing military practice at boys and men for who they are, and not for what they have done. Male bodies become a shorthand for violence even when violence is not committed. Or, in the words of Walzer, "ordinary citizens are killed and no defense is offered in terms of their individual activity" (*ibid*).

iv. At the Center is Gender
Definitions have legal consequences. The CIA, at least, believed that strategic framing and language were important and had the ability to influence outcomes. In order to prevent a backlash, the CIA deliberately strategized to shape public and congressional opinion on the use of torture. In an email to a colleague, the deputy director of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center illustrated the importance of a well-crafted PR message by arguing that "we either get out and sell, or we get hammered, which has implications beyond the media. [C]ongress reads it, cuts our authorities, messes up our budget…we either put out our story or we get eaten. [T]here is no middle ground" (Senate Select Committee On Intelligence 2014, 12). U.S foreign policy actors, therefore, were well aware that language enabled the success of policy goals.

While the connection between discourse and policy outcomes is often challenging to illustrate, the following case is an insightful example of how discourse creates the condition for legitimate military action. In this case, legitimate military action centers on whether or not the dead bodies on the ground are coded as children or male. Who counts as a legitimate target? The tensions between child victim and, to borrow language from the Omar Khadr trial, "remorseless, radical jihadist" remain, even among military personnel.

On February 21, 2010, a US drone strike launched in Uruzgan, Afghanistan killed between 15 and 23 civilians. As a result of the surrounding controversy, a (heavily redacted) report was launched in which a number of military personnel in the drone program could not seem to agree on the definition of childhood or adolescence—despite the fact adolescence is not a category in either U.S or International law. However, perceptions on age and the distinction between 'child' and 'adolescent' impacted the Predator's crew decision to launch a missile strike. In the report, an adolescent is described as a person between the ages of nine to fourteen or seven to thirteen, depending on the operative being interview. In an interview with the lone survivor of the attack, a U.S major asks her twice whether "children under ten" were present. When the Major was later asked whether an adolescent is different than a child, she responded, "I think it varies from Screener to Screener. One Screener may be more comfortable with calling out adolescents. It's very difficult to tell. I personally believe an adolescent is a child, an adolescent being a non-hostile person" (Allinson 2015, 122).

However, when the primary Screener was asked the same question, he said that adolescents were 7-13 years old and "in a war situation they're considered dangerous" (*ibid*). When the Screeners first identified potential children on the ground, the Predator Pilot responded by stating, "[a]t least one child…Really? Assisting the MAM (military-aged male), uh, that means he's guilty" (*ibid*). Amongst military personnel then, 'childhood' became a contested identity that interacted awkwardly with the Military-Aged Male category. And despite the long intellectual history that has tried to position children within a moral/political framework of innocence, childhood remains a fragile social construction, evident especially during times of violent conflict. In the case of the drone strike on civilians in Uruzgan, the decision to launch a drone rested on a definition.

The bureaucratic labor that connects the categories of civilian and combatant with nation-building is and has always been a highly gendered process. As a legal principle, civilian immunity is not applied differently based on gender and age. In practice, however, these identity markers are legally influential across different transnational conflicts. The former head of the International Law Division of the Israeli military once noted that, though international law did not explain what factors to use in military calculations, he still asked questions like:

> Should a man of combatant age be counted as a civilian? If so, does he count for more or for less? How do you count women in relation to men? How do you count the death of children? Does one dead child equal one dead grownup, or does he equal five grownups? As a lawyer I need numbers to work with. I need thresholds in order to instruct the soldiers (Weizman 2011, 13).

As noted earlier, Civilian Immunity does not protect civilians absolutely. Rather, they cannot be intentionally targeted, nor can their deaths be disproportionately high in comparison to military gains, as outlined in the Proportionality Principle. As scholars like Carol Cohn have noted, defense practitioners have long employed a style of thinking that is often associated with mathematics or statistics (Cohn 1987). Any discussion about proportionality will be mathematical, since proportions refer to ratios. Mathematical reasoning is thereby inscribed by law. Moreover, the Proportionality Principle becomes a way of managing risk and functions as a "category of [insurance] technology" (Bell and Evans 2010, 380) since military practitioners routinely anticipate collateral damage as a form of due diligence. As illustrated by the lawyer's statement above, this risk is spread across the entire population, where every civilian is assigned a 'number' based on gender and/or age. Risk and population management will be visited again in chapter 4, but for now it is important to recognize that the War on Terror (though this term was abandoned by the Obama Administration) was not a period where foreign policy officials abdicated methods of prediction or control when confronted by, what the Bush Administration described and then the Obama Administration explicitly refused to call, "senseless, random acts of terror" (Colucci 2012, 479). As will be documented in chapter 5, transnational insurgency inspired greater investment in technologies that promised more prediction and greater visual fidelity.

Vulnerable Men
In her research on the Bosnian conflict, Charli Carpenter found that ideas about vulnerability impacted how humanitarian operations were conducted. When asked, an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) official explained that women were considered extra-vulnerable because of "physical reasons and these kinds of factors" (Carpenter 2005, 308). Carpenter, correctly, identifies the discrepancy between theory and practice as a problem that can undermine efforts to protect all civilians. In her interviews with representatives from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Carpenter, asking whether adult men could be considered vulnerable, was told that:

> [I]t's really not in the general definition of being vulnerable, when you're a healthy, strong 20-year old male. Commonly when you speak of vulnerability you have the image of women, children, and the elderly. The idea of a 20-year-old man who can't defend himself [laughter] he can just run away and join the army or joint the rebel force" (*ibid*).

The OCHA representative alleges that men can find protection within organizations that propagate political violence and that the solution to ending male precarity is coded in their potential for violence. Men can join militant groups, can be violent. Their alleged capacity for self-protection, their ability to transcend vulnerability due to their masculinity, exists precisely because they have the ability to join politically violent movements. Here, male protection is guaranteed, rather than subverted, by the presence of organized bodies of violence. These very organizations, however, are positioned as threatening for children and women. For men, the solution to ending violence is by becoming violent.

While the immunity principle does not discriminate based on gender, UN and military officials are not quite so gender-blind. Eyal Weizman tries to explain this accounting by arguing that counting life is

connected to a rubric that measures "the public legitimacy of an act of violence" (Weizman 2011,13). Like Carpenter, Weizman is undoubtedly correct in noting that public outrage is applied asymmetrically depending on the civilian's gender and age. However, though these authors provide insight on how questions of legitimacy and norms influence transnational efforts at protecting civilians, they do not interrogate how these ideas have gained such prominence. Strategic framing is only successful if the ideas used by policy elites are found to be persuasive, after all. But why are these ideas persuasive in the first place? To answer this question, we return again to ideas about civilizational progress and early historical attempts at constructing categorical differences between combatants and civilians. 1949

These ideas stretch back to Hugo Grotius, who was foundational in providing the theoretical justifications for what is now known as the Principle of Distinction in international law, codified in the 1949 IV Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Grotius argued that nation-building was a task left for men as women could not "devise wars…the difference in sex that authority is not held in common but the husband is the head of the wife…[t]he woman under the eye of the man and under his guardianship" (Kinsella 2006, 171). Consequently, women did not possess sufficient authority to wage war because they were under the guardianship of their husbands.

In Grotius' writings too, however, we find hints at what separates children from women. Grotius compares women and children with the absence of reason, authority, and the inability to combine these two traits into leadership. However, while (male) children may develop and lose these disadvantages through education and maturity, women remain permanently deficient due to their feminine nature. Through Grotius we see that early western thought measured male children in terms of political potential; boys possessed a level of intellectual capacity that women and girls could not attain.

> Therefore, while children might ever seem the more 'natural' innocents, in fact it is women who are made innocent as if by nature…What we find in these passages…is that in order to enable and stabilize the otherwise indeterminate distinctions between those who may and may not be killed, Grotius turns, in the end, to discourses of gender…Discourses of gender establish sex as an ontological basis for distinguishing between the two while, simultaneously, affirming a social and political order within which this understanding of sex is given meaning (Kinsella 2004, 3).

These distinctions operate today, and Kinsella points to international outrage directed towards the American bombing of an Afghan wedding party and how discourses on gender were central in identifying the attack as illegitimate. The wedding party was identified as a civilian assembly because women and children were present, and American military actions were deemed illegitimate due to the targeting of these bodies (*ibid*, 4) despite the presence of adult men.

Why are some bodies classified as 'civilian' and other bodies classified as 'combatants?' Gender, seemingly, has always been integral to understanding war and, specifically, to how bureaucracies implement military procedures. While, importantly, the MAM category includes minors, there is no reference to boyhood or even civilian status within this term. Members of the intelligence and defense communities remain confused on the topic of male children. In some instances, the presence of children, whether boys or girls, was strategically useful and their deaths were translated as

civilizational decay. In other instances, drone crews, PR persons, and troops debated whether their presence was automatically shorthand for guilt, and whether their alleged participation should be viewed in the same lens as the participation of men. Adult men, of course, are often omitted entirely from journalistic accounts that focus on civilian casualties.

The Military-Aged Male category does not only obfuscate and veil childhood and civilian status, but is also a category that connects masculinity and male development—coming of age— with military involvement. Male development and involvement in the nation-building process becomes tied to the draft, even when boys and men are not drafted.

v. Conclusion
The Military-Age Male category demonstrates the power of technocratic knowledge to shape policy outcomes. The MAM category, however, should not be taken as self-evident or an objective characterization of the world. Rather, the Military-Age Male is a category influenced by historical ideas that link men, and even male children, with political violence.

In this chapter, I have sought to answer the following question: If civilian targeting is used to strategically bolster the legitimacy of interventionist policies, and if civilian deaths are particularly distressed and more likely to cultivate global outrage, then why and how has the United States omitted some children and most men (as most men are civilians) from the collateral damage count? The empirical data in this chapter illustrates that legal norms are demonstrably influential in U.S foreign policy. The erosion of civilian immunity, therefore, is mediated by bureaucratic institutions and the production of technical knowledge. The answer to this puzzle is not that foreign policy actors will say one thing and do another. The more interesting question is how this discrepancy is characterized as rational by foreign policy actors. Instead of ignoring legal institutions, foreign policy actors argue through them to justify policy change.

The idea that civilians and combatants occupy distinct categories has been associated with civilization progress and the liberal democratic tradition of warfare. Narratives that link civilian protection with civilizational progress extend to wars fought under both the Bush and Obama Administrations. *The U.S Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* states that the goal of U.S Forces should be to secure civilians. Specifically, while lead architects of contemporary counterinsurgency doctrine mention civilians generally, they specifically mentioned children as a way to denigrate the Taliban and Al-Qaeda's behavior during wartime. The Taliban's recruitment of children was seen as a sign of unrestricted warfare which de-legitimized non-state violent actors. Inversely, the United States was positioned as an actor that was deeply concerned with civilian protection, which created ethical constraints in its ability to wage war.

U.S commitment to legality is partly maintained by the mainstreaming of risk-rhetoric, where male bodies are measured in terms of their potential for violence. The MAM category destabilized male civilian status by imbuing male bodies with predictive potential; Military-Age Males are 'at-risk' of becoming violent. The MAM category was successfully institutionalized due to the cultural

characterizations of the demographic that was being described. These characterizations were "normative and evaluative, portraying groups in positive or negative terms though symbolic language, metaphors, and stories" (Ingram and Schneider 1993, 334). Children, in particular, were often measured in terms of potential, pictured as physiologically and morally incomplete and possessing the ability to do great harm if socialized incorrectly (Park 2014). Moreover, international legal codes like the Proportionality Principle demand that military forces anticipate civilian death, meaning that predicting, measuring, and determining risk is a requirement of international law. Instead of acting as a safeguard, legal conventions can enable harm by demanding that military practitioners assign probabilities to population groups.

In this chapter, I have illustrated that the Military-Age Male category is a mode of thought, legitimized through strategic framing, influenced by a history of intellectual labor, and institutionalized through bureaucratic procedure. In the next two chapters, I illustrate how this category works to direct military practice in ways that place civilian boys and men at great risk of bodily harm. I dissect how gendered population management and technologies of surveillance legitimized the U.S foreign policy decision to omit boys and men from the collateral damage count.

Chapter 4
Risk-Management and Humanitarian War

i. Introduction

Afghanistan and Iraq are no strangers to military intervention or insurgency. Starting from 1979, Afghanistan has been host to four separate insurgencies (Jones 2008 , 26). The 1920 Iraqi Revolt was in protest to British occupation; Britain had 'acquired' Iraq as part of the post-War carving of Middle Eastern countries and decline of the Ottoman Empire (Beckett 2005, 14; Pruszewicz 2014). Yet U.S military studies have been hostile to treating counterinsurgency as a primary area of study. This kind of warfare is instead described with terms—like 'irregular' or 'unconventional'—that highlight its status as aberrant political violence (Jones and Smith 2010, 82). Lieutenant General Sir John Kiszley from the British Army attributed this malaise to counterinsugency's "features with which the the pure warrior ethos is uneasy" (*ibid*, 83). Or, as David Kilcullen famously stated, counterinsurgency is "armed social work" (Kilcullen 2006, 33). Kiszley went on to state that counterinsurgency has been negatively associated by military establishments to unfairly constrain military operations with

> over-tight rules of engagement, negating the use of its trump card-firepower...[and]...the need to accommodate the media. Moreover, in the eyes of the warrior, counterinsurgency calls for some decidedly un-warrior like qualities, such as emotional intelligence, empathy, subtlety, sophistication, nuance, and political adroitness (Jones and Smith 2010, 82).

These descriptions have led critical scholars like Patricia Owens to note that counterinsurgencies are spaces where traits traditionally associated with femininity gain status and where "domestic work is not necessarily disavowed" (Owens 2016, 11). This 'soft approach' has been understood to mean that non-violent military solutions are required to win 'hearts and minds.' Due to its emphasis on "population-centric" warfare, where the civilian population is safeguarded from the "kinetic effects of military operations" and where "non-kinetic" means are used to bolster the legitimacy of state actors (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, I-3; Alt et al. 2009, 186), counterinsurgency is sometimes appealing for those who seek to minimize civilian casualties. Contemporary counterinsurgents have been described as "liberal warriors," embodying a "militarized masculinity that...[have]... the fighting ability of a combat soldier, the high(er) technological weaponry of the Gulf War, and the diplomacy and 'soft power' capabilities of the peacekeeper" (Welland 2014, 291). Because of its focus on 'winning hearts and minds,' counterinsurgency is often branded as a kinder, gentler type of warfare (Cohen and Danziger 2010). Yet the focus on 'winning hearts and minds' can sometimes conceal that COIN's combined military-civilian effort is designed to target insurgent combatants. Or, as Judge Advocate wrote in *The Army Lawyer:* "Make no mistake—counterinsurgency is war" (Bagwell 2008,7).

As discussed in the previous chapter, both the Bush and Obama Administrations positioned civilian protection during wartime as central to U.S identity. Similarly, military planners argued that the 'turn' to counterinsurgency was necessary in order to lower the civilian death toll that characterized the first three years of the Iraq War. Military officials attributed the high civilian death toll to U.S soldiers who were unable to distinguish between civilians and combatants (*ibid*). Early Rules of Engagement (ROE) instructed U.S and coalition forces to target adversaries based on their "status" as part of a recognized

armed force. Combatants were initially conceived as those who self-identified, either through the visual cue of a uniform or by verbal declaration. Yet insurgents purposefully do not self-identity, either visually or verbally. The consequence was, especially in the earlier years of the Iraq War, that Military-Age Males became a new visual vocabulary for soldiers at all levels of command. Though several journalists and officials have been quick to note that the Military-Age Male category is not interchangeable with the 'combatant' category, there is some evidence—because those involved were eventually called into a military hearing and required to testify—that at least one platoon was instructed to "kill all military-age males that were not actively surrendering" (von Zielbauer 2006). Additionally, and as will be further explored, in operations where U.S forces 'drained the swamp,' Military-Age Males were arbitrarily detained and refused exit from areas under fire from counterinsurgents.

The turn to counterinsurgency, and its attempt to curtail civilian death, did not eliminate the Military-Age Male category. Rather, counterinsurgents used the Military-Age Male category to understand who counted as 'risky' in a guerrilla war where "the insurgency force, the civilian population, and the terrain are virtually inseparable factors" (U.S Marine Corps 2006, 3). Military-Age Males were placed under increased surveillance, as were their relationships with women, children, and geography. Home life became a target of economic and social reform—"money is ammunition," as David Petraeus famously said (Kaleve 2007, 6). Civilian protection became a variable in winning the war, their deaths a risk factor that would subvert long-term strategy. Counterinsurgency, in particular, used liberal norms to inform security practice. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were accompanied by substantial economic and social programming designed to strengthen human security. Yet subjecting human security into a military calculation introduced a number of serious problems. Liberal norms do not protect civilians absolutely, after all. International law does not specify how states should pursue civilian protection, nor mandate that civilian protection should be maintained by development schemes. The decision to pursue civilian protection through a combination of military practice and liberal development indicated that a link existed between discourse and policy, where talk about liberal intervention set the stage for liberal warmaking. In practice, this meant that, by 2016, Congress had appropriated almost eight hundred billion dollars for military operations in Afghanistan alone, of which a hundred and thirteen billion had gone to reconstruction (Aikins 2016).

This chapter notes that when liberal democracies wage war, their security practices correspond with the character set by the international liberal order. As Lene Hansen notes, "foreign policy discourse creates a stable link between representations of identity and the proposed policy" (Hansen 2006, 16). As this chapter explains, the turn towards counterinsurgency was motivated by a desire to 'win over' the population from insurgent groups. However, policies are not simply *thought,* but executed with technologies designed to support state power. The 'turn' to counterinsurgency was pushed by soldier-scholars who spread pedagogical tracts and field manuals in order to teach strategy to counterinsurgents. The use of biometric checkpoints on Military-Age Males, for instance, was an ISR technology that functioned as a modern incarnation of a tactic known as 'draining the swamp,' which was borrowed from the colonial period in order to separate insurgents form their civilian base. These technologies were not selected or developed at random, but functioned as 'humanitarian technologies' that regulated civilian space.

Chapter 4 positions the U.S decision to move towards counterinsurgency in a history of colonial counterinsurgency practice. Counterinsurgency, prompted after an initial period of conventional war in Afghanistan and Iraq that proved disastrous, was motivated by a 'population-centric' approach to warfare, which synthesized military action with economic and social development. The paradoxical turn towards humanitarian war saw an explosion of data collection and anthropological knowledge used to decrease the risk that populations would side with insurgent groups and incentivize local populations to cooperate with U.S and coalition forces.

While I situate U.S counterinsurgency practices within a history of colonial policing, I also note that modern counterinsurgency is distinguished from its predecessor in notable ways. This chapter highlights how liberal subjecthood expanded to include civilian groups, who were described as rational, self-interested, and subjects in search of Hobbesian security—with women and (some) children explicitly marked for protection by foreign policy practices. Crucially, by citing the human security of 'women and children' as worthy of protection, home life and domestic relationships became sites for military intervention. As feminist geographers have noted, counterinsurgency, by intervening in daily domestic life, tries to "secure the intimate" (Belcher 2017, 96).

Gender, first used to bolster the intervention's legitimacy and thereby create a stable link between policy and discourse, was used again to orient counterinsurgency practice. The 'population-centric' approach that characterized counterinsurgency meant that local populations were treated as rational economic subjects who would side with U.S intervention if offered adequate culturally-sensitive incentives. The population became a site for data mining, where social scientific facts about the population were understood "less as sociological constructs than as instruments for coercion," (Belcher 2017, 96). Physical space was transformed in order to monitor and contain Military-Age Males from engaging in violence and, in conjunction with viewing populations as a group that harbored 'raw data,' policymakers developed ISR technologies that could monitor civilian relationships. Said otherwise, social, economic, and political life—the human terrain—was reorganized in order to pre-empt violence. The Military-Age Male category became central to the way risk was assessed in the human terrain and how 'non-kinetic' means were used to reduce risk in the civilian population.

ii. What War are We Fighting?
Between 2001 to 2007, the Bush Administration could not agree on what kind of war was being fought in Iraq. Before 2007, the Bush Administration repeatedly denied that they were engaged in guerrilla warfare or fighting insurgents. Yet as early as 2003, General John Abizaid, Commander of Central Command, stated that Iraq was a "classical guerrilla-type campaign" (Knowlton and International Herald Tribune 2003). Only two weeks later, Donald Rumsfeld claimed that he wouldn't use the term "'guerrilla war'…because there isn't one." Rather, adversaries in Iraq were "five different things: looters, criminals, remnants of the Ba'athist regime, foreign terrorists, and those influenced by Iran" (Dale 2009, 56). At a November 2005 Press Conference, Peter Pace, the Chairman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, "I have to use the word 'insurgent' because I can't think of a better word right now," only to have Donald Rumsfeld interject by arguing that the adversaries were "enemies of the legitimate Iraqi government" and that using the word insurgent "gives them greater legitimacy than they seem to merit," (*ibid*). Lieutenant General David w. Barno, who commanded over 20 000 troops in Afghanistan

from 2003 to 2005, wrote that unit commanders were prohibited from using the word 'counterinsurgency,' and were instead instructed to use the term 'counter-terrorism' to describe their operations **(**Barno 2007, 34).

Despite the administration's reluctance to use the term 'insurgency,' The U.S Marine Corps published the *Small-Unit Leaders' Guide to Counterinsurgency* (SULGC) in 2006. During an interview with *Stars and Stripes* in the same year*,* Colonel Chris Short, commandant of the COIN Academy in Iraq spoke openly about counterinsurgency: "In counterinsurgency, the number one thing is to take care of the population" (Branch 2010, 16). However, while a number of operations within Iraq and Afghanistan may have looked like COIN, the doctrine was not institutionalized until 2007 with the publication of what is frequently called "The Petraeus Doctrine" and then the Bush Administration's *New Way Forward.*

This confusion extends to the academic literature. The Rand Corporation, for example, has a report called "Counterinsurgency in Iraq from 2003-2006" (Pirnie and O'Connnell 2008). Scholars like Colleen Bell and Brad Evans correctly identify that Barack Obama was highly critical of the Bush Administration's approach to the 'War on Terror' during his presidential bid —eventually dropping the 'War on Terror' label from his administration—but they incorrectly identify Obama's strategy as a shift from fighting terrorism to fighting insurgency, a strategy that the authors, ironically, describe as a "new way forward" (Bell and Evans 2010, 373).

The 'turn' to defining the conflict in Iraq as an insurgency had serious, practical effects on how the War on Terror was fought. Constructivist scholars have, at length, explained that security threats are not objectively determined and require human interpretation. During the Cold War, security meant protecting state integrity. The post-Cold War period introduced a more expansive range of security practices that centered on 'human security.' Rather than emerging from a "quasi-objective international power," threats require interpretation by actors in a social setting (Risse-Kappen 1996, 84). These threats reveal how political actors rationalize and interpret global politics (Bell and Evans 2010). The shift to the *New Way Forward* and, later under the Obama Administration's, to "civilian power," highlights that U.S policy officials reinterpreted security expansively to include threats to daily life. Because 'securing' is an action, the redefinition of security informed the range of suitable actions that policymakers undertook. Under the Bush and Obama Administrations, security bureaucrats used liberal norms to inform their policy preferences which, in turn, informed what methods and technologies were deemed appropriate to solve security problems (Kowert and Legro 1996, 370). As I will illustrate in this chapter, counterinsurgency emerged from the "paradoxical turn in colonial warfare" that targeted "a population in need of 'humane treatment,'" but which was still highly coercive and violent (Meiches 2015, 483).

Counterinsurgency's emphasis on 'securing the population' meant that social and political spaces were reorganized to suit military needs. The erosion between combatant and civilian categories was matched by an erosion between public and private spheres. Under U.S counterinsurgency practice, the home became a site of intervention, a geographic locale mined for 'cultural knowledge' and then physically re-organized (though the insertion of biometric checkpoints, the rebuilding of villages, for example) to ensure the success of counterinsurgent efforts. Leila Khalili describes this process as "co-opting

everyday spaces into landscapes of war" (Khalili 2011, quoted in Belcher 2017, 96), where "culture, kinship, and 'home' are taken less as sociological constructs than as instruments for coercion" (Belcher 2017, 96).

While there are differences between the Obama and Bush Administrations, notably on topics like multilateral versus unilateral action, the Obama Administration's counterinsurgency strategy relies heavily on lessons learned from the Bush Administration and the "population-centric" approach that was formally institutionalized during Bush's second term. Admittedly, these nuances are difficult to track due to a number of misleading comments that emerged from the Pentagon and White House during the early phases of the U.S occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, before former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld could admit, in November 2006, that "the problem is not a military problem…it's a political governance problem," (Kaleve 2007, 9) he was stating that "we don't do body counts on other people" in November 2003 (Branch 2010, 16). And Lt. Col. Jim Cassella, a spokesperson for the Pentagon stated that while "we never target civilians," there was "no reason to try to count such unintended deaths" (Lauterback 2007, 429).

Famously, of course, these denials could no longer be maintained. The Congressional Research Service's report on Operation Iraqi Freedom identifies Tal Afar, the city located in the Iraqi Ninewah province, as a standout case that influenced a shift to more comprehensive COIN practices. The 3rd Armored Cavalry, led by Colonel H.R McMaster (the Trump Administration's National Security Advisor at the time of writing) who was the author of a "well-known account of Vietnam decision-making…readily [drew] key lessons from that earlier complex engagement" (Dale 2009, 61). McMaster later described the mission in terms of population security and stated that "the whole purpose of these operations...[was]... to secure the population so that we can lift the enemy's campaign of intimidation and coercion over the population and allow economic and political development to proceed here and to return to normal life" (*ibid*)**.** McMaster described his approach as "clear and hold," a phrase lifted from the counterinsurgency approach in Vietnam from General Chreighton Abrams, after Vietnam had suffered under years of General William Westermoreland's 'search and destroy' strategy (*ibid*, 62). Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice reiterated this approach in 2005, stating that "[o]ur political-military strategy has to be clear, hold, and build: to clear areas from insurgent control, to hold them securely, and to build durable, national Iraqi institutions" (*ibid*) The congressional statements and policy papers that emerged from the failures of Operation Iraqi Freedom illustrated how counterinsurgency was made through "the routinized practices of bureaucracies" (Aradau and Van Munster 2007, 90), where professionals competed to define the character of the conflict and how to best respond to situations that were deemed threatening.

The comparison to the Vietnam War as an aspirational standard is both paradoxical and fitting. While the *Small Wars Field Manual* (used in Vietnam) states that "tolerance, sympathy, and kindness should be the keynote of our relationship with the mass of the population" (Marine Corps 1940, 32), this statement squares oddly with John Nagl's description of U.S military efforts in Vietnam as being plagued by "an organizational culture that accepted military victory through annihilation as the only way to win a war" (Nagl 2002, 130). Writing in the *Small Wars Journal,* Matthew Swearingen was blunter, associating the quests for 'hearts and minds' with using "a kinder, gentler machine gun hand"

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(Swearingen 2015). Though U.S military forces sought to reduce civilian casualties and win the support of the civilian population, and, in some ways succeeded in the goal of reducing civilian casualties, they necessarily targeted the population to 'root out' insurgents. Daniel Branch, for example, argues that British Counterinsurgency in Malay and Kenya resulted in land reform, interning the population, and selectively servicing emergency aid to communities based on their level of cooperation. These practices were not "less punitive" than traditional methods of war (Branch 2010, 17). Similar problems occurred during the 1991 Gulf War, where a commitment to limiting civilian casualties was followed by economic sanctions that caused substantial distress to the civilian population "and brought about the near collapse of Iraq's infrastructure" (Gordon 2012).

Perhaps the Bush Administration truly was confused about the conditions in Iraq or Afghanistan, or maybe they were reluctant to legitimize their opponents by calling them 'insurgents,' thereby undermining a discourse that positioned the U.S as morally superior. Regardless, trying to distinguish counter-terrorism from counterinsurgency efforts in the years prior to 2007 remains challenging. Scholars should nevertheless resist conceptualizing military strategy pre-2007 as one where soldiers exclusively 'fought terrorists.' Rather, U.S operations in Iraq prior to 2007 contained elements of COIN. These conceptual challenges are compounded by comparisons to Vietnam and British colonial practices, cited multiple times in COIN documents like *The U.S Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Manual*, the *Joint Publication 3-24*, and the *SULGC*, and which seemingly contradict U.S foreign policy commitments to civilian immunity and, at first glance, liberal democratic norms.

Counterinsurgency emerged as a solution to what initially appeared to be a paradox; it is a type of warfare that allows liberal democracies to both pursue their military goals and comply with their normative commitments to international law . The 'turn' to counterinsurgency has been described by its advocates as a hybrid between liberal-style development and military practice designed to "enable culturally astute decision making" (Zehfus 2012, 177). Or, as ISAF General McChrystal stated, increased civilian protection was a "cultural shift within our forces" (HQ ISAF 2009). In place of conventional 'kinetic' military tactics, counterinsurgency subjected the population to an ethos familiar to those with even a cursory knowledge of behavioral economics. Local populations were treated as rational economic subjects confronted with culturally-sensitive social incentives in hopes that their behavior would shift to reflect U.S military needs. Gender figured as a prominent code in these tactics, as a category that was used to understand how these societies should be destroyed and then rebuilt. Counterinsurgency, therefore, was explicitly committed to social re-organization. To understand the paradox between humanitarian protection and 'kinetic' military force, the next sections address how international law created an opening for state militaries to both protect and endanger civilians. Importantly, civilian protection became part of a utilitarian calculation that is common to international conflict.

Counterinsurgency and Household Management
Documents released by the Marine Corps and the Joint Chiefs of Staff emphasize that COIN is a "comprehensive civilian and military effort" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, ix), and the *SULGC* argues that military forces are meant to play a "supporting role," though they may be the most visible aspect of COIN (Marine Corps 2006, 2). The Bush Administration's *New Way Forward* emphasized that

counterinsurgency was a set of practices that centered the population, but the synthesis between military security and development did not reduce military presence. Instead, COIN emphasized that Iraq's security, political, and economic progress were interlinked and "mutually reinforcing and should therefore be implemented simultaneously" (Dale 2009, 65). Both the Bush and Obama Administrations saw liberal economic development as crucial to peace in the Middle East. Simon Dalby notes, for example, that both the 2002 and 2006 *National Security Strategy for the United States* highlight that Iraq, Iran, and North Korea—the 'Axis of Evil'—were not sufficiently integrated into global markets, a condition that threatened global stability (Dalby 2007, 589). The State Department under the Obama Administration believed similarly, though officials abandoned the dramatic language that characterized the Bush Administration. The State Department was responsible for "elevating economic diplomacy as an essential strand of our foreign policy," which meant appointing a Chief Economist who would monitor the geo-economic landscape and "identify issues at the intersection of economics, security, and politics"(Department of State and USAID 2010, vii).

Implemented initially in Iraq, these ideas were then transferred to Afghanistan. Security became the prerequisite for instituting political and economic reform. The White House position was that "while political progress and economic gains and security are all intertwined, political and economic progress are unlikely absent a basic level of security" (Dale 2009, 65). This meant that, though social and economic security were deemed important, the traditional idea of security as enabled by military strength remained crucial to U.S strategy. Additionally, and as will be discussed again, expanding the definition of 'security' to include economic and political threats enabled greater opportunity for military intervention in domestic life. Consequently, the turn to development and reconstruction did not come at the expense of a military presence. U.S counterinsurgency, similar to its colonial origins, sought to manage the population through a combination of surveillance technologies, economic incentives, and restructuring of the urban environment. The *New Way Forward,* while including a substantial civilian component in the form of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), was also accompanied by a 'surge' of an additional 168,000 troops.

In practice, 'clear, hold, and build'—a COIN cornerstone advocated by McMaster and the Bush Administration—was a practice that re-organized home life by physically altering village architecture and the way locals interacted with their homes. For example, and under the watch of Lieutenant Colonel David Flynn, Taroke Kalacha became another village that was destroyed ('cleared') through the flattening of homes, compounds, and farm plots. Theses villages were destroyed in order to prevent insurgents from seeking sanctuary and cover in civilian houses. The counterinsurgents were then ordered to 'hold' the village, in order to prevent insurgents from returning. The third part of the formula, to 'build,' was part of a hearts and minds approach that Oliver Belcher describes as being both symbolic and strategic for Flynn, who wanted to reaffirm U.S identity by sending "a message to returning villagers that motivations of the U.S military were very different than the scorched earth tactics used by the Soviets" (Belcher 2017, 94).

The case of Taroke Kalacha became emblematic due to the problems that came with securing civilian life while still pursuing military goals. While U.S and coalition protection of civilian life has, as investigated by Airwars, routinely exceeded that of its Russian counterparts **(**Airwars 2017**),** rebuilding Taroke Kalacha came with problems that some observers have attributed to the unique ways liberal

democracies govern foreign populations. In practice, 'non-kinetic' military power translated to modifying "life processes, environments, social reproduction, and bodily security" (Belcher 2017, 95). Taroke Kalacha, as rebuilt by U.S forces, became a place where architectural planning was designed around the need to identify insurgents who returned to the village after the 'clear and hold' phase. As a result, the population's living conditions were re-adjusted to ensure that military goals were maintained even in the absence of U.S troop presence. Village buildings were rebuilt to contain "surveillance 'sight lines' for military and police patrols in the village and countryside" (*ibid*). Rebuilding the qalat (citadel or compound) became a contentious process when the outer wall, designed as an outdoor space where women could venture while still maintaining gender segregation, was eventually abandoned because parties could not agree on the wall's height. This meant that women were more likely to stay indoors. Because the houses had been rebuilt in a 'western' style with roofs made of a metal, women became confined to homes "that were practically ovens" during the summer (*ibid*, 103). The intersection between development and military action has been called the 'security-development nexus' or 'humanitarian war' by IR scholars (Duffield 2010; Walter 2016). What these policies highlight, as in the case of Taroke Kalacha, was that nation-building relied on a strong military presence that sometimes undermined civilian well-being.

The Bush Administration's military strategy eventually embraced the security-development nexus, a move that was not abandoned when Barack Obama became president. Documents published during the Obama Administration (like the *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (QDDR) and the *Counterinsurgency JP 3-24* manual) cite "human security" as a central component to counterinsurgency strategy and as of 2010, more than 2000 civilian personnel were deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq (Department of State and USAID 2010, 122), indicating that security was not the exclusive responsibility of a military bureaucratic structure. While traditional IR theorists may define security as that which is threatening to the state's integrity, statements made by U.S policy officials indicate that presidential administrations did not share the same opinion. Indeed, and as early as the 1990s, the Clinton Administration repeatedly cited 'human security' in foreign policy speeches and officials were implored to include "a new understanding of the meaning and nature of national security and of the role of individuals and nation-states" (Rothschild 1995, 55).

As other scholars have noted, the post-9/11 political atmosphere has been home to a number of security practices that fall outside traditional definitions of war (Aradau 2007, 90). Despite the military's high visibility, policy documents characterized the military role as a set of political and economic initiatives conducted in conjunction with State Department agencies like USAID and international NGOs. One counterinsurgent deployed in Afghanistan agreed with the characterization of the military as a supporting, rather than leading, actor in security delivery. They stated that while the term 'hearts and minds' was not used during their formal training "[w]e'd say it informally when we talk about the goal... A catchphrase that was tossed around was that we want to work ourselves out of a job" (Corey, interview with author, January 2017).

Because COIN is a form of warfare "that has the population as its focus of operations" (Chiefs of Staff 2009, xi) it requires a "unity of effort across the spectrum of U.S agencies"(Marine Corps 2006, 3). These practices were also instituted by the the 'civilian power' of the United States, a term that emerges from the first QDDR and which emphasizes that development is a "core pillar" in U.S foreign policy. The QDDR expanded the definition of security and what was deemed threatening by employing what was called the "civilian lens" (Department of State and USAID 2010, 1). Importantly, women and girls

were mentioned 133 times in 242 pages (Hudson and Leidl, 53), usually in relation to "protection and empowerment" and increasing their capacity to make (often political) decisions (Department of State and USAID 2010, 23). Economic threats, environmental threats, and even demographic fluctuations that led to high youth populations in the Middle East were mentioned as potential risk factors. Women's rights, however, were a solution to precarious political climates because "when women have equal rights, nations are more stable, peaceful, and secure" (*ibid*).

These categories of insecurity are in tandem with the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) 1994 definition of human security (UNDP 1994, 23). The UNDP's definition highlighted seven areas of insecurity: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, community security, and political security. Importantly, many of these sites of insecurity are solved or managed within the household, indicating that military intervention that uses human security to achieve its ends will necessarily and by design enter into home life. Sometimes these military interventions emphasized the 'development' character of counterinsurgency, as seen earlier when discussing the rebuilding of Taroke Kalacha. At other times, intervention took the form of pre-dawn House Raids in order to detain Military-Age Males thought to be insurgents. As Cecilia Bailliet remarked, "[t]he intrusion into private homes and the disruption of family life during house raids raises many concerns, as 'war amongst the people' becomes even more intimately 'war in the home' (Bailliet 2007, 174). That being said, I want to make a distinction between domestic, as opposed to international, governance. I am not making a general argument against development programs that provide for public health care or the redistribution of food. All governance requires intervention into daily life. However, unlike public policy that occurs at the domestic level, counterinsurgency is still a military endeavor that is informed by international law. The international laws of war conditioned the way counterinsurgency was practiced, meaning that civilian protection and human security were subject to traditional military decision-making that weighed civilian protection against military goals. Development schemes designed to win 'hearts and minds' became a weighted variable that U.S foreign policymakers used to adhere to the Proportionality Principle. The *international* character of counterinsurgency is a crucial factor for scholars who want to understand how counterinsurgents decided what policies were deemed appropriate. The Proportionality Principle and Civilian Immunity came home, quite literally, to Afghanistan and Iraq.

What can a gender analysis reveal about a security approach that centers its development and security practices on foreign populations? As late as 2002, scholars like Anne Sisson Runyan were asking, though rhetorically, if feminists should "seek to be 'at home' in IR…or [if they] should 'forget IR' in order to build more hospitable local/global homes for the world's inhabitants, especially those marginalized by the world's politics-as-usual" (Sisson Runyan 2002, 361)**.** This question was originally posed after September 11th 2001, and tellingly characterizes disciplinary IR as a space that marginalizes gender as an analytical framework for explaining how and why wars are fought.

I respond to Sisson Runyan's challenge (predictably) by arguing that gender is not on the margins of international relations and that by refocusing security to include threats ranging from economic well-being to women's rights, gender became central to navigating security provisions and managing the counterinsurgency terrain. I am not arguing that the reason the Bush Administration went to war with Afghanistan was to 'liberate' women. There is more than one cause for the War on the Terror. I am arguing, however, that gender made intervention justifiable and then became central to implementing a

population-centric approach to security and informing the logic of military strategy. By expanding insecurity to include threats to social and biological development, home life became a space for military intervention, since this was the space where social and biological development were sustained.

Military intervention into home life came with its own distinct challenge, however. One of the fundamental challenges in a counterinsurgency campaign is discriminating between combatants and civilians. Or, as stated by one military official: "The enemy in counterinsurgency is cloaked in the invisibility of the innocent civilians around him. He wears no uniform, he has no distinguishing characteristics, and he looks like every other civilian a soldier encounters" (Bagwell 2008, 7). Homes were not merely sites for liberal development, therefore, but spaces where combatants lived and were supported by 'women and children.' Friend and foe no longer confined to distinct sites, the Military-Age Male became a surveillance strategy to navigate residential space.

iii. International Relations Comes Home: Expanding the Liberal Project

Most counterinsurgency documents framed the civilian population as an assemblage of "enlightened" self-interested, rational individuals (Marine Corps 2006, 121). This framing appears during the Bush Administration and continues to the Obama Administration when the State Department released the QDDR. Counterinsurgents were instructed to mobilize the population and address their grievances; several COIN documents state that the ill-treatment of the population can exacerbate tensions, lend support to the insurgent 'narrative,' and lead to a loss of support from the 'locals.' The JP 3-24, published under the Obama Administration, "emphasizes that understanding grievances is key to addressing root causes of insurgency and creating durable stability" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, iii), and the SULGC, published even before *The New Way Forward* was publicly announced, contains statements like "grievances may have a number of causes, such as the lack of economic opportunity, restrictions on basic liberties, government corruption, ethic or religious tensions, or the presence of an occupying force" (Marine Corps 2006, 2). While U.S foreign policy officials condemned the Taliban extensively (see: chapter 3), these denunciations did not extend to the civilian population, who were instead framed in terms quite familiar to liberal theorists. Yet, perhaps paradoxically, discourse that framed the population as rational was matched with injunctions that counterinsurgents should be sensitive to culturally-relative norms and social morals. Well-intentioned or not, the result was that civilians who were described as 'rational' subjects in search for security had this drive attributed to caricatures about Afghan or Iraqi culture.

The Language of Intervention: How 'Women and Children' became Liberal Subjects
In order to understand how military decision-makers used gender to navigate the contemporary battlespace, we must first look at counterinsurgency's colonial roots and how 19th century political liberalism informed the character of U.S interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. A historical examination illustrates how U .S intervention on behalf of 'women and children' became viable and where contemporary counterinsurgency mimics and deviates from its colonial predecessors.

One of the more startling differences between contemporary COIN in Iraq and Afghanistan and counterinsurgency during the colonial period is that, after 9/11, liberal subjecthood was extended to select portions of Middle Eastern populations. The *Counterinsurgency JP 3-24* manual, for example, states that a precept for counterinsurgency is to "support justice and honor," but the manual extends

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justice to the population and implores counterinsurgents to "whenever possible, help the population to retain or regain their honor" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, d-1). These attitudes were replicated in the participants that I interviewed. When confronted by insurgents, the participants I interviewed—even those who supported U.S involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan—did not seek to vilify their adversaries, though they did mention that they had seen others do so.

Almost all participants confirmed the existence of demeaning terms like 'haji,' which is an Arabic word that has a positive meaning for Muslims but which was made degrading in U.S military circles. The term refers to a person who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Other dehumanizing terms, like 'crows and ravens,' referred to local women (a term that references Norse mythology). "You know, the predator is named because it's a predator that hunts down their prey. Ravens and crows in mythology have a very specific role. They're the ones who carry the souls of the dead into the afterlife" (Kris, interview with author, January 2017). Kris mentioned that the U.S military borrowed heavily from mythology to inform its military identity. The individuals who worked in signals intelligence were described as the 'Gilgamesh Pod,' for instance. While I cannot know the *intention* behind the existence of terms like 'ravens and crows,' I am still compelled to point out that this reference, whether stated ironically or otherwise, positions women in relation to their male family members, specifically as caretakers of their dead bodies. Kris grappled with this language, saying that "when you call women 'crows and ravens,' then you're taking power away from them. [You're saying that] You might give life but I'm taking it away from you" (*ibid*).

Even within my small sample of participants, there was a breadth of diversity when it came to understanding the role of race and religion in the conflict. Participant 4 stated that "a lot of time you heard the word towel-head or hajis. Yeah, every single term was dehumanizing or else they'd leave people out of the conversation altogether and use words like targets and compounds, as opposed to houses and soccer fields" (Jessie, interview with author, October 2016).While another participant asserted:

> there was nothing more crude than the term 'haji'...You'd have the occasional racist who'd throw out harsher terms and that was not in any way institutionalized or used in the presence of leadership. During training, leading up to going there, you'd hear the term Camel-jockey. That would be about as bad as it got, and that's one that leadership would frown on but not really saying anything about it (Alex, interview with author, January 2016).

These admissions were interspersed with statements made by the participants about how they recognized that they held racist baggage and that they were struggling but actively trying to unpack it (Taylor, Alex, and Jessie, interview with author, January 2016 to January 2017). Alex stated: "I related to Iraqis. I didn't view our troops as Crusaders, but I could understand their perception. I saw them as human." And Corey stated that

> "[t]here were children who would come and hang round the FOB, because they were children. They'd grab the casings from the bullets, and there was one time when my grandmother sent along student supplies for the children. There was a running joke [among my colleagues and I] that they were spying on us on behalf of their parents and that their parents were Taliban. It was a joke, but the type of joke assumed to be true. But you couldn't be mad. It was war with the five richest countries versus one of the five poorest. How dare we get angry that they're not

playing by the rules" (Corey, interview with author, January 2017).

These statements are reflexive and thoughtful. My initial reaction was to contrast participant statements with those made by counterinsurgents during the colonial period. French general Saint-Arnaud, for example, described France's scorched-earth policy in Algeria in the 1840s as follows: "We have burned everything, destroyed everything. How many women and children have died of cold and fatigue!" (Downes 2008, 20). Made by a high-ranking French general, an 'official' statement that glorifies destruction may be familiar to those who have watched Donald Trump talk about his administration's security strategy (more on this topic in the conclusion), but these deeply problematic beliefs were by no means absent during COIN in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lest we forget, those who died from drone strikes were often called 'bug splats' by drone crews, named after the computer software—called Bugsplat— used by the CIA and Department of Defense to calculate anticipated collateral damage from air strikes (Sifton 2012). Bugsplat was first used in the 2003 Iraq War, and its developers argued that the software could help reduce civilian casualties by modeling the damage specific to the bomb that was used (Schwartz 2013). Ironically, the DoD decision to achieve a more 'humane' war through using technology, a well-established U.S tradition, also gave birth to a more dehumanizing lexicon. These tensions are commonplace in counterinsurgency.

There is always a problem with trying to attribute military practice to a single ideological drive. Individuals join the military for diverse reasons. Military practice changes with command turnover (as when David Petraeus inherited ISAF command from Stanley McChrystal). Presidential administrations alternate between Republican and Democratic parties. And as illustrated in the first section of this chapter, the move to counterinsurgency was the result of bureaucratic wrangling where elites vied to define the 'security situation' in Iraq. The state, therefore, is not ideologically homogeneous, nor are the bureaucracies that are responsible for implementing its security practice. The interview process is often quite effective when asking participants to chronicle *what happened* during their time abroad, but is more challenging if the researcher is trying to determine if participant *attitudes* are representative of the structures that employed them, especially when the participant sample is small. This heterogeneity is well-illustrated by a recent poll conducted by the *Military Times*. The poll documented that one in four troop members had "seen examples of white nationalism among their fellow service members" and thirty percent of respondents stated that white nationalism was a greater threat to U.S national security than "many international hot spots" (Shane III 2017).

Though further studies are needed to determine if these findings are replicable, the poll results illustrate two important points. First, racism is prevalent within military ranks and a substantial portion of those enlisted also find its presence troubling. Second, the U.S military was ideologically diverse. I am hesitant, therefore, to make the claim that today's counterinsurgents are 'more enlightened,' as this position also erases historical figures who vigorously opposed colonization. At the very least, however, the participants I interviewed confirmed that foreign policy practice was not infallibly enlightened or free from the 'baggage' of the past. Chronology is not an indicator of progress, even if this idea appeases our prejudices about the past and present. Does this mean that contemporary counterinsurgency was indistinguishable from its colonial predecessors?

From what I document in the following section, counterinsurgency doctrine was propped on the stilts of liberal benevolence which, while rejecting the more bloodthirsty language of the 19th century, would often view the 'beneficiaries' of intervention as anthropological caricatures. So high-level counterinsurgents vied "to gain influence" with villagers, the latter who were simultaneously described as "swing voters," but also as persons who came from a "culture of violence," and who possessed "xenophobic attitudes" (Petit 2011, 28). What I would highlight is that despite these problematic practices (and there will continue to be accounts of horrifying events as this chapter progresses), the racist attitudes that inform contemporary COIN doctrine are different than their 19th century colonial roots in important ways.

The Bush Administration's focus on shared values meant that U.S counterinsurgency efforts were re-oriented to reflect universal liberal values. The 19th century colonial period invoked similar values, of course. Much like today's intellectual landscape, 19th century British colonials issued ethnographic reports that produced agreement and contradiction. As Nivi Machanda notes a common theme found among colonial-era policymakers was that Afghanistan's "faults were caused by their institutions and could be alleviated by humanitarian reforms" (Manchanda 2017, 14). Contemporary counterinsurgency deviates from this position by arguing that Muslim societies *already* and overwhelmingly share the same avowal to liberal norms as the United States. Afghanistan was an exceptional case, of course, but the problem was not Islam, as the argument went, but Al-Qaeda's perversion of Islam. This dissertation is not dedicated to exploring how human rights are practiced within different cultures. Rather, this project identifies that this rhetorical frame produced an opening for military intervention into Iraq and Afghanistan.

As Hansen notes, "[a]t the centre of political activity is the construction of a link between policy and identity that makes the two appear consistent with each other" (Hansen 2013, 25). A common retort to this assertion may be that politicians lie, that lofty rhetoric does not match intentions or actions. However, the link between policy and identity holds even when politicians engage in 'spin.' The Bush Administration lied about the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) in Iraq, yet by citing WMDs, the Administration created the grounds for the U.S invasion in Iraq. Discourse does not need to be an empirically accurate reflection of reality. What matters, in this instance, is how discourse informs the way intervention is conducted. Citing 'women and children' as vulnerable, for example, will engender a different set of security practices than those directed at removing (fictional) WMDs from Iraq. By speaking the language of human rights, U.S policymakers carved an opening for hybrid action between military and development sectors.

In contrast, while COIN documents leverage 'successful' campaigns waged by the British in Malay and Kenya, these historical campaigns did not emphasize combined military-civilian action designed to produce human security. In Malay, after an initial strategy that emphasized heavy firepower and high civilian casualties (much like the early stages of Iraq and Afghanistan), General Sir General Templer was appointed in 1952 to oversee the counterinsurgency effort. On March 25, 1952 a party that was repairing the water supply for a town called Tanjon, located approximately fifty-five miles of Kuala Lampur, was attacked. In response, Templer imposed a twenty-two hour curfew and imposed a town hall where he punished the general population to extract information. "It does not amuse me to punish

innocent people, but many of you are not innocent. You have information which you are too cowardly to give" (Nagl 2002, 89)**.** The information that he collected from the town hall led to the arrest of approximately 40 Communist supporters, after which the curfew was lifted. While these strategies did not lead to the high civilian death rates that characterized the early years of the Malay war, few would describe these practices as humanitarian development. Nevertheless, contemporary proponents of counterinsurgency frame Templer's methods as part of a kinder, more humane tradition of warfare. This type of 'branding' can make counterinsurgency appealing to humanists (however vaguely defined), due to its focus on "legitimacy and privileging civilian life in order to gain hearts and minds" (Kleinfeld 2009, quoted in Cohen and Danziger 2010, 76).

How do we explain the shift to population security and discourse that successfully leverages nation-building and development as a reason for military intervention? The QDDR identifies The United States as part of a "community of values" that now includes the Middle East and Asia, a position that would not have been possible in the 19th century (Department of State and USAID 2010, 10). Yet expanding liberal membership to include civilians from former colonies facilitated U.S intervention. In fact, it is precisely by citing 'women and children' as members of this political community that intervention is deemed justifiable.

Just as the civilian immunity principle is rooted in Grotius and his liberal contemporaries, the norms surrounding humanitarian intervention have their roots in liberal intellectual labor. Martha Finnemore argues that "normative understandings about which human beings merit military protection" have changed to include populations that had previously been dehumanized. After examining a period of 150 years, Finnemore found that 19th century Britain invoked the protection of Christian minorities threatened by Muslim Ottoman Turks as a reason for intervening, but the oppression of other groups, whether religious or otherwise, "did not evoke similar concern" (Finnemore 1996, 155). More recently, Vladimir Putin used similar justifications to intervene in Ukraine on behalf of a persecuted Russian minority in Crimea, stating that "Russia lost these territories for various reasons, but the people remained" (Conant 2014).

Russia is not, by any scholarly standard, a liberal democracy. However, the differences between Russian and U.S interventions illustrate an important theme found in this project. Whereas the intervention in Crimea was justified on the grounds that a Russian ethnic minority was imperiled, the Bush Administration intervened in Iraq by citing liberal values like a respect for democracy and freedom (Barbash 2003). The Taliban and Al-Qaeda were positioned as adversaries who refused to adhere to a set of norms associated with the international liberal order, like women's equality. Recall, the Bush Administration explicitly stated that Al-Qaeda hated "our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other" (Bush 2001). Terrorism was "a threat to our way of life" (*ibid*), a phrase that was often disparaged by media pundits but which, perhaps, reveals much—what way of life was Bush referencing, exactly? The answer: a way of life that was informed by liberal democratic norms. Rather than using primordial kinship ties to orient its foreign policy, U.S interventions under both the Bush and Obama Administrations were distinctly liberal in character.

Finnemore identifies 19th century liberalism and the abolition of slavery as "an essential part of the universalization of 'humanity.'" While European states had abolished slavery within their own borders during the 17th and 18th centuries, they invoked the language of liberal universalism and condemned the 19th century slave trade as "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality" **(**Finnemore 1996, 170). The slave trade was criminalized as a form of piracy, leading British and other European navies to intervene militarily and board foreign-owned ships. Humanitarian intervention, in this case, was facilitated by expanding the definition of humanity to include African peoples. However, Finnemore succinctly notes that hierarchies of domination within the state system led to the haphazard application and invocation of liberal universalism, because while African peoples had been elevated to the category of 'human enough' by the 1830s and enslaving them inside Europe was prohibited, "enslaving them outside Europe was only distasteful.... Abuse of Africans did not merit military intervention inside another states." And the ships that were boarded were usually African-owned (*ibid, 140*), indicating that being acted upon was not merely the consequence of what actors had done (slavery), but who they were (African merchants). Similarly, like all security conflicts, discourse in the War on Terror had to establish "collective referent objects," or stated otherwise, had to interpret what group was worthy of security and identify what policies were required to address the insecurity this group faced **(**Axl and Schlag 2012, 893)**.**

Finnemore adds that intervention changed dramatically over the twentieth century as the "humanity" deserving of protection by military intervention became universalized" (Finnemore 1996, 139). Finnemore is not alone in describing liberal interventionism as a type of war that is "fought on behalf of humankind" (Dillon 2008). On a more critical note, Martin Kienscherf writes that the goal of liberal war is the "pacification of recalcitrant populations and their eventual (re)integration into the networks of liberal governance" (Kienscherf 2011, 518). According to this line of reasoning, counterinsurgency is a coercive approach to integrating 'failed' or 'failing' states into international society by forcibly installing development schemes that secure human life.

Though these scholarly discussions provide insightful contributions by pointing to the normative pillars that facilitate intervention, they often treat civilian populations as an undistinguished mass. The confusion is somewhat understandable, given that the civilian category is not designed to be a legal status informed by gender or age. Still, counterinsurgents did sub-divide the civilian population along the lines of gender. As stated in chapter 3, COIN architects spoke of civilians generally, but they also mentioned women and children, specifically. As a result, the Military-Age Male creates a puzzling conundrum for scholars who study wars fought by democracies because the category functions as a paradoxical reminder that liberal intervention continues to exclude certain groups from 'universal humanity.'

By intervening on behalf of a vulnerable and foreign civilian population, policy-makers revealed what they deemed to be 'legitimate' grounds for their wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, respect for civilian protection was still understood through the prism of *international* liberal norms. The condition of 'civilian protection' is defined to mean 'not *intentionally* targeting non-combatants by military means.' This interpretation of safety is institutionalized in both U.S and international laws but should not be interpreted to mean that civilians remained unharmed in conflict zones. While contemporary policy-makers, therefore, may view civilians in Muslim-majority countries as worthy of intervention

based on their inclusion in a community of values, counterinsurgency strategy still leveraged cultural assumptions about gender norms to target the population. And while expanding liberal membership to include populations once deemed sub-human facilitated the conditions for humanitarian interventions, intervention still relied on asymmetrical power relationships within the international system. At this point, it is worth returning to Laura Bush's November 17th, 2001 radio speech.

> The severe repression and brutality against women in Afghanistan is not a matter of legitimate religious practice. Muslims around the world have condemned the brutal degradation of women and children by the Taliban regime. The poverty, poor health, and illiteracy that the terrorists and the Taliban have imposed on women in Afghanistan do not conform with the treatment of women in most of the Islamic world, where women make important contributions in their societies...Fighting brutality against women and children is not the expression of a specific culture; it is the acceptance of our common humanity (Bush 2001).

Instead of positioning Muslim-majority countries outside a liberal community of values, Laura Bush appeals to a set of norms that she characterizes as universal throughout all cultures, including other Muslim-majority countries. Bush certainly rejected the idea that these values were 'western.' The Taliban, however, deviated from the norms ascribed to "all civilized peoples" by depriving women and children the fundamental rights that are secured by good governance. Even in 2001, under a neo conservative government, human security was invoked by referencing that, under the Taliban, "seventy percent of people are malnourished [and] one in every four children won't live past the age of five because healthcare is not available" (Bush 2001).

As Senator, Hillary Clinton was confronted by a member of the public who argued that intervening on behalf of Muslim women was racist and culturally insensitive. Clinton responded by stating that "the argument that supporting the rights of women will insult the Muslim world is demeaning to women and to Muslims. Women's rights are human rights. They are not simply American, or western customs. They are universal values which we have a responsibility to promote throughout the world" (Hudson and Leidl 2015, 48). As authors like Ronald Krebs and Patrick Jackson (2007) have argued, The Bush Administration spent considerable time using discourse designed to enact and legitimize their foreign policy agenda. I cite these words, not to examine the psychological motivations of foreign policy actors, an exercise that is "empirically intractable" (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014, 891), but to illustrate how discourse shapes the practice of U.S intervention. The War on Terror was a moral obligation for "coalition forces, rather than American forces." The Bush Administration sought to "liberate Iraq" rather than to invade it (Krebs and Jackson 2007, 35). Moreover, the sites for intervention focused on the biological requirements of childhood development, highly reminiscent of how Michael Dillon described the 'liberal way of war" as one that promoted "human welfare through the understanding of the life sciences" (Dillon 2008). In practice, women have overwhelmingly bore the responsibility for childcare. This reality has meant that aid agencies often target economic and social programs at women because, as the OECD states, their "economic participation and... control of productive assets speeds up development...and improves children's, health, and school attendance. *Women typically invest a higher proportion of their earnings in their families and communities than men"* (OECD 2015, emphasis mine). In general, women are more likely to be construed as sites of development, a trend that did not change with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

When childhood development becomes a form of insecurity, then the domestic sphere is highlighted as a space of vulnerability and a site for reordering. Childhood health and education are, of course, serious issues and my intention is not to make an argument against development programs, generally. Rather, I want to highlight what happens to home life once development becomes an arm of military intervention. As I illustrate below, the *international* character of the insurgency informed how the household remained a site of risk, where civilian protection was *valued as a variable* in a larger military calculation ordered by international law. In other words, an adherence to international law like the Proportionality Principle maintained a risk culture that extended to the household, where the population was further subdivided along gendered lines like 'women and children' and Military-Age Males. Importantly, hybrid schemes that combined development with military action did so in order to prevent political violence; human welfare became a means to securing a centralized state free from political violence, for securing a leviathan.

Risk and International Law
A discussion about 'women and children' may seem like a detour in a project about Military-Age Males. Yet this discussion is necessary for understanding the connections between discourse on intervention and how security practices were implemented in Iraq and Afghanistan. Or, said otherwise, discourse tames the possible range of policy options that are used to solve (what policymakers have identified as) a problem. "The realm of conceivable behavior in a given social structure is normatively determined and it is not as wide as the realm of behavior that is physically possible" (Florini 1996, 367). Yet, the Military-Age Male's safety and surveillance is dependent on citing 'women and children' as vulnerable. The security theater was re-interpreted to include civilian space, a site for investing in women and children, a shift that occurred because the household became a site worthy of direct military intervention. Since home life was now under military observation, a new code was needed to locate risky subjects and re-assess the intimate relationships that sustained an insurgency. The solution was to use social scientific knowledge, primarily from anthropology, to understand the economic and social needs of the population the U.S military sought to secure.

These kinds of humanitarian interventions have been accused of being a form "moral trusteeship" born from liberalism's tendency to view non-Western populations as "somehow...lack[ing] the necessary requirements for a proper existence," (Mehta 1999, quoted in Duffield 2010). And Bell and Evans describe these interventions as a process which institutes social change "through the promotion of and insistence on certain ways of life—life designated by some measure of 'good'" (Bell and Evans 2010). While liberal universalism is—absolutely—normative, these criticisms risk being stretched into an excuse for perpetual inaction. Speaking the language of security may facilitate state intervention, but then again, are there any aspects of the human condition worthy of intervention? And under what conditions can groups intercede in another state or assemblage? These questions are old news, but still deserve to be mentioned because, if we are to criticize the United States, then on what grounds are our criticisms based? Whether we oppose or support intervention, both choices are informed by normative considerations and result in serious material consequences. There is no option that will, to quote Bell and Evans, avoid "the promotion and insistence on certain ways of life." I grapple with these questions, though I am perpetually dissatisfied with the answer.

For my part, I view counterinsurgency as a form of warfare that threatens to increase vulnerability by

subjugating human security into a military calculation. Humanitarian intervention, regardless of intent, is still a *military* intervention, where the laws of war determine the boundaries of acceptable behavior. Mary Kaldor spoke about the problems of conflating human security with counterinsurgency, writing that

> a judgment about whether hitting a military target justifies civilian casualties must be made differently from the same judgment in a domestic or civil context....[because]...the rules of engagement are determined by the "laws of war"...rather than by civil law, which offers guidelines for policeman...As long as population security is a tactic rather than a goal or a strategy, the starting point for soldiers will be how to identify targets or disrupt networks rather than the needs of the people (Kaldor 2010, 10).

The *international* aspect of U.S wars in Iraq and Afghanistan conditioned the way humanitarian norms were managed and set hybrid military-development projects apart from similar schemes that emerge in the civil realm. Bringing the 'international' into the household has the potential to increase vulnerability, precisely because the population is subjected to a continuous utilitarian calculation where their needs are measured against military gains. A number of scholars (Duffield 2007, 2010; Aradau 2007) have argued that counterinsurgency is a form of 'biopolitics,' inspired by Michel Foucault's 1976 definition where the population is viewed as a "political problem, as a problem that is at once scientific and political" (Foucault 1976, 45). Or said more plainly, biopolitics is a lens that scholars use to "examine the strategies and mechanisms through which human life processes are managed under regimes of authority" (Garrison 2013). However, scholarship on biopolitics is often applied identically to political subject matter at both the civil and international levels, and these accounts do not usually focus on how 'the international' impacts the management of what is called the security-development nexus. As a result, scholars who have argued that counterinsurgency is a form of biopolitics—because of its alleged overlap with human security and insistence on liberal development schemes–often miss a larger point. The 'international' is a category that still matters in the practice of counterinsurgency. The way risk is assessed is dependent on international legal frameworks. The decision to intervene using gender makes normative sense due to the development of an international society that views gendered protection as an international obligation (Jutta Joachim (2003), Kathryn Sikkink and Hun Joon Kim (2013) for example, explain the process by which women's rights were taken seriously by UN decision-makers.)

The intersections between risk and 'the international' is well-illustrated by General Stanley McChrystal who, as commander of ISAF in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2010, was instrumental in the push for greater civilian protection. McChrystal's revised Tactical Directive instructed coalition forces to "avoid the trap of winning tactical victories—but suffering strategic defeats—by causing civilian casualties or excessive damage and thus alienating the people....excessive use of force resulting in an alienated population will produce far greater risks" (ISAF 2009). In other words, McChrystal warned his troops of 'blowback.' A 1954 term that originated in the CIA, 'blowback' was first used as a "metaphor for the unintended consequences of the US government's international activities that have been kept secret from the American people" (Johnson 2001). Blowback, therefore, is a description of a failed utilitarian calculation where risk and consequences were not adequately predicted—where civilian protection was not assigned sufficient weight when conducting military operations.

Counterinsurgency became a way of pacifying and managing risk, while still retaining the possibility

for conventional military practice. The result is that U.S forces retained their international moral obligations by lowering civilian deaths, but the lowered civilian death count was maintained by widening the security theater to include military intervention into domestic space. The Proportionality Principle mandates that military actors should avoid excessive civilian deaths in their pursuit of military gains, but the principle does not tell anyone how much weight that should be assigned to civilian protection. The fear of 'blowback' was a reminder that military gains were not be measured in the short term.

Despite McChrystal's Directive, civilian protection in Afghanistan remained on precarious grounds. In 2010, McChrystal was fired by the Obama Administration and replaced by David Petraeus. Petraeus was faced with a growing insurgency and was told that troop withdrawal would occur in 2014. In order to meet the 2014 deadline, Petraeus increased airstrikes, night raids on homes, and "arbitrarily arrested or summarily killed... Military-Age Afghan men suspected of supporting the Tablian" (Belcher 2017, 96). Ironically, Petraeus also once told Mary Kaldor that counterinsurgency and human security were nearly indistinguishable, though Kaldor refuted his claim for the reasons explained earlier (Kienscherf 2011, 522). Civilian protection was subject to chronic uncertainty and fluctuated with military requirements. COIN in Afghanistan and Iraq subsumed civilian protection into a familiar utilitarian calculation, but as one variable of many, and certainly not as the axiomatic principle.

Utilitarianism is necessarily about risk assessment—its ethical structure is based on measuring consequences and therefore requires that its adherents mine information in order to make predictive decisions about the future. Civilian Immunity, therefore, becomes one more variable that is used to assess risk; the Proportionality Principle mandates that military actors weigh risk to civilians—and the technologies that democracies develop, like drones and biometric checkpoints, emerge as visual technologies that are designed to assess these risks. The United States, therefore, treats civilian protection as important, but not as a moral absolute or axiomatic principle, thereby fulfilling its international obligations while pursuing its military aims. Maintaining these commitments may require constant recalibration, but they are not incoherent, paradoxical, or hypocritical. Or as noted elsewhere, international law can "strengthen norms against intentionally harming civilians but leave military commanders on all sides substantial tactical latitude" (Condra and Shapiro 2012, 168).

iii. Civilian Death in the Human Terrain

The precarity of civilian protection is well-illustrated by the implementation of military checkpoints in Iraq and Afghanistan. At first, U.S officials insisted that military forces were not responsible for civilian deaths, a line that was reproduced by U.S media, sometimes with an impressive lack of self-awareness. On an April 9 NBC segment, Tom Aspell reported:

> [h]undreds of women and children *and men of nonmilitary age* fleeing Fallujah today, taking advantage of a 90-minute pause in the fighting to escape. More than 450 civilians have been killed in 6 days, carnage which prompted Adnan Pachachi, a leading member of the U.S-appointed Iraqi Governing Council, to condemn Operation Vigilant Resolve today as unacceptable and illegal (Entman 2006, 220).

Operation Vigilant Resolve, sometimes called Fallujah 1, occurred after the brutal deaths of four Blackwater private security contractors. The city of Fallujah was emptied of the population—save

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those persons designated Military-Age Males. Fallujah 1 copied a colonial policing strategy known as 'draining the swamp.' Because insurgents were characterized as combatants that blended into the civilian environment, conventional military forces removed the population (the swamp) from the warmaking environment, leaving only alleged insurgents behind. During the second Italo-Sanusi War, fought in Libya from 1923 to 1932, Italian commander Rodolfo Graziani 'emptied the sea' by interning 80k to 100k in concentration camps enclosed with barbed wires as a way of separating the resistance from its social base (Downes 2008, 160). In the case of Operation Vigilant Resolve, 'draining the swamp' meant emptying Fallujah of all but Military-Age Males, a demographic designation that does not have legal standing under international humanitarian law, stands apart from 'civilian' and 'combatant' categories, but which facilitated intervention into spaces where men and boys were present.

During this period, U.S military officials continued to insist that civilian immunity was respected. The head of Central Command at the time, General John Abizaid, who had only a year earlier asserted that Iraq was a "classical guerrilla type war" responded by reaffirming U.S commitment to civilian immunity. "We are the most precise and the most compassionate military force that's…ever been assembled, and we do not ever target civilians" (Entman 2006, 220). Recall, however, that under international law, 'targeting' is a definition that must meet the condition of *intention.* Under the Doctrine of Double Effect, civilian harm may be foreseen but cannot be intended. Practically, this means that states can adhere to the normative commitment of civilian protection while civilians still die from military action.

While Military-Age Males did not lose their legal civilian status, they continued to face differentiated treatment. These operations included forced confinement and arbitrary detention, tactics that even the Congressional Research Service described as "aggressive" (Dale 2009, 57). General Ray Odierno, who was a strong advocate for the surge and would later succeed David Petraeus in Iraq (who was also a strong advocate of the surge), commanded the 4th infantry division over territory known as the "Sunni triangle," located just north of Baghdad and which encompassed Saddam Hussein's hometown. During his first tour, which ended in 2006, Odierno was known for "kicking in doors and rounding up thousands of Iraqi 'MAMs'" (Ricks 2009) with the goal of catching a few embedded insurgents (Sepp 2007, 219). Perhaps civilians had not been intentionally targeted, but intentions aside, an estimated 600 civilians had been killed in U.S attacks only 2 weeks earlier (Entman 2006, 216). Others estimate that 75 percent of Iraqi civilian casualties were caused by US military action (Chin 2007, 4). By 2010, an estimated 100,000 to 120, 000 civilians had been killed or wounded by "direct military action" (*ibid*).

Odierno reportedly had a "change of heart" about the tactical approach in Iraq, shifting from a "kill and capture" mindset to one where Odierno was explicitly telling his troops: "Don't give up the terrain" (Ricks 2009), which meant that troops should 'hold' civilian sites from insurgents. Odierno would later become a proponent for COIN and actively lobby for the surge, which was granted after Rumsfeld was fired and replaced by Robert Gates**.** Odierno told his planners that additional troops would be used "to secure the population, first thing" (*ibid*). What did securing the population mean, in practical terms? Counterinsurgency can be especially brutal precisely because militaries have problems distinguishing combatants from civilians (Dixon 2009, 356). With the U.S surge in Iraq, violence initially increased, but proponents of COIN allege that while violence rose, the surge's "purpose was to set the conditions for longer term civil security" (Ucko 2011, 7).

Odierno would later speak favorably of gated communities. He stated that the purpose of these gated communities was to secure the population "by hindering the ability of terrorists to carry out... car bombings and suicide attacks" (Dale 2008, 67). The shift to population security did not result in the retraction of the MAM category. If anything, the CRS identifies the tactics and strategies used by Odierno in Operation Vigilant Resolve as the basis for future COIN strategy. "Early...COIN practices for population control" included the creation of "gated communities [that] were strictly controlled...through the use of checkpoints and ID cards" (*ibid,* 58).

Conventional armies are uniformed and easily identifiable. That is not the case with insurgents, who often use the urban landscape as cover and to enact political violence. The U.S solution to this challenge involved restructuring the urban environment in a way that seriously impacted civilian mobility and safety. Because insurgents blend with the population, counterinsurgents are warned not to fracture the Operational Environment into "small, discrete systems and individuals" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, IV-6). The operational environment included "the influences on, and behavior of, all relevant actors, not just the behavior of the adversary" (*ibid*). Because the "operational environment" included the so-called private sphere of personal relationships, identifying insurgents meant that the civilian population was physically managed and observed. "Family and tribal ties create a strong core that insurgent groups leverage to link to various political, social, and business arms of the populace. A single family may only have a small number of active insurgents; however, marriage, friendship and group ties can extend communications, support, and loyalty" (Marine Corps 2006, 5). The private sphere and home life, spaces often deemed outside the boundaries of disciplinary IR, became crucial to managing U.S warfare.

Handbooks did not bother hiding the importance of gender to counterinsurgency operations. David Kilcullen, an Australian COIN strategist who is featured in the *Small-Unit Leader's Guide,* advises counterinsurgents to "[c]ovet your enemy's wife—but keep the children at arm's length" (Kilcullen 2006, 121). Kilcullen replicates the same empirical pillars that inform aid literature, though crudely. Women were seen as sites for investment, though for the purpose of military gain. Kilcullen writes that if counterinsurgents "win the women" then they "own the family unit. Own the family, and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population" *(ibid).* For counterinsurgents, investing in women became a tool to counteract insurgent recruitment efforts, indicating that U.S military officials understood the family unit as a set of kinship ties maintained primarily by women within the domestic sphere. Additionally, the SULGC states that "women play an important role in counterinsurgency operations" and that "in many cultures they are trusted and respected members of the household and the population…Find out their needs and wants, which are often... based around their families' well being" (Marine Corps 2006, 45). At the very least, this position highlights that development incentives targeted at women were often strategic instruments used to reaffirm the power of, in this case, the governments of Afghanistan or Iraq. The home became a security network, a space of hierarchical relationships responsible for life's necessities, that either reinforced or subverted the strength of an insurgency.

The reshaping of the urban environment was especially apparent while passing through military

checkpoints—and it was the high death rate that occurred at these checkpoints the led to revising the Rules of Engagement in way that would afford greater care for civilian protection. In Fallujah, the United States issued two-stage checkpoints, framed with Arabic and English signs that stated, "Stop or you will be shot" (Ciezadlo 2005). Compounding the problem is that the soldiers arming the checkpoints often spoke in English. Writing for *The Christian Science Monitor,* Annia Ciezadlo explained that "if it's confusing for me—and I'm American—what is it like for Iraqis who don't speak English" (*ibid*)? The entry of a foreign military power meant that citizens were required to revise their mobility patterns. After a particularly harrowing incident through a checkpoint, Ciezadlo asked her driver, an Iraqi civilian, to slow down.

> My voice shaking with fear, I explained to him that once he sees a checkpoint, whether it's behind him or ahead of him, he should drive as slowly as possible for at least five minutes. He turned to me his face twisted with the anguish of making me understand: "But Mrs. Annia," he said, "if you go slow, they *notice* you!" Under Saddam, idling was risky (*ibid*).

Ciezadlo explained that her driver's instinct to rush through checkpoints came from his experiences under Saddam Hussein's government. If civilians were caught idling past the wrong places, or next to ministry buildings (where many American checkpoints were located), then civilians could have been been detained indefinitely and with no notice given to their families (*ibid*). Surveillance was intended to secure the civilian population, yet they faced heightened risk during periods of adaptation to a new political geography. This problem was exacerbated by the decision to quickly implement 'snap TCPs,' checkpoints or roadblocks that were easily erected and movable across multiple locations (Smith 2008, 156). The elasticity of these checkpoints, defined by their ability to both "appear and disappear over a relatively short time frame," (Meiches 2015, 477) meant that snap TCPs were particularly suitable for the fluid changes that characterized the insurgency, but which meant that civilians were required to recalibrate their behavior to match the evolving terrain.

U.S and coalition forces tried to mitigate these lines of insecurity by managing gender. As indicated by Alex, men and women experienced differentiated treatment at these sites because soldiers were directed to be respectful of gender norms.

> We had very little interaction with females. As a directive, we were supposed to interact as little as possible with them. The reasoning was very well fleshed-out; there are more progressive parts in Iraq and Afghanistan but there are cities in both locations were women are fully covered and conservative, and they don't talk to men outside of their families and if they do then they do so in the presence of men. You [we] don't have an appropriate grasp of culture, so to avoid an incident that's what we did…there were female marines stationed with us; they didn't do combat operations but they were there for those interactions. [Civilian] women would go through checkpoints and they needed to check for contraband, so a woman would be the one who checked through that. And we received classes that taught us what was specific to conservative Sunni culture and such (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

Being sensitive to cultural expectations around gender was designed to be a moderating force, as an easily deployable form of insurance that would not make a terrifying situation even worse. Gender was identified as an axis that could compromise the counterinsurgency's success if not appropriately managed. Segregation is, of course, not only an idea but a way of dividing physical space between men

and women. These ideas informed not only how men and women were treated at checkpoints, but how military decision makers viewed home life and then, as illustrated in chapter 5, how death was allocated by drone strikes.

iv. Rebuilding the Liberal State

U.S policy-makers argued that human security could only be maintained though the presence of a Hobbesian leviathan. The civilian population, newly minted with economic rationality, would respond to (culturally sensitive) incentives and side with the political actor most capable of providing security, or so the architects of Iraq and Afghanistan's reconstruction argued. After a strong, central state was in place, then government could fulfill the tenets of human security. This formula was said to make sense from both the perspective of liberal rationality and Afghan and Iraqi cultural norms.

While liberal theorists expand security beyond threats to state integrity, these moves are not new. In fact, Emma Rothschild argues that what we now call 'human security' was typical from the mid-seventeenth century to the French Revolution. Definitions of security that focused on the protection of state sovereignty were "an innovation in much of Europe, of the epoch of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars," (Rothschild 1995, 61). Today, contemporary threats to states are deterritorialized and have expanded to include instability to a transnational economic system and threats to human rights. Meanwhile, membership in a human rights regime becomes disconnected from national boundaries because of its emphasis on the individual as the security referent. Consequently, opportunities to intervene on behalf of 'our' membership abroad grow as liberal membership is no longer based on national affiliation. Paradoxically, the globalization of insecurity serves to reinforce state strength and its importance as an international actor, especially if the state is framed as the body that guarantees the environment by which human security can be maintained.

The QDDR states that "the link between internal conflict and weak governance stands out" (Department of State and USAID 2010, 121). Monopolizing security under a formal government apparatus, therefore, is a necessary condition for ensuring the promotion of humanitarian development. The state and the rule of law become the first condition for ensuring liberal subjecthood. Besides the difficult question of state intervention, the QDDR illustrated that the practice of U.S intervention expanded to include the "full range of tools at our disposal—diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural..." (Solomon 2014, 720). No surprise then that a key component to counterinsurgency included Security Sector Reform (SSR), a range of activities designed to promote good governance, development and local ownership of security. In Afghanistan, and in line with security being "people-centered," SSR included a Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program for former (male) combatants. Though this program was intended to affirm the human security of former insurgents by finding them gainful employment and integrating them into civil society, the ultimate objective was to reinforce a particular mode of governance that took security ownership away from 'warlords' with "the ultimate objective...to reinforce the authority of the government" (UNDP 2010a). If building government capacity is crucial, and if liberal subjects do not have the ability to do so–and the perception is that they do not because they have been rendered insecure by an oppressive government–then the intervention of an actor with the ability to secure local ownership over security becomes necessary. Usually, another state has the material capacity to produce this change.

The *JP 3-24* is more explicit about the links between development and security and how these connections went unobserved in the early years of the Iraq War.

> War, politics, and reconstruction are linked in ways that individuals within the government failed to appreciate in the opening years of the Iraq conflict. If war, as Clausewitz said, is an extension of politics by other means, so too is relief and reconstruction an extension of political, economic, and military strategy. In this regard, there is a distinct difference between pursuing reconstruction to catalyze long-term economic growth and deploying reconstruction to support a counterinsurgency campaign **(** Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, VIII-20).

Proponents of this approach do not shy away from using social contract theory to justify state security as the first step to securing human dignity and interestingly, COIN was described as "graduate level" warfare by Petraeus (2009). Larry Diamond, a Senior Adviser to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad in 2004, argued that rebuilding Iraq comprised of four factors: political reconstruction of a legitimate and capable state, economic reconstruction in the form of a rule-based market economy, social reconstruction that involves supporting a civil society that keeps state power accountable, and general physical security. Because without security, "a country has nothing but disorder, distrust, and desperation—an utterly Hobbesian situation in which fear pervades and raw force dominates. This is why violence-ridden societies tend to turn to almost any political force" (Diamond 2004, 37). This argument was echoed in 2009 by ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal, who stated in a speech at the International Institute for strategic Studies that rationality meant siding with the force that could tame a Hobbesian state of nature. "[V]illagers are supremely rational and practical people; they make the decision on who they will support, based upon who can protect them and provide for them what they need" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, IV-14). The *JP 3-24* states that "[w]hatever their political preferences at the outset of the conflict, civilians tend to cooperate with whichever side is able to establish effective control. For civilians, control means creating conditions that are predictable and tolerable—a clear set of rules that are consistently enforced under which they feel they can reasonable survive" (*ibid,* IV-17).

Hobbesian security was presented as a simultaneous feature of universal rationality and the cultural morals of the host population. The population may have been 'rational,' but their rationality was sometimes presented as an animalistic drive that existed outside of civilization, where the terrain was understood as deeply patriarchal and entangled with the State of Nature. Afghans were ascribed with the same kind of rationality as those who lived in the State of Nature, who rationally determined that some freedoms must be abandoned in order to secure order through a Leviathan. Writing in *The Military Review,* Brian Petit, a Lieutenant Colonel and former commander of the Special Operations Task Force South, wrote:

> Family life is structured around the qalat (citadel)...that serves both to contain (women, possessions, goats) and to repel (intruders and the public). Afghan village life is simple and Hobbesian and nasty, brutish, and short...In rural Afghanistan, demonstrating sufficient cultural understanding while exhibiting the ability to act powerfully earns respect. Personal relationships are paramount, but they must grow from positions of strength...villages and villagers principally aim to survive and prosper. To do so, they will visibly align or subjugate themselves to the dominant, lasting presence (Petit 2011, 26).

I struggled with including this quote, given the rather more generous language that was used by McChrystal and in assorted COIN handbooks. However, the constant referrals to choosing 'Hobbesian' security led to an eventual recognition. Counterinsurgents believed that villagers would 'choose Hobbes.' And as anyone who has studied Thomas Hobbes knows, choosing the Leviathan is a decision prompted by the horrors that occur in the State of Nature. While most military practitioners did not accuse local populations of existing outside the confines of civilization in such audacious terms, the constant referrals to Hobbes come with an implication that the progress of civilization follows a formulaic trajectory outlined by social contract theorists. The message was simple: Afghan people had yet to choose civilization.

v. Gendering the Terrain
While U.S defense and security spokespersons spoke extensively about Hobbes and security—traditional concerns of disciplinary IR—a closer examination reveals how these concepts were dependent upon the intervention and subsequent administration of home life. Because counterinsurgency re-centered security onto the civilian population, counterinsurgents found that they needed a code to understand the relationships that sustained this group. Spike Peterson once asked "what security can mean in the context of interlocking systems of hierarchy and domination and how gendered identities and ideologies (re)produce these structural insecurities" (Peterson 1992, quoted in Columba Peoples and Vaughan-Williams 2010, 42). While liberal membership expanded to include membership from civilians in Muslim-majority countries, thus facilitating intervention on behalf of a group with shared characteristics, this population still needed to be interpreted by security actors in order to facilitate military strategy. As observed in the previous section, citing 'women and children' informed the range of policy options available to military planners, mostly by assessing security as a series of relationships (networks) that extended into homelife and which turned all civilians into participants of a security agenda. Gender became central to navigating the kinship ties that sustained the various ethnic and religious groups in Afghanistan and Iraq. Civilian relationships were reconstituting to suit security needs and kinship ties became sites of surveillance.

How, then, do we explain counterinsurgency documents that highlighted population security, a civilian assembly that included boys and men, but which also positioned Military-Age Males as a demographic category that subjected them to increased surveillance and, at worst, jeopardized their civilian immunity and removed them from the U.S collateral damage count? (Importantly, the collateral damage count is also a form of surveillance that, by collecting and measuring information, highlights those who are counted as legitimate sites of grief). Gender informed the range of technologies and practices that were available to policymakers. These security practices took the form of monitoring surveillance patterns, collecting data, and legitimating the targeting of civilian boys and men. The idea that boys and men were 'risky subjects' was reaffirmed by media and political officials.

As a recent example, the New York police division (first called "The Demographics Unit" and then renamed into the more friendly "Zone Assessment Unit") dedicated to spying on Muslim New Yorkers, securitized entire communities in an effort to pre-emptively detain and capture would-be terrorists. "Plainclothes detectives looked for 'hot spots' of radicalization that might give the police an early warning about terrorist plots. The squad, which typically consisted of about a dozen members, focused on 28 "ancestries of interest" (Apuzzo et al. 2014). The unit was canceled after the NYPD admitted that

the division had found no leads. The result, according to Linda Sarsour, a representative of the Arab American Association of New York, was "psychological warfare in our community…it completely messed with the psyche of the community" (*ibid*).

Muslim boys and men were under increased surveillance during the Bush and Obama Administrations. They were systematically observed and the information collected about them was "used... to govern their activities" (Dubrofsky and Magnet 2015, 3). And while the Department of Homeland Security dismantled the National Security Entry-Exit Registration (NSEERS) before Donald Trump took his inaugural oath, the registry initially contained a list of over 80, 000 teenage boys and men traveling into the United States from over 25 Arab and Muslim-majority countries. This registry was first introduced in 1991 during the first Gulf War and required the registration and fingerprinting of selected "non-immigrant" travelers coming into the United States from Iraq and Kuwait, though the requirements were removed two days later. The surveillance of boys and men paralleled the rise of U.S military action, though no known terrorist conviction resulted from the NSEERS program (Chiacu 2016). Perhaps state sovereignty is most apparent at borders, where state actors routinely articulate what and who is deemed 'threatening' to the state's integrity. If gender is at the borders of IR then it is there literally, to ensure that the center remains unpolluted by risky subjects.

Witness the logic of counterinsurgency surrounding the Canadian public's anxiety to allow Syrian refugees entry into Canada. To allay fears that 'terrorists' hid within the civilian population, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau deprioritized entry for single Syrian males as a way to reduce perceived risk, meaning that single men were placed at the end of the queue to facilitate entry for those deemed to be more vulnerable (Perkel 2016). These anxieties were replicated and reported in various media outlets, and in a textual analysis of the *New York Times* Between 2001 and 2003, Smeeta Mishra found that at least 55 percent of articles on Muslim men focused on acts of violence. "The words "Muslim men" and/or "Muslim man" were often followed by words such as "suspects," "detained," "deported," "terrorism," "illegal immigrants," "suicide bombers" and "violence." News articles about Muslim men in the non-Western world were often stories about violence, terrorism and Islamic resurgence" (Mishra 2007, 1).

Common to all of these examples is the idea that a particularly demographic group needed to be managed for risk. Military-Age Males were a social construction that rendered certain population groups hypervisible by "foregrounding their difference" against a normalized general population (Dubfrosky and Magnet 2015, 7). Yasmin Jiwani argues that this kind of surveillance is an "active social process that reinforces the differential structural positioning of its targets" (Jiwani 2015, 89). So while 'MAM' was not a category that could be interchangeable with combatant, the designation was still necessary for reinterpreting the population and landscape to suit security needs. The category functioned as a surveillance tool that told counterinsurgents where they should look. Alex stated that:

> There was no distinction between MAMs in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it didn't imply that they were combatants. By this I mean we used 'MAM' to describe males around us, but it didn't carry a militant meaning. You would radio that there were 3 MAMs and a woman in a vehicle, you were just alerting higher to what you were observing in case it went hostile (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

The population was interpreted along demographic categories that institutionalized gender and age as a visual cue. Even though Military-Age Males were civilians, until they were not, the MAM category rendered them into high-contrast subjects against a 'general' civilian environment. When I asked why the military focused more on MAMs than women and children, Alex stated that:

> We were largely discounting women and children because they were usually, almost never, gunmen. And only very rarely used as suicide bombers. We didn't discount them entirely, because it did happen, but sometimes you had men dressed as women to get through.

> But we were really concerned about women and children being used to distract you. But you certainly can't shoot a woman or child for being a distraction. We largely didn't count them as potential threats; though you wouldn't let your guard down. If a child ran up to me then I wouldn't raise my rifle. If a man yelled at me and I speak rudimentary Arabic and I yelled stop and he didn't, then I would raise my rifle. There was a level of risk that you accepted with women and children, because historically they weren't involved. Yes, women and children have been used in the past but we're not in the business of making enemies of women and children. You better have an ironclad alibi for why you raised your rifle at women and children (*ibid*).

Corey largely agreed that insurgents were aware that coalition forces followed a set of norms that regulated how soldiers acted around civilians; There were several instances where insurgent men would dress as women to avoid detection and surveillance, a strategy that was often unsuccessful because sex differences were understood using physiological attributes. Simply, women walk differently (Alex, Jessie, Corey, interviews with authors October 2016 to January 2017) . Insurgents, therefore, also leveraged gendered relations to strategically alter the warmaking terrain. Corey affirmed that their adversaries were familiar with the rules of engagement, stating that "they put women in front of you, and children" (Corey, interview with author, January 2017).

Depending on the period of the war, Military-Age Males were either placed under increased surveillance and non-kinetic forms of coercion or, during the most brutal periods of the Iraq War, faced systematic detention and violent targeting. The move towards non-kinetic coercion was positioned as a more humane solution to the rampant civilian targeting that had given birth to the Iraqi insurgency. The Iraqi Insurgency would provide the impetus for creating an institutional framework for distinguishing between risky individuals that would have lasting consequences throughout the Bush and Obama Administrations.

By 2005, legal experts in the U.S military had identified the high civilian death toll in Operation Iraqi Freedom as "unacceptable"(Bagell 2008, 7). From 2003 to 2005, the Standing Rules of Engagement had anticipated two possible scenarios where soldiers could use force: Soldiers could use force in self-defense during a time of peace, or soldiers could use force against an *identified declared* hostile force during a time of war. Insurgents, of course, do not self-identify as combatants, either visually or verbally. The result was, as one Judge Advocate wrote, that soldiers stationed at checkpoints or on convoy operations were "too often misidentifying threats and shooting the wrong people—people who posed no actual threat to them" (*ibid*, 5).

The inability to discriminate between threat and non-threatening persons led to revised Rules of Engagement in late 2005, which were then issued on ROE cards to coalition soldiers. In comparison to the 2003 ROE cards, which instructed soldiers to shoot individuals based on their "status," such as belonging to a military unit from the Saddam Hussein government, the 2005 "ROE tells soldiers that they can identify threatening individuals based on their conduct" (Smith 2008, 152; Bagwell 2008, 7). Specifically, the 2005 Multi-national Coalition- Iraq (MNC-I) ROE card stated that "you may engage the following individuals based on their conduct: persons who are committing hostile acts [and] persons who are committing *hostile intent*" (Bagwell 2008, 7, emphasis mine). Not only were individuals targeted for engaging in a combat function, but they were targeted pre-emptively if the soldier anticipated that they were going to engage in a combat function. Not incidentally, "hostile intent" became foundational to the decision-making that informed Signature Strikes.

As military decision-makers stated explicitly, the shift from 'status-based' to 'conduct-based' targeting was designed to identify and assess threatening individuals who did not self-identify, a change that military decision-makers credit for decreasing civilian casualties (Bagwell 2008, 7). Practically speaking, soldiers were instructed to use a combination of lethal and non-lethal maneuvers to determine who was deemed threatening. Called 'Threat Assessment Escalation of Force (EOF),' soldiers could shout, use non-lethal "shock" maneuvers like flashing a laser in a driver's windshield, 'show' and demonstrate their intent to use the weapon, and, if the individual did not comply, soldiers were then instructed to shoot (*ibid*, 9). The goal was to coerce compliance from suspected individuals, and if those persons did not comply, then their threat profile increased. Their reaction to military orders were used to determine their combatant status. Counterinsurgency stands out from drone warfare in this respect, as there were often no soldiers 'on the ground' to implement non-kinetic maneuvers on those suspected to be insurgents. The move from 'status-based' to 'conduct-based' targeting became an underlying ethos that was exported to countries where the U.S conducted drone warfare. Managing and predicting behavior became key to pre-empting political violence and, as the next section illustrates, substantial work went into developing systems that could make identifying "hostile intent" easier.

Gender Networks and the Technologies of Risk
Counterinsurgency documents may prefer to use the word "network" instead of 'kinship group,' but these networks were partially maintained through gendered hierarchies established by marriage and reproductive labor. A feminist geopolitics recognizes that bodies are sites where politics are inscribed. People are not merely described; they are acted upon. When feminist geographers argue that geopolitics is 'embodied,' what they mean is that geopolitical spaces are intentionally created and that the way individuals experience their physical environment is a reflection of the role they occupy within a set of gendered relationships and hierarchies (Williams 2011, 382). Because the battlespace was reinterpreted to include home life and private kinship ties, this facilitated intervention into spaces previously deemed "private" but which feminist scholars have described as political for decades. The SULGC argues that counterinsurgency and, more specifically, mobilizing the population should not be thought of as a "soft approach" (Marine Corps 2006, 29). Similarly, given David Kilcullen's instruction that counterinsurgency is "armed social work," scholars like Patricia Owens have noted that counterinsurgencies are arenas where "domestic work is not necessarily disavowed" (Owens 2016, 11). Like their colonial predecessors, counterinsurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan were implicated in household governance (Schwarz et al. 2016).

Importantly, the SULGC advises counterinsurgents to maintain a strong presence in urban spaces and to interact with locals. The SULGC advises counterinsurgents to view the population as an assemblage that exists on a continuum of risk. The figure places the population on a rubric from "friendly" to "hostile." The rubric is divided into six sections. Moving from "friendly" to "hostile," the population is described as:

1. Active government supporters, which counterinsurgents should consolidate and strengthen
2. Government sympathizers, which counterinsurgents should protect
3. Uncommitted or neutral population, which counterinsurgents should persuade
4. Insurgent sympathizers, which counterinsurgents should dissuade
5. Active insurgent supporters, which counterinsurgents should deter
6. And Insurgent fighters, which counterinsurgents should marginalize and defeat (Marine Corps 2006, 29).

Understanding insurgent networks, therefore, was an exercise in measuring probabilities and unpacking gendered relationships. Because the civilian population was characterized as rational, at least half this population could be persuaded and integrated into a nation-building project that centralized ownership of security into a central government apparatus. "People support an insurgency because they perceive it is in their best interest" (Chiefs of Staff 2009, I-3). So while civilian boys and men were imbued with potential for violence, there was no way of knowing what boys and men would be allies without subjecting this demographic to hypervisiblity and tactics of persuasion, practices designed to 'win hearts and minds.' As a result, military organizations like the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) invested considerable resources into programs that used data-driven solutions to tame risk, predict violence, and pacify the population.

Military-Age Males were viewed as social problems that would predict the success of U.S military action. They were, in other words, risky civilians. As Aradau writes, "risk inscribes reality as harbouring 'potential dangerous eruptions'...and deploys technologies to avert these events in the future" (Aradau 2007, 98). Instead of being conceived as a refutation of the high-tech ethos that characterized the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), counterinsurgency required its own set of technologies designed for the context of irregular war. In fact, DARPA returned to Afghanistan after a three decade absence from the theaters of war; Vietnam was the last violent conflict where DARPA was deployed (Weinberger 2017). Unlike the traditional RMA, however, these technologies were not conditioned by a political context that viewed insecurity as a battle between states. Given the expansion of the security theater to include the home, the technologies that became crucial to waging successful COIN were those that promised to identify combatants and those that could determine if civilians were at-risk of siding with insurgent groups.

To assess whether Military-Age Males were responding to these incentives structures, branches like the TRADOC Analysis Center developed models that used social scientific knowledge and Bayesian statistics to "provide insights into the potential effects of blue force [non-kinetic] actions on the beliefs, values, and interests of individuals in the civilian population" (Alt et al. 2009, 186). Said otherwise, significant resources went into developing simulations designed to measure the impact of non-kinetic

activities on civilians. Importantly the data about the population is anthropological in nature, and intelligence analysts would have had to update the model themselves by inserting relevant information about the population they were simulating. In this particular case, the data collection process used in the 'Cultural Geography Model' reveals how risk was assessed during counterinsurgency operations.

> As a first step in this process the population in the area of interest is partitioned along relevant socio-demographic lines...During the second step of the process the analyst seeks to develop an understanding of the salient issues that are relevant to both the population and the tactical commander. Further, narrative data describing each population segment, its history, and underlying belief structure must be collected. These narratives will be used to inform the cognitive state of entities within the social simulation, their stance on the relevant issues, and their perception of events within the operating environment...During the third and fourth steps in this process, the threat groups within the area are identified and data collected as to their motivations, beliefs, history, and goals (Alt et al. 2009, 186-187).

The entire point of the simulation, the authors write, is to "quantify our uncertainty" (*ibid*, 137), a process which was completed through the use of Bayesian analysis, a statistical method where "observed data from the world about some event [is used] to make inferences about the probability of future events of the same type given similar conditions" (*ibid*). To that end, the model uses Bayesian statistical formulas to predict behavior by assigning traits to variables that are perceived as fundamental to that specific demographic category. The "input data," as the authors write, is highly subjective—an important observation that will matter in chapter 5, when I discuss the move towards autonomous weapons platforms that use artificial intelligence to target suspected insurgents.

Crucially, the authors provide an example of the Cultural Geography Model, where the Military-Age Male is depicted as a male civilian who believes that the "government owes me a job with honor and power" and that "violence is acceptable" (*ibid*). The Military-Age Male category intersects with education levels, tribal affiliation, and party affiliation. This is not a general condemnation of Bayesian statistics, but an observation about the method's limitations during wartime. The decision to categorize Military-Age Males as a demographic that feels entitled to government handouts is not an observation that is mathematically derived, after all. Instead, these characteristics are compiled from social-scientific research and inserted into a statistical calculation that seeks to pre-empt risk by ascribing behavioral characteristics to a risky demographic group.

The Military-Age Male category was an institutionalized reflection of who was most likely to be politically violent and there is some evidence suggesting that military planners believed that 'MAMs' were likely to engage in violence if their needs were not met. For Military-Age Males, honor and economic grievances were seen as fundamental to their gender and age. These ideas about the 'Military-Age Male' were not objectively determined but the product of intentional social-scientific data collection. The 'input data' that was used in the Cultural Geography Model was collected through human intelligence.

The need to interpret the sociocultural environment led to the deployment of Human Terrain Specialists. The SULGC admits that "the insurgency force, the civilian population, and the terrain are virtually inseparable factors in guerilla warfare" (Marine Corps 2006, 3) and therefore advised small

unit leaders to understand the relationship between the insurgent group and the population (*ibid,* 4). Because insurgents were characterized as combatants that blended with the civilian population, the population was necessarily imbued with risk. This position was perhaps most crudely articulated by General James Mattis who stated: "Be polite. Be professional. Have a plan to kill everybody you meet" (Ricks 2006).

The Human Terrain System became a project that, to echo Christopher Sims, embedded "academics in foxholes" (Sims 2016). Civilian academics, acting as human terrain specialists, accompanied soldiers into the battlespace and were instructed to make make sense of the sociogeographic space using disciplinary (sociology, anthropology etc.) knowledge. A term that has historical roots as early as 1968, one of the earliest uses of the 'Human Terrain' is located in the appendix of the Report by the Committee on Un-American Activities, titled *Guerrilla Warfare Advocates in the United States* (Medina 2014, 140). Anthropology has a lengthy history of involvement in the practice of warfare, of course. Approximately 95 percent of American anthropologists were involved in World War II, for example, with many working as administrators in Japanese internment camps or providing information on culture and language (Gallagher 2017, 152). Further attempts at 'bringing in' the social sciences include Project Camelot, a 1964 U.S Army project that employed academics to study foreign cultures that were the targets of U.S intervention, The program was canceled in 1965 after criticism that the venture was imperialistic (*ibid*). More recently, Montgomery McFate noted that a psychology textbook from 1973, called *The Arab Mind*, was used to justify torture and sexual assault at Abu Ghraib Prison. McFate cited this example as an improper use of social science and argued that anthropologists should involve themselves with the U.S military in order to prevent the future misapplication of social-scientific knowledge (McFate 2005, 37). This argument was undoubtedly convincing to many HTS participants; from 2007 to 20014, more than 1000 Human Terrain Specialists were employed for the cost of approximately $750 million. To date, this is the most expensive social scientific project funded by the United States Government (Sims 2016).

The Human Terrain was not only examined through qualitative methods. Similar issues regarding the accurate and ethical use of sociocultural knowledge arose with DARPA's Nexus 7 program, which crowd-sourced data from Afghan civilians for the purpose of intelligence collection. Afghan civilians, usually employees in the development sector, were given GPS-enabled phones "and instructed to mark the location of buildings and streets...Participants were not told that...[they were providing]...the military with intelligence, and DARPA never publicly announced the program" (Weinberger 2017). The participants were offered an incentive if they participated in the challenge; they were allowed to keep their phones. The ultimate goal of the Nexus 7 program was to gain a clearer understanding about the social fabric in Afghanistan by turning Afghan civilians into "several hundred data intelligence feeds" that would provide "near-real-time access" of intelligence to U.S and coalition forces (*ibid*). The participants were never told that they had become spies or that their social networks had become surveillance sites that were mined for data. Crucially, the veneer of mathematical rigor that accompanies 'data driven' solutions often conceals that these technologies depend on a partnership between the social sciences and military organizations.

v. Conclusion: Moving Away from Counterinsurgency?
Initial military involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq came with devastating results for the local population. The first twenty weeks of the U.S bombing in Afghanistan resulted in widespread destruction to civilians, but also to the civilian environment. Marc Herold counts between 3100 and 3500 civilians killed, with another 4000 to 6000 injured, with many requiring prostheses. Approximately 4000 to 6000 Taliban and allies were killed, but an estimated 19,800 Afghans became refugees in the process (Herold 2002, 626). Herold writes that the U.S warplanes intentionally targeted Afghanistan's electricity generating capacity, which led to "major health and sanitation concerns as cities require electricity to pump water" (*ibid,* 628). The highways became so badly bombed that travel times multiplied between two and three times, "crippling commerce in a land of traders" (*ibid*). The Iraq Body Count organization states that the first two years of the Iraq War resulted in 24, 865 civilian deaths, with almost 20% being women and children (Iraq Body Count 2005). The remainder, presumably, were Military-Age Males, though like most organizations that tally civilian death, the status of dead male civilians was not specifically highlighted. This period was characterized by U.S military action that was unwilling to jeopardize the protection of American troops in order to reduce civilian casualties, described by a U.S pilot as a "fangs-out, kill-kill-kill culture" (Chivers 2012).

Counterinsurgency, on the other hand, was described as a 'cultural turn' that would decrease the intensity of warfighting **(**Gilmore 2011, 34). Scholars like Neta Crawford suggest that the shift to counterinsurgency was motivated by U.S desire to reduce civilian casualties (Crawford 2013). This view was corroborated by military officials like David Barno who argued that he viewed the tolerance of Afghan people towards an international military force as a finite "bag of capital" (Barno 2007, 35). The desire to prevent civilian casualties meant that, under Stanley McChrystal's command,

> air strikes based solely on technical intelligence were almost entirely eliminated owing both to their conspicuous lack of success and the unintended casualties they characteristically caused among Afghan civilians. In my estimation this new judicious reserve in the application of coalition fire power helped sustain the people's fragile tolerance of an extended international military presence (*ibid*).

By 2012, when the Obama Administration had announced its intentions to withdraw troops, commentators were still debating whether or not counterinsurgency had successfully decreased civilian casualties or had helped improve the 'security situation' in Iraq. David Ucko argues that the authors of the *FM 3-24* "deliberately misled their readers" by over-emphasizing the more pleasant aspects of a 'hearts and minds' campaign as one that would guarantee civilian protection. Despite the misleading PR that left 'civilian protection' undefined , Ucko still determined that COIN practices led to longer-term stability in Iraq (Ucko 2011, 4). When I asked Alex if the Petraeus Doctrine had been discredited they responded:

> I don't think it has been discredited. I think it peaked at a certain point. I was in Iraq in 2006, 2007 and, as a Lance Corporal, I wasn't super familiar with higher-level doctrine but we were always familiar with 'hearts and minds.' We would go on patrol for the sole purpose of canvassing. We'd say that they didn't have to like us but since we were there, we'd ask, "What do you need; we're here." And maybe people would say they needed school supplies or a school. We may not have earned admiration but we earned begrudging respect. In one case we helped a small little struggling town, a town with a long history of drugs, a weapon smuggling town, near Syria. It was one of the places ISIS took over very quickly. We got there with no one talking to us at all. But by the time we left, they were

> regularly informing us and that allowed for the re-establishment of a police department and a sanitation department
>
> From an outsider's perspective it seemed like the "Hearts and Minds" approach worked. They weren't ready to go vote Republican but it seemed that they were willing to take back the city. [There was a perception from the town's population that] [i]f we tell the Americans where the bad guys are, then the Americans will go and scare them away" (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

The evidence suggests that a military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq seriously restructured urban environments and kinship relationships. In this chapter, I argued that COIN's focus on expanding insecurity to include threats to women and children meant that home life became a primary site for military intervention. "Armed social work," as David Kilcullen called it, became human security as governed by the international laws of armed conflict. While this move meant that basic social services (like garbage removal, work for wages programs etc.) were used as incentives to win the population's support, civilian protection was still understood through international law, a framework that instructed military decision makers to anticipate collateral damage but which did not explain how civilian protection should be maintained. As a result, civilian immunity was applied unevenly, depending on operational goals.

While the Doctrine of Double Effect may instruct states to avoid *intentionally* targeting civilians, the population still had routine interaction with coercive military practice. The terms 'combatant' and 'civilian' became insufficient distinctions for deploying military strategy. By expanding military intervention into the household, gender was used to interpret the networks that sustained the civilian population. 'Risk' was (and is) a condition of insecurity, and to ascribe 'risk' to a body necessarily means that those bodies have to be managed. In the case of Iraq and Afghanistan (and elsewhere, as will be seen in the next chapter), risk was delineated through the use of surveillance mechanisms that rendered male civilians hypervisible.

Counterinsurgency has sometimes been characterized by its rejection of U.S technological supremacy during wartime. Prior to September 11th, 2001, and as part of the RMA tradition, the United States had been re-investing in its defense sector by increasing development in missile defense, space assets, precision weaponry, and information technology (Hoffman 2006, 395). Frank Hoffman describes this transformation as irrelevant given "the emergence of nontraditional adversaries pursuing 'complex irregular warfare'" and that the Pentagon had misread "what really constituted threats to American national security interests" (*ibid*). This description is, however, inaccurate, and many of the technologically intensive techniques used in Iraq and Afghanistan echo U.S experiences in Vietnam.

In his autobiography, Robert McNamara, Secretary of State during the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, argued that the U.S viewed the "people and leaders of South Vietnam in terms of our own experience. We saw in them a thirst for—and a determination to fight for—freedom and democracy…We failed then—as we have since—to recognize the limitations of modern, high-technology military equipment, forces, and doctrines in confronting the unconventional, highly motivated people's movements" (McNamara 1995, 322). Though high-tech solutions did not win the war in Vietnam, this does not mean that the U.S reduced its investment into the technologies of war when confronted with insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead, and as will be seen in the next

chapter, U.S investment in defense technologies was re-oriented to address a transnational insurgency, whereas the research atmosphere prior to 9/11 focused on technologies suited for state-to-state warfare.

While one of the precepts of counterinsurgency is the maintenance of a military force inside urban spaces and near local populations, Barack Obama pledged troop withdrawal from both Afghanistan and Iraq during the 2008 election. The Obama Administration followed through on this pledge and decreased troop presence in both countries, despite COIN documents indicating that nation-building required a presence that could last decades. Yet troop removal from Afghanistan and Iraq was paralleled with an expanding military presence "outside areas of active hostilities," a term that applied to Pakistan, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen– all places where the Obama Administration conducted drone warfare.

Increased reliance on drone warfare paralleled what Richard Medina describes as the "evolution of sociocultural understanding" in U.S defense and intelligence communities. The Human Terrain System, which had leveraged anthropological knowledge as a way to understand "micro level human systems," moved towards using geography to understand "macro level systems" (Medina 2014,139). U.S defense and intelligence communities increased their reliance on remote data collection through GIS and sensor technologies and decreased their reliance on face-to-face intelligence gathering. That does not mean, however, that social scientific knowledge about the population was abandoned. In fact, just as anthropological knowledge about Military-Age Males informed the quantitative models used by counterinsurgents, social scientific knowledge remained crucial for understanding the visual landscapes displayed on the drone monitor and determining who was and was not a combatant. In the next chapter, I explore these tensions and look at how gender became a governing code in drone warfare.

Chapter 5
Learning to See Data: Military-Age Males and Drone Warfare

i. Introduction
Gender was central from the early days of the drone program. On November 3rd, 2002, two SUVs left a compound. Abu Ali Al-Harithi and his male associates sat in one SUV while the women were in a separate SUV. The segregation between men and women became the deciding factor to issue the strike and to target the vehicle containing men. According to one official, "if the women hadn't gotten into another car, we wouldn't have fired" (Zenko 2002, 86).

Abu Ali al-Harithi, also known as Qaed Salim Sinan al-Harithi, was an Al-Qaeda operational planner in the cell that bombed the USS Cole. Al-Harithi was targeted and killed by a Hellfire missile launched from a Predator Drone, a strike that killed all six men in his convoy (Bambford 2006). At the time, the CIA refused to explain the criteria that informed the decision to strike Al-Harithi, but argued that the decision conformed with the customary rules of armed conflict (McManus 2003). Their simple comment about women, however, is illuminating.

How do we know that gender informed the decision to strike? Because CIA spokespersons have insisted that individuals who are near 'targets' are not innocent; being near a targeted person is a form of suspicious behavior. In an interview with *The New York Times,* a CIA official who requested anonymity stated: "Al Qaeda is an insular, paranoid organization — innocent neighbors don't hitchhike rides in the back of trucks headed for the border with guns and bombs" (Becker and Shane 2012).

Proximity to a target, therefore, is a factor in determining guilt. *But only if you're a man or a boy.* Based on this reasoning, Military-Age Males who are near suspects are excluded from the collateral damage count. If you are a woman or a girl, however, then being near a 'target' creates a social condition where U.S drone operators refrain from issuing a strike command. Leon Panetta, former Director of the CIA and U.S Secretary of Defense under the Obama Administration, admitted as much. "If there were women and children in the shot, we normally would not take the shot...if you can isolate the individual and take the shot without impacting on women or children, then do it" (Panetta 2016).

Chapter 5 details how drone technology has prompted an explosion of data and knowledge production, and explains how norms require a material infrastructure to diffuse globally. Instead of positioning drones as 'unmanned' technologies that pursue security goals objectively—which, by extension, would imply that individuals were accurately targeted by drones—I chronicle how drone crews used gender as a governing code to determine strike decisions. This chapter is dedicated to showing "the actual working of power rather than assuming it on the basis of uneven structural relations," (Muller 2015, 33). Practically speaking, that means this chapter assesses how the interaction between human and drone technology influenced the practice of war.

Against the backdrop of a transnational insurgency that used civilians for cover, U.S foreign policy officials argued that drone strikes were a form of technology that led to higher civilian immunity. Drone technology became a crucial surveillance technology where alleged combatants were marked for death if they exhibited a Pattern of Life that was above the acceptable risk threshold. Because

insurgents who used the population for cover were interpreted as sites of insecurity, the need to distinguish between civilian and insurgent led to further investment in drone sensors and batteries. In turn, the investment in sensors and batteries meant that drones could collect more footage (data) and loiter for longer periods of time. The raw data collected by military drones, however, required interpretation by a host of analysts, a process that has been a source of consternation to the U.S military and which has led to research into Big Data management and automating the intelligence analysis cycle.

As I illustrate, removing humans from the knowledge production cycle did not introduce objectivity into the target-selection process, and this chapter details how algorithms may also replicate human bias as the drone targeting process because automated. Given that drones are sustained by a Distributed Common Ground System that stretches across 27 locations in the U.S and internationally, the norms that inform civilian targeting and hyper-surveillance are sustained by a physical architecture of state power, all directed towards producing information about populations with which it wars. Data did (and does) political things because it allocated moral and material value (Johnson 2015). The United States used the Military-Age Male as a salient category to reorganize the social and political life of Muslim-majority populations to suit military needs.

ii. A Brief History of Signature Strikes

The 'drone program' is notoriously opaque and details have emerged sporadically since 2002. Most articles on drone warfare note that the Obama Administration was more likely to use weaponized drones than the Bush Administration. While the Bush Administration issued fifty drone strikes in eight years, the Obama Administration authorized over five hundred (Purkiss and Serle 2017). However, the Bush Administration made the decision to equip drones with laser-guided missiles and to allow the CIA to run a drone program (Brunstetter and Bruan 2011, 339). Prior to the War on Terror, the CIA had used drones during the Bosnian conflict in 1994 under the code name of 'Lofty View' (Shaw 2013, 537), a less controversial move by a civilian agency, given that drones were not yet equipped with missiles and could not kill anyone. Notably, the CIA also used Predator drones to hunt for Osama bin Laden. These drones were launched from Uzbekistan and used to search Afghanistan's terrain, though the drones were not armed at this time (Williams 2010, 872)**.** This changed in February 2001, when General Atomics added a "laser turret to the nose of the Predator and equipped its wings to fire U.S Army Hellfire AGM-114 laser-guided missiles" (*ibid*). My participants indicated that they witnessed the evolution of drone warfare while they were stationed in Afghanistan or Iraq.

> My first appointment was on the ground, but it was 2006. There were drones and they were overhead, but we did not have communication with them. They were there to tell us things...Whereas when I was deployed in 2010, I could task the drone...If someone told us that there were guys [Taliban] here and we had a drone above them...then that's not enough. We needed two separate intelligence forces that could tell us [where the militants were located.] We'd only be able to strike if there were 3 separate messages that didn't contradict each other and they'd brief that to my boss...In 2010-2011, the Rules of Engagement were significantly tightened (Alex, interview with author, Octobre 2016).

Since 2001, drone strikes have evolved to encompass two categories: Personality Strikes and Signature Strikes. Personality Strikes are directed at those who are known to be involved in hostilities. *The*

Intercept describes the authorization for a targeted strike as a two-step process: Authorization of a Target and Actioning (the term given when a missile is launched.) U.S intelligence officials in the JSOC's Task Force 48-4, alongside other intelligence agencies, would build a case for striking an individual. This profile would be generated into a 'baseball card' that detailed the person's 'stats' and would eventually find its way to the executive branch and President (Currier 2015). Usually, if a target had been approved for death, then the relevant military agencies had sixty days to kill him before the authorization needed to be renewed (*ibid*).

In a lengthy speech where he argued that using drones was an ethical imperative, John Brennan stated that targets were selected "after a legal review," a process which was justified under the right of national self-defense, as codified by the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force, "which courts have held extends to those who are part of Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and associated forces." Here we see Brennan's focus on bureaucratic and legal procedure. "We are a nation of laws," Brennan stated, "and we will always act within the bounds of the law" (Brennan 2012).

But not all who die are part of the 'disposition matrix,' the term given to what was previously known as the 'the kill list.' Renamed under the Obama Administration, the 'disposition matrix' was crafted as a database that centralized multiple knowledge streams gathered from various bureaucratic branches responsible for conducting war. As a participant noted, "if you...just stood there with your eyes closed in one of the centers were drone decisions are happening, then you'd think you were in a corporate boardroom in the way the sanitized descriptions are used. You're not talking about mothers, daughters, sisters blown to bits, but about targets acquired and the financial cost of this system" (Jessie, interview with author, October 2016). This database has alternatively been described as a 'spreadsheet' that lists selected targets (Shaw 2013, 536). Interestingly, 'Signature Strikes' were also rehabilitated by the Obama Administration into the more friendly 'Terrorist Attack Disruption Strike' (TADS) designation, However, for the sake of clarity, this dissertation uses the term 'Signature Strike.'

Signature Strikes are usually met with greater controversy than Personality Strikes, since the former strike is frequently directly at persons who never have their identities verified. Signature Strikes emerged under the Bush Administration, when President George Bush signed a 'secret' Memorandum of Notification that gave the CIA the right to kill Al-Qaeda members in "anticipatory self-defense virtually anywhere in the world" (Brunstetter and Braun 2011, 340). Signature strikes against Military-Aged Males were also given the green light under the Bush Administration (Schmitt and Sanger 2008). A Bush Administration official reportedly stated that "[w]e got down to a sort of 'reasonable man' standard. If it seemed reasonable, you could hit it" (Sanger 2009, 250).

Indeed, what is reasonable? John Gardner writes that the "common law is obsessed with reasonable people... the select group of personalities who inhabit our legal village and are available to be called upon when a problem arises that needs to be solved objectively...Although no one is really like them, they set the standard for judging our frailties." This question is central to the Principle of Distinction, where lawmakers are frequently asked to justify who can be 'reasonably' classified as a civilian in an environment where combatants do not wear uniforms. Not all civilians are immune from attack under IHL. If civilians attack, injure, or capture their adversaries then they are said to be engaging in DPH, or "Direct Participation in Hostilities." Those civilians who are directly participating in hostilities have

their civilian immunity removed. The problem is that the "parameters of direct participation is something that has remained essentially unexamined in the treaty law," (Crawford 2015, 3). In the words of one participant, "[t]here was no distinction between MAMs in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it didn't imply they were combatants" (Alex, interview with author, August 2016). Previous U.S legal precedents state that, in the context of children, "indirect participation," like transmitting military information, weapons, and supplies was not considered DPH. But in the case *United States of America v. Salem Ahmed Hamdan,* the delivery of munitions *was* considered DPH (Crawford 64, 2015). The word 'reasonable' appears to embrace both commonsense and ambivalence, a relationship that was mirrored in the intelligence collection process. Documents like *Joint Intelligence JP 2-0* highlighted the perpetual uncertainty faced by intelligence analysts when they assessed suspicious behavior, but also called for clear thinking (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2013).

Even though Brennan and other Administration officials refused to speak about Signature Strikes, Personality Strikes still provide us with hints on how MAMs were deemed risky. Brennan argued that an Al-Qaeda member or "associated force" did not need to be directly engaged in combat for a drone strike to take place. The targeted strike could occur against an individual who was "training for, or planning to carry out attacks…perhaps the individual possesses unique operational kills that are being leveraged in a planned attack. The purpose of a strike…is to *disrupt his plans and his plots before they come to fruition*" (Brennan 2012).

A Signature Strike is a missile strike that uses a person's "pattern of behavior—or 'signature' as a proxy for determining if that individual is engaging in a 'continuous combat function' or is directly participating in hostilities (Benson 2014, 29). Individuals identified as 'insurgents' by their signature are often *not* caught engaging in combat. While the White House collects the identities of militants they seek to target in so-called personality strikes, the identities of those who are targeted by Signature Strikes are often unknown and remain unknown. Under IHL, a person's identity does not need to be confirmed if that person is already engaged in political violence; they become unlawful combatants. The problem with signature strikes is that people often die *before* they enact a combat function, based on the "capturing, coding, and cataloging of life" (Shaw 2013, 546). I will put this problem in the bluntest terms possible: We have decided to punish, to allocate harm and death, to persons before they have committed wrongdoing.

Drone technology has the capacity to make the terrain of war hypervisible, contributing to the "social sorting" of individuals that "exceed acceptable risk thresholds" (Tyler and Monahan year 2011, 239). But the non-identity of these persons is a stark contradiction for a military culture that is dedicated to strengthening an apparatus of hypervisibility and sophisticated intelligence collection. Taylor used the deaths of two aid workers to illustrate this contradiction.

> Take Giovani Laporto, an aid worker, and his associate. They were...captured by militants. The militants were then targeted [by drone strikes] and the aid workers were both killed. We didn't know they were in there, but just that very fact indicates that we don't know who is present on the ground (Taylor, interview with author, October 2016).

The scholarly literature on drones is silent on how risk is calculated, what behaviors cross the risk threshold, and how these factors end in a drone strike order. A number of scholars have already commented that these signatures are based on gendered and racialized patterns of behavior. Lauren Wilcox argues that drone warfare legitimizes violence through "gendered and racialized assumptions about who is a threat," (Wilcox 2015, 129) but does not delve deeper into what aspects of race and gender drone crews search for. Ian Shaw argues that, through the gaze of the drone screen, persons exist as a "digital profile through a series of screens, algorithmic calculations, and spreadsheets" (Shaw 2013, 540). However, readers are not told how these digital profiles are translated into risk. Similarly, Jamie Allinson notes that populations are "audited through the gaze of the drone, but for the purpose of death rather than life," (Allinson 2015, 120) but Allinson's work does not detail the standards that inform the auditing process.

What are the patterns of behavior that constitute risk? Even high-level foreign policy officials have admitted that more transparency is needed in the drone program, though these calls have resulted in sporadic and fragmentary pieces of information. As Lindsay Cohn Warrior notes, while John Brennan acknowledged to the U.S Senate that the Obama Administration should be transparent about the number of civilians who were killed by drone strikes, "the problem of how combatants are defined and how their status is determined remains" (Warrior 2015, 109). Despite the recognition that gender influenced U.S policymakers to collapse the distinctions between civilians and combatants, not enough research has been done on what movements or 'signatures' render civilians into combatants. We know, for example, that the intelligence agencies use cell phone metadata to track militants, that journalists appear to have similar mobility patterns to insurgents, and that journalists have been targeted as a consequence (Taylor, interview with author, October 2016). In reality, programs like the NSA's SKYNET use over 80 factors like travel, relationships, and visits to airports to determine if an individual is an insurgent. In 2016, ArsTechnica reported that SKYNET deemed Ahmad Zaidan, Al-Jazeera's Bureau Chief in Islamabad, a member of Al-Qaida. Not only was Zaidan an insurgent, but SKYNET selected him as the individual with the highest score (as in, the individual most likely to be an insurgent) out of all those who traveled between Peshawar and Lahor. Zaidan, understandably, interviews insurgents and travels frequently due to his job as a journalist. His occupation, however, meant that he displayed similar mobility patterns to the insurgents he interviewed. This error did not result in any kind of soul-searching on part of the NSA, however. In fact, metadata and Big Data continue to determine who and what were considered as 'suspicious' (Grothoff and Porup 2016).

Yet, scholars and journalists are left with frustratingly inadequate statements from CIA officials who refuse to provide the criteria for Signature Strikes but nevertheless make claims like "[c]ivilians have died, but in my firm opinion, the death toll from terrorist attacks would have been much higher if we had not taken action" (Hayden 2016) These statements risk turning the drone program into a black box, a process that scholars should not accept. Similarly, citing gender and race is not enough. We should, as Martin Muller instructed, show "the actual working of power rather than assuming it on the basis of uneven structural relations" (Mueller 2015, 33). Relegating the exercise of power to a placeholder called 'gender' does not inject clarity into the state's black box. At worst, 'terrorists were targeted—because gender, probably' illustrates the failure of critical IR to treat gender as something other than peripheral. Gender deserves more than a cursory acknowledgment—a gender analysis deserves

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scholarly labor. Because without determining what behaviors inform the decision to issue a drone strike, the practice of state security remains shielded from either improvement or criticism. Furthermore, revealing the criteria that informs the decision to conduct a strike can have significant outcomes. As Congressman Adam Schiff, a ranking member on the U.S House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, warned, "to demand a higher standard of proof...could be the end of these types of counter-terrorism operations" (Ackerman 2015). Schiff's message was clear: Understanding *how* civilians and, by extension, MAMs were targeted by drone strikes could undermine the U.S security agenda. (I would also add that if evidence and proof invalidate an enterprise, then perhaps the enterprise was faulty from the beginning.)

iii. Technology and Gender in the War on Terror
The participants that I interviewed were told that cultural differences between Western and Islamic warfighting informed the decision to view minors as legitimate targets (Taylor and Kris, interviews with author, October 2016 to January 2017). Specifically, sex segregation in Muslim-majority countries informed how the military distinguished between combatant and civilian terrains. A comment made by one participant, that "women don't go outside," is indicative of a common theme: The gendered construction of space influenced military actors.

How does drone technology interact with these gendered codes? These norms are upheld by a "physical architecture of state power," (Shaw 2016, 690**)** and an analysis of warfighting should be cautious of under-examining the material objects that are required to sustain the practice of security. For example, despite attempts to frame recent Trump Administration airstrikes in Syria as a "clear message," (Tunney 2017) this message was reliant upon the material capability of 59 Tomahawk missiles. Positioning security practice as discursive, therefore, risks rendering invisible the physical infrastructure required for the U.S to exert its power. Material objects sustain security practices, and the technological—and often limited—capabilities of these technologies inform the practice of security. The irony, of course, is that this relatively invisible infrastructure is responsible for mediating our everyday political encounters, and for assigning the "condition for our participation in social and political life" (Mazziotti 2017).

While scholars should be wary of ignoring the objects and the 'stuff' of state power, we should be equally wary of ignoring ideas and discourse. Because while military contractors and proponents of predictive analytics may claim objectivity for their algorithms, drones remain bound to human subjectivity and, with the move towards autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons platforms, the decision to label some Military-Age Males as 'insurgents' is being outsourced to algorithms.

I began this dissertation by depicting an empirical puzzle. U.S Counterinsurgency guides emphasize that militants vie for the civilian population's support as a way to win the war against a stronger and better-resourced military force. These documents state that the United States cannot rely on military prowess alone and that, in fact, "non-military means are often the most effective" way to win an irregular war against militant groups (U.S Interagency Counterinsurgency Initiative 2009, 2). The escalation of drone warfare, a return to what Keith Shimko calls a "reconnaissance-strike complex," (Shimko 2015, 28) at first appears to diverge from this position and to signal a reaffirmation of the

Revolution in Military Affairs. This perception is not uncommon. When I speak on this topic at conferences, discussants usually scratch their heads. Isn't counterinsurgency a return to boots-on-the-ground, an abdication of long-range precision weaponry in favor of, as David Kilcullen famously said, "armed social work?"

I shared these beliefs when I first began researching this project. In fact, I began this research project by asking why the Obama Administration would alter, deviate, change course from counterinsurgency to a type of warfare that has been characterized by some media outlets as "the death of precision" because of its high civilian death count (Rogers 2017). And certainly, the decision to remove Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count would seemingly cause resentment from a large segment of the host population and undermine the success of U.S foreign policy.

However, as I illustrated in the former chapter, characterizing counterinsurgency as a kinder, gentler warfare is erroneous and masks the brutality of traditional counterinsurgency campaigns. The difference between COIN and drone warfare is not marked by the former being more 'humane.' In fact, my research indicates that drone warfare is a logical progression from COIN (and let us not forget that drones often provided aerial support for counterinsurgents in Afghanistan and Iraq—not to mention that COIN in Afghanistan was accompanied by air strikes.) Innovation in drone technology is driven by democratic norms that center civilian protection and troop protection, key components of U.S identity. Perhaps this connection sounds counterintuitive, given that the U.S treats Military-Age Males differently than 'womenandchildren,' both in life and death. These contradictory tensions characterize U.S warfare since September 11th, 2001. Counterinsurgents seek to win populations that the U.S stigmatizes, and U.S foreign policy officials characterize drone strikes as necessary to protect civilian life, even though civilian status is treated with ambivalence.

Nevertheless, like COIN, which is a form of warfare characterized by asymmetry between adversaries, drone warfare is particularly attractive to democratic states who see social-sorting as the key to fighting modern battles. Drone strikes are only sustainable as a war strategy in a conflict where technological asymmetry exists between adversaries. As a weapons platform, drones are ineffective against a 'traditional' state adversary. The MQ-9 Reaper, for instance, the drone that was used most often by the Air Force to conduct strikes, reaches a top speed of approximately 275 miles, meaning that it cannot escape from conventional manned fighter aircraft, even fighter aircraft owned by poorer states (Lewis 2011, 297) And though Reapers are often equipped with missiles, pilots and operators cannot match the situational awareness of a pilot in a conventional aircraft and would likely lose in aerial combat (*ibid*). Drones are mostly useful in spaces where, as Michael Lewis describes, "air defense systems are primitive or not existent…While it is possible to find…such a permissive environment in an inter-state conflict, permissive environments that will allow for drone use will often be found in counterinsurgency or counterterrorism operations" (*ibid,* 298). Drone warfare, therefore, is effective against poorly resourced non-state actors who do not have the technical capacity to contest the aerial dominance of a state. As a result, drones are uniquely suited to fighting irregular adversaries. The drive towards drone warfare should not be thought of as an inevitable march towards technological progress, but as a relationship between greater powers and (usually) former colonies. From this relationship, the objects that sustain state power emerge.

This point was well-illustrated in Syria on June 8th, 2017, when a pro-Syrian Government drone (analysts suspect that the drone was Iranian in origin) fired on U.S coalition forces. The munitions struck no one (though they could have), meaning that the U.S continues to hold its record of zero troop fatalities from air power since 1953 (Grier 2011). Importantly, the drone was quickly struck down by a conventional aircraft (Gibbons-Neff 2017). This example reveals three important points. One, democratic states lead drone innovation, but drone innovation is not necessarily confined to democratic states. In fact, groups like ISIS continue to purchase commercial hobbyist drones that are modified to drop grenades (Watson 2017). Secondly, even if 'lesser powers' like Iran or Syria create drones, their effectiveness is muted when confronted by U.S air power, indicating that a drone is more likely to be effective in irregular warfare. Finally, even if innovation in drone technology is driven by democratic norms, the decision to *use* drones is not necessarily guided by democratic principles. Drones, therefore, should not be confused as a shorthand for 'humane war,' even if they were first born from liberal impulses.

This position is supported by a 2012 article published in *Security Dialogue,* where Frank Sauer and Niklas Schornig noted that, at the time of their writing, nearly two-thirds of UAV holders were democratic states (Sauer and Schornig 2012, 364). Currently, armed UAVs are used by 28 countries, most of them classified as 'democratic' even if this classification wanes depending on time period (Turkey, for example, develops armed drones.) A number of non-democratic states have also developed or purchased UAV drones, like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and China (New America 2017). Nevertheless, democracies seem to be the driving force behind UAV development. The United States and a few of its allies have the ability to sustain satellites, global data links, and the foreign bases that power more sophisticated UAVs, while countries like China own UAVs that have limited flight range from their ground controllers (Dillow 2016). Sauer and Schornig provocatively argue that "[i]nstead of naively taking supposed democratic peacefulness at face value," scholars should question if democracies, in comparison to other regime types, conduct violence in distinct ways. Sauer and Schornig identify a number of factors "pivotal for democratic peacefulness" that also influence the ways democracies wage war, including cost reduction, but also the desire to follow a "specific set of normative rules" like reducing civilian and troop casualties (Sauer and Schornig 2012, 365).

What are these normative rules that democracies seek to obey? My research indicates that casualty aversion and troop protection norms have been central to military defense spending. Objects, like drones, do not "pre-exist but are constituted through intra-action between different material-discursive practices" (Walter 2014, 108). The rise of drone technology is connected to how the U.S articulates its identity and also how foreign policymakers view the wars they fight.

In his 2008 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, President Obama argued that the United States must remain a "standard-bearer" in its conduct of war, words that were repeated verbatim in John Brennan's 2012 speech where he explained that using drones was an ethical imperative. "That is what makes us different from those whom we fight," both Obama and Brennan said. A point repeated by U.S leadership is a point worth considering. In his speech, Brennan argued that even when the U.S challenges "a vicious adversary that abides by no rules," the United States should still abide by

international law. Not surprisingly, Brennan argued that targeted strikes were ethical and that they conformed to the principles of necessity, distinction, and proportionality. When speaking on the Principle of Distinction, Brennan argued that "one could argue that never before has there been a weapon that allows us to distinguish more effectively between an Al-Qaeda terrorist and innocent civilians" and when speaking on proportionality, he stated that drones could be used "to avoid harming others…it is hard to imagine a tool that can better minimize the risk to civilians than remotely piloted aircraft..." (Brennan 2012)**.** Jay Carney, the White House Press Secretary, repeated this line during a press briefing when he told a reporter that "the administration is able to…pursue Al-Qaeda in a way that significantly reduces the potential for and the fact of civilian casualties"(Office of the Press Secretary 2012). U.S identity was, once again, re-articulated through a commitment to the law, to valuing civilian life, whereas their adversaries were positioned as rule-breakers. Moreover, the Principle of Distinction would be used, again, to justify the move towards automating military drones.

As emphasized in previous chapters, International Humanitarian Law was not merely tossed around in speeches. Recent leaks from the Justice Department White Paper, published in 2010, refer repeatedly to "laws of war principles" and "international law" (Benson 2014, 29)**.** Similarly, participants noted that getting authorization for a strike required a "huge confirmation process," because "whether it's PR driven or not, the U.S avoids these scenarios, especially in contrast to Russia. Not necessarily because we're a moral giant, but at the minimum it illustrates a desire to lessen the killing of civilians" (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

Instead of situating American references to IHL as strategic props, I argue that investment in and the increased use of UAVs (and other precision) weapons systems is informed by the democratic character of the United States. These weapons systems have been positioned by U.S foreign policy officials as uniquely suited for fighting irregular combatants who do not remain within state lines. Wall and Monahan (2011) note that UAVs exist

> within a discursive and symbolic context where a steadfast belief in precision technology helps justify the techno-scientific violence of the West. Central to common representations of virtuous warfare, and especially aerial warfare, is the idea that the USA is technologically superior to other countries in its war capability, particularly because of its reliance on 'smart bombs' and 'precision-guided missiles' that distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate targets (Wall and Monhan 2011, 247).

The problem, of course, is that U.S self-branding is, even if self-indulgent, somewhat—but only somewhat—accurate. Drones do, indeed, kill fewer civilians than traditional aircraft. However, that is not because drones are more precise, as will be explained below. When General Stanley McChrystal assumed command in Afghanistan in 2009, drones became part of his strategy to reduce civilian casualties and, according to a UN report, the strategy worked. There was a 28 percent reduction in civilian deaths (Brunstetter and Braun 2011, 337). Confirming civilian death is a notoriously tricky business because, as Taylor stated, "we consider local sources unreliable and there's no one on the ground counting the bodies" (Taylor, interview with author, October 2016). But even when looking at the civilian death count from various sources, the conclusion remains that the drone strikes reduce

civilian casualties *in comparison to conventional airstrikes.*

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) does not omit boys and men from their collateral damage count. Because TBIJ decided to define collateral damage to include all civilians, including Military-Age Males, their civilian death count was six times higher than the number provided by the White House—even though the minimum total number of individuals killed by drones was "strikingly similar" (Serle 2016). As I have written elsewhere, the decision to count boys and men as civilians is a "little definitional difference [that] translates to a big difference in the numbers" (Shoker 2017). Civilian immunity remains, at the very least, symbolically powerful to the United States, and central to its legitimacy—to the point that foreign policymakers only admitted that drones had killed civilians in 2013 (Columbia Law School and Sana'a Center 2017, 17). Moreover, according to the Columbia Law School Human Rights Clinic and the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies only twenty percent of civilian deaths from drone strikes have been acknowledged by the U.S government (*ibid*, 3).These numbers potentially undermine a discourse that positions the investment in drone technology as humane and morally necessary.

Certainly, there seems to have been a perception by the Obama Administration that the civilian death count, or the collateral damage count, should be kept low, even if artificially. But to reiterate the argument I made in chapter three, the position that artificially lowering the collateral damage count was part of a 'strategic' or deceptive campaign to sell drones to the American public does not explain why foreign policymakers opted to use civilian protection as the framework for advancing this cause. Nor was there a total disconnect between the discourse and reality; Proponents of armed drones argue that the data collected by TBIJ shows that drones are still better at reducing civilian death. Daniel Byman, for example, argues that:

> Drone deaths—about one in three, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism—is lower than it would be for other forms of strikes. Bombings by F-16s or Tomahawk cruise missile salvos, for example, pack a much more deadly payload. In December 2009, the United States fired Tomahawks at a suspected terrorist training camp in Yemen, and over 30 people were killed in the blast, most of them women and children. At the time, the Yemeni regime refused to allow the use of drones, but had this not been the case, a drone's real-time surveillance would probably have spotted the large number of women and children, and the attack would have been aborted. Even if the strike had gone forward for some reason, the drone's far smaller warhead would have killed fewer innocents. Civilian deaths are tragic and pose political problems. But the data show that drones are more discriminate than other types of force (Byman 2013).

Michael Lewis adds that because UAVs have the ability to loiter for lengthy periods of times there is a better chance that the target will be correctly identified and the proportionality of the attack better assessed (Lewis 2011, 297)**.** Lewis went on to write an article in *The Atlantic* where he stated that drones were "[a]ctually the most humane form of warfare ever" (Lewis 2013). And drone crews, of course, remain in the trailers and geographically removed from insurgents, well-insulated from combat on the ground. "In general, proponents of unmanned systems and robots expect them to reduce human suffering and death in the short run" (Sauer and Schornig 2012, 371).

The way the United States views its adversary is important because, to echo Michael Dillon, "different

referents of security give rise to different kinds of governmental technologies and political rationalities" (Dillon 2007, 10). And this has certainly been the case when the United States has directed its investment in military technology. The discourse surrounding the War on Terror, summarized as a conflict between a rule-following United States and shadowy insurgent networks, is reflected in the direction of U.S military technology. ISR technologies need to be both persistent and pervasive in order to match an adversary that was described in the 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism as "agile and adaptive" (Obama 2011, i). The need for persistence has led to increased investment in sensors, used for collecting images and video, and drone battery life, to lengthen the amount of time drones can loiter before docking (En 2016, 51).

In a war where adversaries blend into civilian environments across territorial lines, social sorting becomes desirable. No wonder, then, that Ray Odierno and Nichoel Brooks wrote that ISR "sets the conditions for the initial success of the surge in Iraq" (Odierno and Brooks 2008, 52). Meanwhile, the US Air Force estimated that counterinsurgency required three to four times more ISR than major combat operations because irregular warfare "involves a fluid target set that requires the much longer dwell times that only UAVs can sustain" (Gregory 2011, 193). Spending on drones was only $363 million dollars in 2001, but grew to $2.9 billion dollars in 2013 (Hall 2013, 17). In the 2017 fiscal year alone, the Department of Defense allocated approximately 4.6 billion dollars (Gettinger 2016, 1). In 2005, only five percent of military aircraft were UAV, but by 2012 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles comprised a third of all military aircraft (Hall 2013, 16-17). And in 2015, a Defense Department spokesman stated that unmanned drone flights would increase by approximately 50 percentage points by 2019, from 60-65 a day in 2015 to about 90 per day in 2019 (Bloomberg 2015). Counterinsurgency, therefore, was not a 'return' to a less technologically intensive form of battle, but required consistent technological innovation.

This point is better illustrated by contrasting drone warfare with military technologies used earlier in the War on Terror and first Gulf War. Genealogy, as Massimo Mazziotti once noted, has the tendency to highlight how social context informs the direction of technological change (Mazziotti 2017). Counterinsurgency is sometimes conceptualized as a deviation from the Revolution in Military Affairs, and drone warfare as its return. I argue that there has been a sustained ideological belief in aerial dominance and precision technology throughout the War on Terror. The expansion of drone warfare to theaters that the Obama Administration legally defined as "areas outside of active hostilities" is part of this military trajectory.

Writing in the JFQ Forum during his time as vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William A. Owens argued that the American RMA, though fraught with internal ambiguity about "what is to be done," seemed to converge on the "Clausewitzian idea of war, the notion of the 'fog and friction' of conflict'" that too often "obscures predictability" (Owens 1996, 38). While Owens acknowledges that the fog of war cannot be totally eliminated, the desire to increase predictability remains, a solution that is found in "being able to *see* a large battlefield with great fidelity"(*ibid*). Military dominance, therefore, depends on innovating the technologies of aerial surveillance—a literal ascension from the fog of war. But not even Owens predicted that technological innovation would be directed towards non-state militia forces. Rather, he foresaw the RMA's potential directed towards a traditional adversary, with precision weaponry geared towards "effective longer range weapons" (*ibid*)

rather than the military drones that persisted across state lines and hovered over communities.

The RMA was mentioned shortly after September 11th 2001, though Donald Rumsfeld preferred the term 'military transformation' (Rumsfeld 2002, 20).The reconnaissance-strike complex, mentioned earlier, was a strategy that informed the U.S 'Shock and Awe' campaign in 2002, that was itself lifted from the 1991 Gulf War. A conflict that lasted only one hundred hours, the 1991 Gulf War contained more separate air attacks conducted in one day than the English Air Force managed to issue between 1942 and 1943 (Shimko 2017, 17). According to Shimko, the designers of Operation Iraqi Freedom expected a similar outcome, which was somewhat fulfilled when Iraqi forces and Saddam Hussein were deposed within three weeks. Afghanistan was similarly inundated by large-scale conventional air strikes before COIN migrated there, too (*ibid*, 18). The first twenty weeks of U.S bombing in Afghanistan resulted between 3100 and 3500 civilians killed by either bombs or missiles, nearly twenty thousand refugees with serious health issues in camps, and approximately fifty thousand BLU-97 cluster bombs around "major bombing zones." These numbers, of course, do not include the destroyed infrastructure, environment, public health, and economy (Herold 2002, 626)**.** In his study on civilian death in the early weeks of the War in Afghanistan, Marc Herold found that U.S military planners chose weapons that "necessarily resulted in heavy civilian casualties." The five-hundred pound bomb, with a lethal blast range of 200 meters, was later 'upgraded' to a two-thousand pound bomb that had a lethal blast range of 34 meters—these bombs also relied on GPS (Herold 2002, 629). Central to all of these attacks were RMA technologies that reconfigured "the basic elements of warfare by distributing mass along a timeline that is narrow but a space continuum that is broad…allowing mass to be concentrated in time but not in space" (Shimko 2017, 18). The practice of using high-intensity, high-frequency bombing over a wide geographic space is often referred to by its other name: carpet bombing.

However, Shimko diverts from my argument by noting that the emergence of an Iraqi insurgency caused the "diminished utility of technical surveillance" (Shimko 2015, 25). In a conflict against a traditional adversary, the U.S had an information advantage and was able to see where bases, tanks, and Iraqi troops were located. In the context of an insurgency, however, the United States found that its bases, infrastructure, and troops were rendered highly visible to an insurgent adversary that could use civilian life as cover. Becoming a "low tech" adversary became strategically useful for insurgents. In the previous chapter, I noted that Frank Hoffman argued that the RMA was a range of technological innovations better suited to fighting a traditional adversary (in the context of the Cold War, that adversary was understood to be the USSR.) Shimko argues that discussions about the RMA have "waned in recent years," not because there has been no revolution in the military's organization or technological orientation, but because the scope of the revolution is narrower than initially conceived. Echoing Jeffrey Record,"Clausewitzian great-power clashes" have been replaced by "smaller, messier wars…many of them fought by irregular adversaries in failed states…mastery of the RMA is mastery of a war that will never be fought" (Record 2000, 20).

Contrary to Hoffman and Shimko, I argue that the United States has not receded from using 'precision' technologies to fight insurgents. The U.S continued, as illustrated earlier, to invest in ISR technologies during COIN in Iraq and Afghanistan. Taylor, for example, mentioned that the United States used

Patterns of Life to target couriers because, in an effort to escape monitoring, militants avoided using cell phones. "Taliban or Al-Qaeda aren't going to use cell phones because they know they can be overheard so they try to go dark, and they use people to deliver messages back and forth" (Taylor, interview with author, October 2016). The Gorgon Stare and ARGUS sensors were designed to disrupt these low-tech methods of communication by automatically highlighting movements that came into camera range, referred to as autotracking (Robinson 2009).

This is also not the first time that the United States has sought technological advantage in a counterinsurgency, nor the first time the United States has been motivated to invest in technologies that limit civilian casualties and increase troop protection. Historically, the Air Force has been reluctant to adopt aerial technologies that remove pilots from aircraft, especially compared to the Army, the latter which bought hundreds of the first surveillance drone developed 1955 by the Radioplane company (Whittle 2014, 21). However, two incidents prompted the move towards surveillance UAVs. The Air Force's reluctance changed in 1960 when the Soviet Union shot down a U-2 reconnaissance jet that was flying over its territory, piloted by Francis Gary Powers—though the Air Force's attempt to award a contract to the Ryan Aeronautical Company to adapt its Q-2 Firebee for photo reconnaissance was blocked by the Pentagon. But the contract finally went through when another U-2 plane was shot down over Cuba (*ibid*). The Q-2 Firebee drones were used in Vietnam, but because they used film cartridges to collect photos, the drones had to be flown out of the country to deliver the physical film cartridges. There was no guarantee that the film had collected anything that would help with ISR operations. More than half of the UAVs used in the Vietnam war crashed or were shot down (*ibid,* 22). The point here, however, is that surveillance and information have been historically important to so-called "small, messy wars." As illustrated above, the proliferation of armed drones is especially apparent where the adversary is 'non-traditional.'

Given that drones are better at protecting civilians and troops, Should we then endorse the use of drones, including drones that are used for missile strikes? Critics of drone warfare need to take these assertions seriously, since 'protecting civilians' has become central to the legitimization of drone warfare. But, as I demonstrate below, the majority of those killed by drones never have their identities verified—there are simply fewer persons dying in absolute numbers. Said otherwise, drone strikes may kill fewer persons in comparison to conventional airstrikes, but this does not mean that the ratio between civilian and combatant dead was 'proportional.' Moreover, by omitting Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count, thereby reducing the civilian cost and altering the calculation that determines if a strike is 'worth it,' the drone's precision is reduced even further. Drone strikes may kill fewer people, but decision-making determines 'precision.'

In 2016, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a Freedom of Information Act Lawsuit against the U.S Government in order to obtain information on the legal framework that justified the use of drone strikes. The government issued a redacted 2013 memorandum that outlined its policy framework and which indicated that 'High Value Terrorists' (or HVTs) were targeted only if there was near-certainty that the targets were there, and if there was "near certainty that non-combatants [would] not be injured or killed" (The White House 2013, 11). The memorandum, titled *Procedure for*

Approving Direct Actions Against Terrorist Targets Located Outside the United States and Areas of Active Hostilities, did not mention Signature Strikes or TADs. Civilian protection was again mentioned in a 2014 report submitted to congressional defense committees, where the authors stated that drones complied with the Law of Armed Conflict including the principles of military necessity, humanity, and distinction —which requires that"*only lawful targets…may be intentionally targeted*" (Department of Defense 2014, 2).

Or in other words, we only kill those that the law deems we may intentionally kill. The criteria to determine who became a 'High Value Terrorist,' was later explained as a person who poses an "imminent threat to the United States" (The White House 2013, 17), which is striking due its ambiguity. David Kennedy once remarked that the law provided an "institutional framework for transforming sovereign power and violence into right"and a "vocabulary for marking legitimate power and justifiable death" (Kennedy 2016, 257). It is precisely the move towards legality that highlights boys and men as sites that should be monitored in the battlespace. The Military-Age Male functions as a surveillance technology, telling soldiers and policymakers where they should look. Moreover**,** the criterion used to determine the behaviors that are deemed to be a militant's 'signature' have never been released. So what kinds of boys and men pose an imminent threat? The criteria is discussed in the next section.

 Most research indicates that it is true that drones reduce civilian casualties in *comparison* to strikes conducted by conventional aircraft, which I will note is a low bar to beat when conventional U.S airstrikes rival the bomb-drop rate of its allies in World War Two. (There are notable exceptions; recent research conducted by Micah Zenko and Amelia Mae Wolf (2016) finds that drones kill more civilians than conventional airstrikes, but this finding is a minority position in the research literature that chronicles civilian death by drones.) Yet even with greater care given to civilian protection, at least 1 in 16 of those who die in drone strikes are civilians, according to the Roosevelt Institute. (Davis 2017, 1). Moreover, the Roosevelt Institute argues that even when combatants are killed, the majority of those killed in strikes are unidentified. On this point, all third-party researchers and organizations agree. As of November 2014, the deaths of 41 militants resulted in the deaths of 1, 147 people (*ibid*). The precision rate to this date, therefore, was 3.45 percent, meaning that the argument about 'precision weaponry' is a peculiar claim. Fewer civilians die, but only because the strike capability of the weapon is weaker. Hellfire missiles weigh about 100lb, because Predator and Reaper drones are designed to be disposable airframes that cannot hold heavy payloads (Ackerman 2015). Drones are not more precise; they are simply smaller weapons and therefore less destructive. The issue remains, however, that the Principle of Distinction was seriously eroded—even if fewer persons are dead, the majority of those killed by drones were categorized as 'legitimate targets,' their civilian status stripped in death because they were characterized as Military-Age Males.

Writing for the Roosevelt Institute, Cameron Davis notes that the practice of assuming that any male in the vicinity of a blast strike is a militant "flouts the traditional American standard of 'innocent until proven guilty'" (Davis 2017, 2). Given that drones allegedly excel at sorting combatants from civilians —every participant mentioned that sex differences were easily distinguishable—we should be troubled

that more caution is not given to limiting the number of civilians killed by strikes.

> We have come across men wearing women's clothing and wearing headscarves, but you could tell by the way they're walking that they weren't women, but the way they were walking through crowds. It's a bit hard to explain, but you can easily tell gender differences after 1000 hours of watching video (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

> You can more or less determine whether they were male or female if you could see that they were wearing pants of some sort or if they're walking around covered. The movements would be a bit different. If you're a woman you're generally walking around with a certain gait (Taylor 2017, interview with author, October 2016**).**

U.S defense and intelligence communities could count, with high fidelity, the number of dead on the ground and even distinguish Military-Age Males from women and children.'The drone stare,' the common term used to describe the sensor's range of sight, was used to collect data about the populations under surveillance. In a Congressional Research Report, Chad Haddal and Jeremiah Gertler write that drones could identify objects the size of milk cartons from an altitude of 60, 000 feet and models like the now-retired Predator B have the ability to fly without refueling for over thirty hours, in comparison to helicopters, which would require refuelling after two hours (Haddal and Gertler 2010, 3). This 'persistent gaze' makes drones the preferred choice for policymakers looking to monitor individuals and borders. "In part, drones are forms of surveillance in keeping with the precepts of categorical suspicion and social sorting that define often contemporary surveillance systems" (Wall and Monahan 2011, 240). Yet, despite the Big Data collected by drones, this information has not resulted in greater precision. Instead, combatant status was allotted to boys and men who passed a threshold of risk.

> Everything was measured using Patterns of Life (PoL). You could see who the targets were talking to and you could see body language...The percentage of accuracy—I don't know if this is the exact number—but if it was greater than 45 percent then you'd have permission to 'action them' as we would say. That was the collateral damage estimate. As in, if we were 45 percent sure that these guys aren't civilian, then we'd action them (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

Drone technology informs the renegotiation of civilian immunity, indicating that, as Daniel Brunstetter and Megan Braun have succinctly argued, the Just War Tradition is "an ongoing project that is made and remade by those who engage it, while still allowing for the possibility that it respects certain boundaries" (Brunstetter and Braun 2011, 342). Despite the sophistication of drone sensors, it is human decision-makers who distinguish combatants from civilians**.** Legal tradition remains central to American warfighting, but these legal codes are adjusted through technological processes that mediate the production of knowledge. Rather than selecting individuals who are engaged in combat, a 'target' is pre-emptively killed by using information about his sociodemographic grouping to predict his likelihood to engage in violence. The group's 'character' is prioritized over the individual's activity.

Policymakers have argued that the decision-making process surrounding strikes are accurate because, as NSA General Counsel Stewart Baker stated, "metadata absolutely tells you everything about somebody's life. If you have enough metadata, you don't really need content" (Cole 2014). This line is

troubling enough on its own but becomes even more troubling when a rather important omission is noted: Most of those who are killed are not monitored as individuals, but as members of an insurgent *assembly*. The metadata that is collected, therefore, uses characteristics that have been traditionally understood as separate from what an *individual* does. Moreover, the behaviors that determined combatant status were often removed from what is traditionally understood to be an act of combat. Note how Military-Age Males, even when not exhibiting a combat function, were counted as combatants if they were near the primary suspect. And recall the NSA's SKYNET program, which uses details like airport visitation to create a profile of 'killable' enemies, hardly a behavior exclusive to insurgents.

Lauren Wilcox has argued that Patterns of Life position gender as a performance where subjects enact "behaviors and practices against a normative framework that renders some modes of life into the category of the 'hated'" (Wilcox 2017, 20). There certainly are some very startling similarities between Patterns of Life and theories that argue that gender is performance. Men go outside; Women stay inside. Men do this; Women do that. However, if gender was 'performance,' then it was a biological performance that men and boys could not subvert. Men would sometimes try to 'perform' femininity by wearing a burka when passing through targeted areas, a trick that often failed because men and women walked differently. While sociological differences provided the moral framework for monitoring Military-Age Males, physiological difference was also a visual cue that enabled surveillance.

For the sake of accuracy, I should note that not all the participants I interviewed were against the use of drones during wartime, but even advocates noted the potential for its abuse. Alex stated that "I wouldn't say drones themselves are the error. I think it's a great tool to have in your tool kit. But I think we've become very reliant on them and it lulls you into...it makes easier to have less consequences if you do screw up and it shouldn't be the exclusive tool...they can facilitate forgetting our moral code" (Alex, interview with author, August 2016). Ultimately, Alex argued that more mechanisms were needed to ensure that fewer civilians died and that the people responsible for civilians deaths were held accountable.

Drowning in Data: How Drone Crews Use Data to Issue Strikes
A number of correctives have emerged to puncture the 'technology first' narrative that often characterizes drone warfare. In a 2009 New York Times article, Scott Shane wrote that support for the drone program was bolstered by its "antiseptic, high-tech appeal," which hid "just how radical it is… for the first time in history, a civilian intelligence agency is using robots to carry out a military mission, selecting people for killing in a country where the United States is not officially at war" (Shane 2009). Similarly, Derek Gregory writes that "advanced militaries like to boast that their conduct of war has become surgical, sensitive and scrupulous (Gregory 2010, 188).

Yet the discursive construction of the drone stare, one where the technological supremacy of its sensors is referenced using mythical names like 'Gorgon' and 'Argus,' is problematic due to the technological limitations of the aircraft. Reaper aircraft, for instance, only provided a 30 percent view of the sky before being equipped with the Gorgon Stare, a far cry from godlike omniscience and which required drone pilots and operators to re-establish peripheral vision (Loveless 2010 quoted in Williams 2011, 386). One drone crew-member stated, "You really have to think yourself into [the flight-deck] and it

requires a lot of imagination" (*ibid*). The decision to issue a drone strike was based on how data was interpreted by its human analysts and, as time went on, the automated software designed to either assist or replace human analysis. The data that was collected by drone technology remained a chaotic mess until a social-scientific lens was applied to make sense of the recorded daily habits of local populations. As will be seen, the Military-Age Male looms large as a subject that needed to be 'understood' for the purposes of military intervention.

'Humanity' is often re-injected into stories about drone warfare by focusing on the mental stress faced by those who worked in the program. By re-centering the people responsible for practicing drone warfare, human fallibility contradicts the drone's cold, robotic components. For example, recent research and media attention on PTSD rates in the drone crew subverts the idea that geographic distance necessarily leads to moral distancing. A 2006 study found that crews who worked on drone strike missions experienced the same levels of chronic fatigue as Airborne Early Warning and Control crews (Warrior 2015, 97-98). In 2011, the Air Force conducted its own study on the mental health of its drone crews and found that almost one third of pilots had symptoms of 'burnout' and seventeen percent showed signs of "clinical distress" that interfered with their jobs **(***ibid***)**. An interview participant explained that, in anticipation of the stress faced by drone crews, pastors with security clearance were present to anyone experiencing "spiritual difficulty," though psychologists and counselors were not present (Jessie, interview with author, January 2017). The attention paid to mental illness re-centers the human subject in a bureaucratic process that is often de-contextualized and pictured as asocial.

Media accounts are littered with references that focus on the body as the focal point in the practice of war. Pilots who get their first kill are celebrated for "popping their cherries," (Pilkington 2015). In another case, a drone sensor called 'Sparkle' uses the language of gender equality to audit the men she aims to kills."I know what they do to their women...If you're going to shoot a child in the head for trying to go to school ...[killing them] is nothing to be upset about... because they would kill me in half a second if they could" (Maurer 2015). A former intelligence analyst, writing in *The Guardian,* begins her column by asking politicians "[h]ow many men have you seen crawl across a field, trying to make it to the nearest compound for help while bleeding out from severed legs?" (Linebaugh 2015). As readers or scholars, these statements remind us that subjectivity and bodily injury are crucial to those who practice drone warfare. As Elaine Scarry notably stated: "injury may not be the only way that people experience war...but reciprocal injuring is the obsessive content of war and not an unfortunate or preventable consequence of war" (Scarry 1985, quoted in Christine Sylvester 2014, 493). Similarly, participants judged the fairness and ethics of drone warfare by discussing bodily injury, whether or not they supported U.S foreign policy.

> If you're on the ground, you don't feel like [the conflict] is unfair. The militants are not uniformed; they put women in front of you, and children. If I don't deliver this strike someone on my side, wearing my uniform, will die. So that's different than having no force on the ground, pushing a button and following nebulous foreign policy. I think it's easier to support a mission if you're helping protect fellow coalition members. But the feeling one gets if they're not even protecting anyone is, "what am I doing here if I'm not protecting anyone?" And I think that's a common theme in the military, regardless if that person is conservative or liberal. There's a lot less support for military endeavors if there's no one on the ground (Alex, interview with author, August 2016).

Another participant stated:

> If I had to tell the world anything—and I think I keep going back to this issue with drones—is that drone warfare really says a lot about what we've accepted as a culture. I can tell you from my very personal experience that there is nothing honorable about sitting in a dark room across the other side of the world and hunting someone down. We're doing it because it's easy, but the reason that decisions during wartime are hard is because they're supposed to be hard (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

While drones are sometimes more technically known as 'Unmanned Aerial Vehicles,' one veteran from the drone program resisted this characterization, opting instead to call them "hypermanned" (Ross 2016). Kris confirmed this idea by noting that approximately 450 people could watch each video feed and that one person was not responsible for making the decision to strike (Kris, interview with author, January 2017). And according to the Air Force, 168 people were needed to keep a Predator flying for 24 hours, while a Global Hawk required 300 people. In contrast, an F-16 fighter aircraft required 100 people per mission. Drones, therefore, do not necessarily translate into a smaller military footprint (Cloud 2011).

What these statements also illustrate is that technologies that facilitate killing from afar did not necessarily result in moral distancing but caused those involved to meditate on their own involvement (Coecklbergh 2013). Furthermore, and as Mark Coecklebergh argues, because drone crews spend most of their time monitoring the lives of people on the ground, rather than killing 'targets,' drones have the potential to embolden empathy. The drone can, in fact, become a bridge (*ibid*, 133). "I may not have been on the ground in Afghanistan, but I watched parts of the conflict in great detail on a screen for days on end. I know the feeling you experience when you see someone die. Horrifying barely covers it" (Linebaugh 2013).

Rather than focusing exclusively on the machine's hardware, drones should be thought of as a component in a socio-material order (Mueller 2015, 29)**,** or a network where technological infrastructure meets human subjectivity to produce a bureaucracy that allocates death. The material component of this network is not superfluous or secondary, but crucial to understanding how Military-Age Males were targeted by the U.S security apparatus. Similarly, and as explained earlier, drone hardware was produced, not because of an irresistible march towards technological progress, but because the War on Terror and its associated norms redirected innovation towards less destructive ISR technologies. Drone technology was the product of a normative choice, a relationship that was especially apparent when examining U.S disillusionment with the RMA or 'military transformation.' The emergence of the Iraqi insurgency prompted a renegotiation with the technologies that informed traditional warfare and resulted in a shift towards ISR technologies that could sustain pervasive and persistent warmaking. These technological adaptations allow scholars to understand counterinsurgency as a "paradigm of order," rather than "some on-again/off-again tactic in a broader arsenal of military thinking," (Grove 2016). Furthermore, examining the way drone crews interacted with the drone's software highlights the role of political thought in technological innovation. My interviews reveal that drone warfare, instead of a program that deployed the rule of law 'objectively,' required decision-making that used gender to create meaning from the video and imagery collected by drones. It is true that UAV technologies "compile a complex multi-layered picture of the operational environment" that

require drone crews to learn a new skill-set, since interpreting a geographical environment cannot be done by eyesight alone (Williams 2011, 386). But while these images were scanned by trained analysts, they faced a challenge similar to all those who collect data. As Kenneth Waltz noted in 1979: "reality emerged from our selection and organization of materials that are available in infinite quality." Waltz went on to ask, "How can we decide which materials to select and how to arrange them?" (Waltz 1979, 5). This was a daunting challenge for the U.S military, which was, to quote Lt. Gen. David Deptula, "drowning in data" (Magnuson 2010). Analysts were required to determine what was important, to select their variables, and to 'call out' what was deemed suspicious.

My position diverges from earlier scholarly works that critique Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies for distancing users from the subjects viewed through the screen. Proponents of this view argue that GIS technologies can sometimes abstract people from their complicated social lives; people are rendered into points on a map, their deaths sometimes labeled as 'bugsplats' by military and intelligence personnel. Some scholars have feared that GIS technologies flatten the relationships between people and their environments, producing a visual representation of a mapped terrain that does not accurately capture the social meaning people attach to their surroundings (McLafferty 2005, 39). Given that "(social) space is a (social) product, and that "every society…produces a space, its own space" (Lefebvre 1989, quoted in Branch 2015, 40), omitting culturally specific knowledge from geographic inquiry can seriously impact the conclusions reached by GIS users. Indeed, some critics have alleged that GIS technologies, due to the origins of cartography, focus too much on "attributes attached to places, and rarely as relational mappings of interdependencies between those places" (Sheppard 2005, 8). Pre-digital maps recreated the state based along territorial lines, "abstracting human space onto a printed Ptolemaic grid," an innovation stemming from the Reconnaissance's popularization of Claudius Ptolemy's *Geography* (Branch 2014, 13). Cartesian mapping replaced earlier earlier Medieval ideas about statehood, the latter period characterizing space as an assemblage of possessions and land held through social ties between lords and vassals (*ibid*). In contemporary drone warfare, state lines did not demarcate the boundaries of war; the technological capabilities of the drone mandated a new way of understanding the relationship between war and sovereign space. The proliferation of drone warfare under the Obama Administration was met with new legal guidelines that re-established the practice of warfare within states with which the U.S was not at war. The United States, as mentioned earlier, maintained that insurgents could be targeted "outside areas of active hostilities" (areas outside Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria) where it was not officially at war by citing self-defense (The White House 2013).

U.S Defense and Intelligence agencies re-injected social relationships into surveillance technologies by centering social-scientific knowledge about the populations they were monitoring. Counterinsurgency, as the SULGC reminds its readers, is a form of warfare that has the "population at the center of its focus" (Marine Corps 2006, 3). This position remained consistent as the U.S expanded drone warfare under the Obama Administration. U.S defense and intelligence communities leveraged social scientific knowledge about gender and space in Muslim societies in order to create meaning from the data that was collected by the drone's sensors. (The move towards subjectivity, therefore, is not necessarily progressive or feminist.) The aerial footage collected by drones, therefore, re-introduces the relationship between society and space, but these relationships are coded based on their usefulness to military goals. The supra-territorial character of counterinsurgency informs the redrawing of

battlespace to make sense of a style of war where"the insurgency force, the civil population, and the terrain are virtually inseparable" (*ibid*). U.S foreign policy actors examined space for its capacity to act as a plane for social relationships, a fact that was reiterated by different participants.

> During the summertime, there was a 50/50 chance that we wouldn't fire. There was a difference between winter and summer. Since the summer had better weather, local Afghans would opt to work the fields at night. But working at night during the Winter is a bit suspicious (Corey, interview with author, January 2017).

Another participant explained that "women don't go outside," (Alex, interview with author, August 2016) and Corey stated that "the assumption was that we were shooting at men...my impression was that women were not allowed to intermingle with men or be outside. I would only see them walking with children 200 meters away" (Corey, interview with author, January 2017). The battlespace was interpreted using gendered patterns of mobility. Participants were more likely to note that "women do not go outside" if they were stationed in rural areas. If they were in Iraq and canvassing a city, however, they were more likely to encounter women though they were under strict instructions to avoid interacting with them (this task was left to female soldiers.) Despite the diversity between Afghanistan and Iraq, the Military-Age Male was a consistent category that was used across all Muslims-majority populations.

Image, video, and geospatial analysts scanned the footage transmitted from the drone's view of the battlefield. They were instructed to 'make sense' of the battlefield, by scanning the landscape for elements that were deemed threatening by U.S foreign policy officials. These analysts did not decide whether a strike should be made; that job fell to the command structure and its assorted lawyers. However, their interpretation of the battlefield, as represented through the monitor, was crucial to the decision-making process. Making sense of (human) terrain, therefore, required making *predictive assessments;* persons were assessed for their *potential* to become violent in light of the military's "past experiences," thereby grounding interpretation in history and social context. Maps are not only representations of the world around us. Rather, maps organize our messy environments into a standard that highlights certain features and ignores others. "As the term 'target' already indicates, what analysts see is never epistemically or morally neutral. There is always already interpretation" (Coeckelbergh 2013, 128). When it comes to counterinsurgency, the population's relationship with the surrounding environment is assessed by leveraging anthropological knowledge about Muslim societies and how gender segregation in these societies informs who inhabits public space. Several participants did not know why Military-Aged Males were excluded from the collateral damage count, though they all thought critically on the question. The final participant I interviewed, however, could answer the question directly.

> That question was addressed by one of my commanders. The idea of the Military-Age Male is a cultural one. It's completely cultural...there are cultures out there that when a male is considered a man, they're given a rifle and told to go fight. A MAM is when a boy no longer remains a boy, when he can't hang out with women and sit with them. He has to go and stay with the men. When this happens over there, it's around 12 years old. I don't remember how old it was in Iraq, but this idea is widespread across Middle Eastern culture (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

In his 2014 book *The Cartographic State,* Jordan Branch argues that "mapping technology is a set of material tools and practices…tied to a mapmaker's or a map user's repertoire of ideas about how the world is organized," (Branch 2014,11). The private sphere, where home life was constructed as a place for women and (some) children, became the signature for 'civilian.' The public sphere was a space where boys 'came of age' and where they were inducted into violent politics. One participant acknowledged that "[a]ge never came up when were being given a description of the target" (Corey, interview with author, January 2017). Instead, if boys were in the battlespace, then the assumption was that they were old enough for war (*ibid*).

Kris's statement deserves further examination. Note that the transition from boyhood to manhood is paralleled by segregation between the sexes. Children may spend time with women, but male adulthood is marked by leaving the 'private sphere,' guidelines that parallel some interpretations of Islamic theology. In practice, there have been striking parallels between the United States and Saudi Arabia's treatment of male adulthood. In Saudi Arabia, an individual who has been charged with a capital offense and who is under the age of majority may be executed based on a physical examination that assesses whether that person has gone through puberty (Human Rights Watch 2008, 25-26)**.** In past court cases, markers of adulthood have included hoarseness of voice or the presence of facial hair, traits that are often visible before the age of 18 (*ibid*). The age of majority is determined by Islamic Jurisprudence, as articulated by Saudi Arabia's Council of Senior Scholars. Generally, the age of majority is associated with biological development and if the individual does not display signs of puberty earlier then they automatically enter the age of majority upon reaching the age of 15 . For our purposes, puberty also governs the spaces that are open to children. According to some interpretations of Islam, once male children (who are not related by blood, importantly) exhibit signs of adolescence, then they are expected to leave spaces reserved for women and (younger) children. There are some exceptions. Most family relationships do not undergo this kind of segregation (Syed 2010, 154).

While women remained in the private sphere, the public sphere was reserved for men, as interpreted by U.S military officials. " A MAM is when a boy no longer remains a boy, *when he can't hang out with women and sit with them. He has to go and stay with the men*" (Kris, interview with author, January 2017). Public space became a substitute for the military draft, where boys who entered this sphere were involuntarily recruited into a category known as the Military-Age Male. As highlighted in chapter 3, the similarities across these different countries appear to be linked to ideas about 'non-Western' childhood, intermixed with a basic understanding of Islamic mandates surrounding gender segregation. The very practice of interpreting culture, whether or not this interpretation withstood scrutiny, illustrates that anthropological knowledge about Islamic gender roles was fundamental to seeing through the drone.

Analysts are required to make judgments, whether the data is presented visually or otherwise. In a textbook assigned to future intelligence analysts, David Moore writes that "[t]o create intelligence requires transformations resulting from an intellectual endeavor that sorts the significant from [the] insignificant," (Millward 1993, quoted in Moore 2017, 3). The JP 2-0 *Joint Analysis,* published in 2013 under the direction of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spends considerable time discussing

"the nature of intelligence" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2013, I-1**).** The operational environment (OE), the space where these operations take place, are monitored by drones. The sensors collect raw data, but must be processed into "intelligible form." The publication, however, is clear that intelligence gathering requires interpretation. The amount of time spent on interpretation is substantial and highlights drone warfare's dependence on surveillance and data collection. Without the ability to gather "raw data," drone warfare would not be viable. Drone analysts spend approximately 80 to 85 percent monitoring video where one can "go weeks and days watching people do nothing," according to an analyst identified as 'John' in *The Guardian* (Fielding-Smith and Black 2015). We know, of course, that people do not spend 80 to 85 percent of their daily lives doing *nothing*, but if our Patterns of Life are audited for the purpose of military intervention, then 'nothing' remains an aspirational standard.

The word "nothing," also highlights that our daily lives are sifted and categorized, most of our social practices discarded as irrelevant for military purposes, which has both positive and negative consequences. On one hand, I do not think many would suggest that our lives should contain more openings for military intervention. On the other hand, excluding large swaths of cultural context can also propagate war, which is particularly evident in the CIA's drone program in the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Although, CIA drone strikes have allegedly killed militants, The Conflict Monitoring Centre of Islamabad explains that most of the approximately two-thousand people killed have been civilians (Luiz and Bandeira 2017, 133). The FATA area of Pakistan is home to both Pakistani and Afghan Pashtuns, who follow the Pashtunwali code of honor, which includes "melmastia (hospitality), nanawati (the notion that hospitality could not be denied to a fugitive), and badal (the right to vengeance)." Effectively, the CIA creates the conditions for its own intervention. If proximity to a suspect and gender are risk factors, and given that insurgents assimilate into the civilian population for cover—and in the case of the FATA valley—require that civilians provide them with shelter, then insurgents effectively criminalize half the population (the male part of the population) simply by existing in a civilian space.

The *JP 2-0* states that "intelligence has two critical features that distinguish it from information. Intelligence allows anticipation or prediction of future situations and circumstances, and it informs decisions by illuminating the differences in available courses of action (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2013, I-1). The *JP 2-0* acknowledges that "predictive analysis is both difficult and risky" and prone to "greater rates of failure," (*ibid*, II-10) but that has not stopped American defense and intelligence communities from trying. Making predictive judgments, injecting meaning into raw data to produce a category of knowledge as "intelligence," is central to how funding is allocated within the U.S security apparatus. Think of the Futures Markets Applied to Prediction project, sometimes described as the Terrorism Futures Market. Funded by DARPA in 2003, this project aimed to encourage investors to bet on the likelihood of a future assassination or terrorist attacks. The program was canceled after U.S Democrats criticized the program for "seriously propos[ing] we trade in death" (Courson and Turnham 2003). Anecdotes aside, the United States has opted to center prediction at the core of its intelligence gathering process. This is illustrated more fully by examining the role of intelligence analysis within the larger chain of command.

Interpretation travels through a chain of command that inevitably leads to a choice about whether an airstrike is warranted. The crew is connected to a mIRC chatroom, where analysts report suspicious

Patterns of Life**.** "As a screener [the person who decides to type an observation in to the chat channel] anything you say is going to be interpreted in the most hostile way" (Fielding-Smith and Black 2015). One participant argued that "[y]ou could theorize that, in reality, there are quite a few people involved in the ultimate demise of a compound/target/human...in fact, the person pressing the button has the least control" (Jessie, interview with author, October 2016)**.** Another participant explained the process in extensive detail, explaining that individuals did not have to exhibit a combat function in order to be targeted. Carrying a gun was enough to become a risky subject, though as Kris noted, in a heavily armed country like Afghanistan, many men carry guns (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

> I'll give you an example of the first Hellfire shot I took. Getting into the details is pretty important. We're watching 3 individuals. I get on shift; the crew before me was watching a firefight between insurgents and coalition forces. They were underneath a large tree. When I first got on ship, we were going to fire on these guys [insurgents], but they called us off and they called an F15 to come and drop bombs instead. The first two men looked like they were arguing with one another, and you can tell that they hear the firefight going on. So as soon as they put their eyes on these guys, the Joint Attack Air Controller says that these guys have weapons and the Intelligence Video Disseminator says that they have confirmed weapons. They could have been carrying sticks on their shoulders for all I could see. But that was the Pattern of Life. The shot was instantaneous. [We're told that] these guys are bad, so shoot them. They were gone. But then you have to realize that nearly everyone [in Afghanistan] is armed because civilian men aren't safe, because there are cases when Taliban go into villages and kill civilians to make an example out of them, and that sort of thing (Kris, interview with author, January 2017).

Despite the diversity within Muslim-majority countries, gender became a standardized feature of counterinsurgencies and drone warfare in former colonies. Though commanders may cite "cultural differences" as the reason why Military-Aged Males receive differentiated treatment during wartime, in practice the military has created a category that erases difference between ethnicity, age, countries, religions, civilians, combatants. Masculinity and its association with violence is, therefore, historical, transnational, and used throughout the drone network. "The people in Yemen are radically different than the people in Afghanistan, and yet it merely takes walking to a different screen to traverse that cultural difference," said Jessie (interview with author October 2016).

Yet despite the diversity of lived experience, defense and intelligence communities also seek to replicate these risk factors into quantitative measurements, as part of the push towards integrating Big Data solutions into the decision-making process. Military drones do not exist as objects on their own, but as part of a "global network of equipment and people that allow for this style of warfare to exist" (Taylor, interview with author, October 2016)**.** The United States continues to move in this direction, with policymakers seriously investing in automated and semi-automated weapons platforms.

The Future of Intelligence
The intelligence analysis process has encountered a serious problem. The military does not employ a sufficient number of analysts to assess the data that is collected by drones—a human resources problem that threatens the ideological pillars of a state that views hypersurveillance as the solution to insurgency (Erwin 2012). In fact, the Air Force's inventory of conventional aerial vehicles, like fighter, bomber, and transport aircraft, shrank by 11 percent from 2002 to 2012, a time period that included both the Bush and Obama Administrations. ISR platforms, however, increased by an estimated 300 percent

(*ibid*). Part of the human resources gap was filled by hiring private contractors (Fielding-Smith and Black 2015). Nevertheless, a single ARGUS-IS, a 1.8 gigapixel sensor (sometimes called a "drone camera" by the media) is capable of recording 6 petabytes (or 6000 terabytes) per day (Anthony 2013). Most of this footage cannot be analyzed by individuals simply due to biological limitation and is therefore stored by the military for the 'metadata' value. There are, for instance, only up to thirty-seven analysts who were assigned to a single RQ-4 Global Hawk (which was not equipped with missiles), while a MQ-9 Predator was usually staffed by seven analysts (Gettinger 2015). Importantly, this data is valuable because meaning is assigned to raw data gathered from the 'operational environment', a social fact that has been acknowledged by military spokespersons. But given human limitation, most of the 'raw data' remains unprocessed, meaning that U.S decision-makers have sought alternative solutions that are not constrained by human physiology.

Raytheon, a private U.S defense contractor, argued in 2011 that "the warfighters' ability to digest all the information [collected by sensors] is limited by the manpower available to process it all." The solution, the company wrote in a promotional report, lay in its multispectral sensors. Rather than watching "hours of video in which nothing of much use or interest is occurring" the sensor would instead "be programmed to send down only the most relevant imagery, such as a new vehicle entering the village" (Raytheon Company 2011, 7). In 2016, the U.S Air Force commissioned a report by the RAND Corporation to identify future challenges to the intelligence collection process, a challenge the report summarized as both the "simultaneous overabundance and scarcity of different sources of data" (Alkrie et al. 2016, 41). This challenge was more plainly stated by John Custer, who once served as the head of intelligence for the U.S Commanding General of the Army's Intelligence Center in Arizona. He stated that the military has a "romance with sensors, platforms, planes and unmanned vehicles...We forget that's worth nothing without putting some value to it...[W]e simply don't have the capability to look at everything we collect. That's why, most important to me now, are the analytics, that big data piece. How are we going to add value to everything we can collect" (Jontz 2015)?

Part of the problem was with the design of the sensor. Early sensors used a single camera "over a 'soda straw' area the size of a building or two" (Nakashima and Whitlock 2011). The first and second generation Gorgon Stare, however, use at least a dozen cameras to look over an entire city, meaning that insurgents did not know what part of the city U.S forces were monitoring. The problem, however, was that analysts then had to choose *where* to look, now that the entire city was below them for viewing. What visual cues were prioritized? "Today an analyst sits there and stares at Death TV for hours on end, trying to find the single target or see something move," said Gen. James E. Cartwright while he was the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (*ibid*). To solve this problem, the Gorgon Stare was equipped with software that could tag images, which were then stored (*ibid*). The ability to see more, for longer periods of time, created a social condition for automating *where* to look and what modes of life were deemed worth recording. These techniques were not politically neutral.

Some commentators have described analysis as the "bottleneck" of the ISR process (En 2016, 52), where the limited number of human intelligence analysts stall the efficiency of U.S warfighting. Proponents argue that this problem can be corrected by employing Big Data analytics. These techniques are borrowed from and have historic roots in the private sector. In 1996, shortly before the creation of the DCGS, a group of senior Marine Corps Officers visited the New York Stock Exchange

to study how brokers "absorb, process, and transmit the vast quantities of perishable information that are the lifeblood of the financial markets" (Cohen 1997, 43). In the commercial sector, "[d]ata-mining includes profiling practices that identify different types or characteristics and highlights them as special strategic targets for capital investments. This kind of predictive analytics of the human amounts to 'life-mining,' with visibility, predictability and exportability as the key criteria." (Bradiotti 2013, 62). Rosi Bradiotti's conceptual analysis can be expanded to include the prediction of death, where Big Data is mined for insurgent behaviors that increase U.S vulnerability.

The 'Big Data' piece is important to both the present and the future of drone warfare (and, frankly, to all surveillance platforms used both domestically and internationally.) Big Data is commonly understood as extremely large volumes of data that are analyzed for patterns, though our current cultural moment is certainly not the first time where data has been used for military goals. Hamish Robertson and Joanne Travaglia argue that our current anxieties with Big Data mirror the "explosion" in data collection that occurred in the 19th century, specifically between 1820 and 1840. Ian Hacking described this period as one that saw an "avalanche of printed numbers," characterized by "enthusiasm for statistical data collection" (Hacking 1983, 281). Like today, the collection of social data during this period was designed for "understanding and controlling the population in a time of significant social change" (Robertson and Travaglia 2015). In a more contemporary setting, writers in the Harvard Business Review explain that "you can't manage what you don't measure," (McCaffee and Brynjolfsson 2012). The fieldwork conducted under the supervision of colonial administrators and the Blue Books developed by UK bureaucracies became too voluminous for traditional cataloging practices and so new methods of data visualization were introduced. Hamish and Travaglia (2015) note that these social categories were produced as methods of social control. Similarly, in the context of counterinsurgency and/or drone warfare, the MAM category reorganizes the relationships between civilians and their environments along gendered lines.

The Report Issued by the RAND Corporation recommends that, in the face of "near-peer competitors" like Russia and China, who leverage information technologies to deny the U.S its capacity to collect data, new "analysis tools" are needed since, as the "decision loop...shrinks, so too does the window for which the data we collect are timely and relevant" (Alkrie 2016, 42). The range of tools that are designed to support analysis fall under two categories. The first category are tools that enable analysis, tools that allow analysts to perform tasks quicker. These are semi-automated tools, or human-to-machine tools. These tools help analysts search, manipulate, and visualize data. These tools, however, cannot complete tasks on their own. Humans are necessary. The second category are tools that perform analysis without a human present. These are machine-to-machine tools, deemed fully autonomous by the report's terms, and are designed to complete the entire intelligence cycle. ATR, for example, is a program that attempts to complete the entire intelligence cycle without a human. Another example is Sentient, a program developed by the Advanced Systems and Technology Directorate of the National Reconnaissance Office (*ibid*, 43). While automated tools are currently limited, semi-automated tools can already tag data with "meaningful metadata" and store the results in the cloud, which can then be analysed by intelligence personnel in the future. Given that most drone attacks are categorized as Signature Strikes, where suspects are 'actioned' based on behavioral patterns deemed risky and their movements seen as shorthand for future hostility, the role of automation in this decision making process should not be taken lightly.

The solution to filling the gap in human analysts, therefore, are algorithms designed to monitor Patterns of Life. Massimo Mazzotti, writing in the *LA Review of Books,* correctly identified the algorithm as a word "whose time has come" (Mazzotti 2017)**.** Mazzotti, a historian of science who once understood algorithms to mean a set of mechanizable instructions for a computer, argues that "[a]lgorithms have...become agents, which is partly why they give rise to so many suggestive metaphors. Algorithms now *do* things. They determine important aspects of our social reality. They generate new forms of subjectivity and new social relationships" (*ibid*). Algorithms and automation are often imbued with dystopic horror (not helped by the NSA's decision to call their surveillance system Skynet, after the AI in *Terminator*), so I want to avoid exaggeration, which can undermine the precision of research. Nevertheless, automation in warfare may have some serious consequences, a position advanced by notable figures like Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking. As signatories of a 2015 and 2017 open letter from the Future of Life Institute, they stated that "the stakes are high: autonomous weapons have been described as the third revolution in warfare, after gunpowder and nuclear arms" (Future of Life Institute 2017)**.** This position has also been echoed by Steve Omohundro, a noted physicist and Artificial Intelligence specialist, who told the *New York Times* that "an autonomous weapons arms race is already taking place" (Markoff 2014). At the time of writing this chapter, there was extensive discussion on the future of lethal autonomous weapons (LAWS) at the United Nations, but most of this conversation did not include ow gender would be crucial to autonomous targeting.

Given that U.S Foreign policymakers have refused to speak on the decision-making that informs Signature Strikes, scholars are left trying to collect the risk factors that have been casually mentioned by spokespersons. I am very grateful to the veterans who spoke with me, therefore, because they have relayed more than media sources have (so far) been able to verify (though I wonder if that is not due to the questions journalists ask). Given that there is limited available criteria for determining how Signature Strikes are conducted, scholars should ask what patterns of behavior algorithms will deem risky when the targeting process becomes automated. Though we cannot currently answer this question with absolute certainty, there are a few ways that algorithmic knowledge risks entrenching the Military-Age Male into the physical and digital objects that sustain the state's military power.

The question of automated drones is not a far-off future hypothetical. The US Defense Research Agency (DARPA) is developing an automated target recognition system, where computers will analyze the 'signature' of populations and categorize them as either 'combatant' or 'civilian.' The April 2017 introduction of the Algorithmic Warfare Cross-Functional Team, or Project Maven, indicates that the Department of Defense, under the Trump Administration, will continue to research and invest in AI and machine learning. The goal of Project Maven is to "integrate artificial intelligence and machine learning more effectively across operations to maintain advantages over increasingly capable adversaries" (Secretary of Defence 2016).

The 2020 Analysis Technology Plan published by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) states that behaviors or attributes deemed statistically deviant will become areas of investigation. "'Deep learning' and artificial neural networks will play an important role in...2020. These artificial intelligence capabilities will help us identify and refine our models by parsing and correlating the

voluminous data streams at our disposal...big data algorithms will enable analysts to quantify and characterize 'normal,' and detect spatial *behavioral anomalies*...that serve as indicators for future significant activities or events" (NGA 2014 , 7 emphasis mine). Proponents of these techniques argue that statistical analyses can apply "baseline norms for target behavior," (En 2013, 57). As a result, scholars should question if algorithms designed to make intelligence out of raw data will also be programmed to know that "women do not go outside," or flag these behaviors as atypical. Mobility patterns, as we already know, have been monitored by the NSA and CIA. But by the military's own admission, men and women navigate space in very gendered ways.

The problem is made worse when we consider recent reports that illustrate how algorithms replicate human bias. In 2016, ProPublica analyzed an algorithm designed to predict recidivism rates. The algorithm, designed by Northpointe, conducted "risk assessments" and was used by parole boards to determine whether defendants should receive parole. ProPublica's research revealed that the algorithm was biased against black defendants. Northpointe's algorithm predicted that black defendants were twice as likely, in comparison to white defendants who committed a crime of the same severity, to commit a crime in the future and were, subsequently, given harsher sentences (Angwin et al. 2016). The algorithm, which based its assessments on a series of 137 questions, did not ask for the defendant's race. Importantly, while the questionnaire avoided explicit questions about race, the outcomes were still racialized, a feature that has been replicated in other algorithms. Algorithmic auditing has become a burgeoning field, and recent work published by Margaret Hu has illustrated that "database screening of all citizens and noncitizens will make it appear that fairness and equality principles are preserved on the front end...[but] will enable discrimination on the back end in the form of designing...screening systems in ways that result in a disparate impact" (Hu 2017, 633). Hu writes that policymakers who use Big Data to need to be especially cautious, lest they risk perpetuating an "algorithmic Jim Crow" regime (*ibid*). In recent months, this issue has captured greater public attention and since its investigation into the Northpointe software, ProPublica has introduced an entire series dedicated to investigating "algorithmic injustice." In addition to racial bias, researchers like Fei-Fei Li, the Director of the Stanford Computer Science Lab and a chief scientist at Google, argue that the AI workforce is comprised mostly of white men, meaning that the same racial and gender biases that are dominant within this demographic will "inadvertently creep in" to the software they create (Hempel 2017).

Algorithms are not objective, though they are "repeatable, practical solutions to problems,"(Finn 2017,18) meaning that the list of behaviors that inform a suspect's signature would be applied across different scenarios. Can machines adapt to different sociocultural settings if the Military-Age Male category remained resistant to the nuances of different Muslim communities? So far, the results have not been especially promising. Let us return to SKYNET to illustrate this point. SYNET uses the Random Forest Algorithm. Much in the same way that Kris described the decision to "action" a target, the algorithm "takes the 80 properties of each cellphone uses and assigns them a numerical score...SKYNET then selects a threshold value above which a cell phone user is classified as a 'terrorist'" (Grothoff and Porup 2016). The idea is that the daily behaviors of insurgents are sufficiently distinctive from the behaviors of civilians and that the algorithm will be able to identify general patterns between the two groups, a goal which is more easily met if Military-Age Males are not considered Collateral Damage.

Data, or, intelligence, does political things because it allocates moral and material value (Johnson 2015). Automation and semi-automation risk selecting, out of the "near infinite" quantities of data available, MAMs as a salient category for both surveillance and possible death. Because data and algorithms "retain a veneer of scientific objectivity," they are difficult to contest and often rebuild a "dominant social order" that "impose [a society's] classifications of the social and cultural and political world" through the creation of "preferred meanings" (Hall 2006, quoted in Johnson 2015). The data collected through the drone monitor is not removed from politics; info-tech (data, algorithms etc.) shape our lifestyles and environment (Beer 2009, 987). I may also add that algorithms are seldom challenged because of legal regimes that protect intellectual property; many algorithms are not open source, which increased the controversy surrounding the Northpointe algorithm.

Ghost in the Machine
In an attempt to prevent problems associated with machine bias and error, the DoD Directive 3000.09 attempted to reaffirm the role of human beings in autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons. The directive, dating back to 2012, was on the subject of Autonomy in Weapons Systems and stated that autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons platforms must be "designed to allow commanders and operators to exercise appropriate levels of human judgment over the use of force" (Department of Defense 2012 3000.09, 2). The Directive indicated that while autonomous weapons systems could could not be used to apply lethal force, semi-autonomous weapons "may be used to apply lethal or non-lethal, kinetic or non-kinetic force." Semi-autonomous weapons systems can track, identify potential targets, cue potential targets to human operators, prioritize selected targets, suggest when to fire, "provided that human control is retained over the decision to select individual targets and specific target groups for engagement" (*ibid*). The Directive, predictably, did not discuss the criteria these systems needed to use to reach their conclusions, preferring instead to focus on 'problem areas' like hardware or software malfunctions. The problem, of course, is that criteria that informs a Signature Strike, what the Bush Administration appointee called a "reasonable man standard," is interpreted through a legal history that uses gender as an analytical code to allocate innocence and guilt. This not a hardware problem, but an intentional feature of drone warfare. In the end, semi-autonomous drones hold the promise that populations will resurface as statistical reconfigurations of "bodily capacities, indicating what a body can do now and what capacities it might be able to unfold in the future" (Braidotti 2013, 118).

If politics is understood as a social activity, then the capacity to build a political society has been disrupted. Drones become a form of social regulation that prevent community-building by using anthropological or 'culturally sensitive' ideas about violence, public space, and gender. This is a repudiation of politics. You cannot place a disruptive technology in a society without impacting that society's structure, after all. Moreover, while proponents of military automation frame algorithms as tools that identify 'atypical behavior' that deviate from a baseline of norms, there are indications that the defense and intelligence communities view non-violent behaviors from men as atypical. Currently, the user interface that accompanies the Gorgon Stare 2 highlights congregations of people that enter its sphere of vision, indicating that social assemblages are deemed by the drone's software to constitute a factor worthy of scrutiny. Conflating political community with terrorism has had horrendous outcomes in communities that live under drone warfare. One man, Malik Jalal from Waziristan, learned, after being unsuccessfully targeted three times, that he was on the 'kill list.' "I am aware that the Americans

and their allies think the Peace Committee is a front, and that we are merely creating a safe space for the Pakistan Taliban. To this I say: you are wrong. You have never been to Waziristan" (Jalal 2016).

As Kristina Benson (2014) noted, drone strikes in the SWAT and FATA valleys of Pakistan have led to an environment of fear from its residents, where children are afraid of to go to schools or participate in events that host large crowds, such as those that would be found at a wedding or funeral (Benson 2014, 11). Drones transform public space into realms of asociality instead of interaction, meaning that the potential for kinship risks being diminished. Jalal described himself as a "magnet of death for the whole family," and resorted to sleeping under trees in hopes that his home would not be targeted. He tried to assure his child, Hilal, that drones did not kill children, a claim that Hilal refused to believe because he knew that missiles had, in fact, killed children (Jalal 2016). In practice, drone warfare acts as an extension of a counterinsurgency paradigm centered on population control, where social spaces are re-assessed according to military logic. The result is that drones produce spaces marked by social alienation. The father figure, Muslim and carrying all the negative baggage associated with his race and religion, is marked for death while his family, the 'civilians' who might survive, are props that policy officials cite to justify the pursuit of 'precision.'

Paradoxically, automation, a process which requires machine learning and the outsourcing of knowledge to digital algorithms, has its legitimacy maintained by injecting humanity and law back into the process. On the topic of target selection, Obama's former Chief of Staff, William Daley, stated that Obama "realized this isn't science, this is judgments made off of, most of the time, human intelligence. The president accepts as a fact that a certain amount of screw-ups are going to happen, and to him, that calls for a more judicious process" (Becker and Shane 2012). Drones are "the result of associating humans and non-humans to form precarious wholes" (Muller 2015, 27); some observers may describe the human-component in this assemblage as a limitation. In other cases, however, human presence renders the drone program into a morally justifiable venture. The very presence of lawyers and military personnel are often leveraged to assure U.S and foreign audiences of the high ethical standards within the drone program. In an interview with *The Intercept,* former Lt. Col. Mark McCurley stated the authorization process for a targeted strike "includes a lot of lawyers and a lot of review at different levels to reach that decision. We have an extensive chain of command, human along the whole link that monitor the entire process from start to finish of an airstrike" (Currier 2015). The presence of human beings within a bureaucratic apparatus, the checks, balances, mechanisms that are so often dismissed as signs of government inefficiency and overkill, became central to 'selling' the drone program as a morally justifiable endeavor. But this also indicates that despite the move towards autonomous and semi-autonomous platforms, the role of legal oversight and human subjectivity will remain integral to the process.

Drones remain a component in an extensive network of human staff (the infamous 'killchain'), software, and hardware that facilitate the flow of data. These processes are often hidden and "in highly developed and networked societies…human awareness comprises the very tip of a huge pyramid of data flows" (Hayles 2006, quoted in Beer 2009, 987). This is precisely why researchers should continue to untangle the bureaucratic processes that sustain categories like 'Military-Aged Males.' At their best, drones may minimize civilian and troop deaths. Automation and semi-automation, however, threaten to

continue the already-present trend of reducing bodies into "a spreadsheet of risk factors", where private and public spaces are marked as sites for management and intervention. Big Data and predictive analytics should not be confused for 'dehumanization.' Drones are, after all, 'hypermanned' even if the individuals involved seem invisible to the public. Algorithms are programmed by people and designed to fulfill a political goal.

The result is that Military-Age Males have become a category that influence the practice of war, but this logic was not confined to one territory. Rather, ideas about civilianhood and gender were routinely transmitted due to the physical architecture of state power. In fact, the physical transfer of the Military-Age Male norm was required, given that drone crews were often not located in the same geographic setting. Ideas about civilians, combatants, and innocence, therefore, mirror the 'everywhere' character of drone warfare. Literature in constructivist IR often focus on the role of epistemic communities and advocacy groups to explain how norms become transnational, but equal attention should be paid to the objects that diffuse (or degenerate) these norms.

Because, and importantly, the knowledge gained from analyzing drone data is diffused through a material infrastructure known as the Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS) that stretches across 27 locations in the United States and abroad. The DCGS is a weapon system that "employs a global communications architecture that connects multiple intelligence platforms and sensors" (U.S Air Force 2015). Democracies use the infrastructure of technology to spread norms about the conduct of war. When the DCGS was first built in 1998, the dream was to create, in the words of a former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a "system of systems…specific technologies…that allow us to gather, process, and fuse information on a large geographical area in real time, all the time; that allow us to transfer that information—call it knowledge—to our forces with accuracy and speed" (Owens 1995-1996, 37). The "system of systems" remains an aspiration; the Air Force, Navy, and Army all use a separate DCGS. Today, network-centric warfare has become appealing internationally. One participant stated that "their personal understanding of this whole thing is connected to the arms program...Australia [is getting] assimilated. They're getting their own DCGS and the [systems] are all alike, and India looks like it's getting one. It's just the underpinnings of the global arms trade..." (Jessie, interview with author, October 2016). In 2016, the State Department approved the sale of a Reaper drone to Italy. Canada is also in the process of acquiring an armed drone for the Royal Canadian Air Force (Pugliese 2017). As military algorithms 'go global,' researchers should pay close attention to whether behaviors deemed 'statistically deviant' by American military standards go with it.

Big Data is marked by its volume, but the velocity of its collection is also notable. U.S security intellectuals have argued that the intelligence analysis cycle requires speed in order to predict and preempt contemporary insecurities. While contemporary military programs only hint at the future of U.S ISR and drone operations, current trends are troubling. Gendered violence may end up hiding behind lines of (proprietary) code, making criticism even more difficult. Similarly, due to a security architecture that is designed to exploit intelligence at near-real time, I am concerned that the norms associated with civilian protection may degenerate at a speed that is unfamiliar to disciplinary IR.

Conclusion

Since 2001, drone strikes have evolved to encompass two categories: Personality Strikes and Signature Strikes. A Signature Strike is a missile strike that uses a person's "pattern of behavior—or 'signature' as a proxy for determining if that individual is engaging in a 'continuous combat function' or is directly participating in hostilities, as defined by the laws of war (Benson 2014, 30). Individuals identified as "insurgents" by their signature are often *not* caught engaging in combat. Rather, Signature Strikes are often preemptive, where individuals are monitored for behaviors that are used to predict the likelihood that they will engage in violence. I argued that gender was influential when determining what behaviors were deemed 'risky' and that this process placed Military-Age Males at greater risk.

While the White House collects the identities of militants they seek to target in so-called personality strikes, the identities of those who are targeted by signature strikes are often unknown and remain unknown. In order to justify drone strikes, U.S policymakers relied on legal arguments that cited self-defense and further stated that drones were the most appropriate way to pursue military goals since the technology enabled greater protection for civilian. I argued that investment and innovation in drone technology was driven by democratic norms that center civilian protection and troop protection, key components of American identity. Drones have been positioned by U.S officials as uniquely suited for fighting irregular combatants who do not remain within state lines. In a war where adversaries cross borders and blend into civilian environments, social sorting becomes desirable. U.S policymakers, in an effort to comply with their normative commitments, pursued development in drone technology. There normative commitments were, in turn, upheld by a "physical architecture of state power" (Shaw 2016, 680). I argued that the connection between civilian protection and drone warfare was initially counter-intuitive, especially since most who died from drone warfare never had their identities verified, thereby undermining the idea that those who died were necessarily combatants. Nevertheless, like COIN, which is a form of warfare characterized by asymmetry between adversaries, drone warfare is particularly attractive to democratic states who see social-sorting as the key to fighting modern battles. The drive towards drone warfare should not be thought of as an inevitable march towards technological progress, but as a relationship between greater powers and (usually) former colonies. From this relationship, the objects that sustain state power emerge.

Chapter 5 detailed how drone technology prompted an explosion of data and knowledge production, and explained how norms require a material infrastructure to diffuse globally. Instead of positioning drones as 'unmanned' technologies that pursued security goals objectively—which, by extension, would imply that individuals were accurately targeted by drones –I chronicled how drone crews used gender as a governing code to determine strike decisions. This chapter was dedicated to showing "the actual working of power rather than assuming it on the basis of uneven structural relations," (Muller 2015, 33). This injunction led to assessing how the interaction between human and drone technology influenced the practice of war.

Gender was central to calculating 'risky' behavior and, therefore, for determining what movements or 'signatures' rendered civilians into combatants. As I stated earlier, this ethical framework targets individuals for punishment and death before they have committed wrongdoing. Guilt becomes a condition that is predicted, rather than the product of an action. Though U.S decision-makers have

argued that preemptive action targets insurgents who are actively plotting to attack the United States, participants stated that those who were targeted did not always meet this criteria. Indeed, the very act of omitting Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count indicates that proximity to a suspect, regardless of individual behavior, was a sufficient factor that placed Military-Age Males at risk for violence. Sociological and anthropological knowledge were leveraged to understand the 'human terrain,' indicating that the decision to issue a drone strike was connected to how U.S policymakers understood Muslim-majority countries. I end by reiterating that, rather than focusing exclusively on the machine's hardware, drones should be understood as a component in a socio-material order, a network where technological infrastructure meets human subjectivity to produce a bureaucracy that allocates death.

Chapter 6
Conclusion: The Future of Warfare

During the U.S presidential election and while he ran for the Republican nomination, Donald Trump promised that he would "bomb the shit out of ISIS" (Mogelson 2017). When asked by Fox News hosts how he would minimize civilian casualties in a war where ISIS used civilians as human shields, Trump responded that "when you get these terrorists you have to take out their families" (LoBianco 2015). As I write this concluding chapter, the Trump Administration has not yet completed its first year office. A rigorous comparison with the Obama and Bush Administrations is currently not feasible, but early signs indicate that discourse about civilian protection is eroding under the new administration.

During a visit to Warsaw, Trump abandoned language familiar to liberals. Claims of universal kinship and values were instead replaced with appeals to civilizational progress that centered whiteness and Christianity. In his speech, Trump called out the "leaders of more than 50 Muslim nations" to fight "hard against radical Islamic terrorism...We cannot accept those who reject our values and who use hatred to justify violence against the innocent" (Trump 2017).Throughout the speech, Trump repeatedly referred to 'the West' as the unit of membership, where Europe and America were bound by a shared history of fighting Nazism. The West was described as "the fastest and greatest...community of nations," (*ibid*) a space where "we" write symphonies, "we" do this, and that and—importantly—a space where "we empower women as pillars of our society and our success" (*ibid*). In his speech, Trump stated that the "fight for the West...and our survival depend on these bonds of history, culture, and memory" (*ibid*). However, the Trump Administration's self-branding has been contested by the very constituencies he sought to speak for. The Women's March, organized to protest the president's well-documented misogyny, was a transnational event that drew between 3.3 and 4.6 million people in the United States alone, making it the largest march in U.S history (Broomfield 2017).

The explicit appeal to protecting "western civilization" from "radical Islamic terrorism" is not new to the Trump Administration. The Republican primary battle was filled with similar discourse; As one of many examples, Texas Senator and political rival Ted Cruz claimed that the U.S needed to "empower law enforcement and secure Muslim neighborhoods before they become radicalized" (Sanders 2016). Trump's most immediate Republican predecessor made similar rumblings. George W. Bush notoriously went 'off script' and referred to the War on Terror as a 'crusade,' a fumble which resulted in an immediate media backlash. Bush also made several statements about how he believed that God was guiding his foreign policy actions, a reference to his Evangelical Christian faith. These words harken back to 'Manifest Destiny,' a global project supported by self-described imperialists (a term that did not carry the baggage of today), who insisted that God had "'marked' the American people to lead in 'the redemption of the world'" (Lears 2013). Perhaps counter-intuitively, these statements did not necessarily contradict earlier comments made in the Bush Administration. In his 2001 State of the Union Address, Bush stated that "the terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars...a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam." Bush addressed Muslims directly and stated that "[w]e respect your faith...Its teachings are good and peaceful...The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect to hijack Islam itself" (Bush 2001). The Bush Administration viewed the U.S role in global politics as one of steward, where they

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would shepherd non-democracies into a liberal society of nations. The Trump Administration's reference to Christianity, on the other hand, positioned the U.S as a member in a smaller community based on imagined primordial kinship.

Both the Bush and Obama Administrations sought to reassure audiences that civilian protection was a crucial foreign policy goal and that the U.S role in international relations involved the protection of 'non-Western' populations. The Trump Administration has not mirrored this discourse, preferring instead to speak explicitly about Western Values. This comparison does not absolve the previous two administrations. Indeed, both the Bush and Obama Administrations have pushed foreign policy agendas that do not manage to escape their racist historical legacies. Counterinsurgency, especially, is discussed in this project as a legacy-child of colonialism. Other commentators have linked the Obama-era revelation of omitting Military-Age Males from the collateral damage count with a domestic politics that "shares an ugly synergy with the sort of broad-swath logic that we see employed in Stop and Frisk, with the NYPD national spy network, with the killer of Trayvon Martin" (Coates 2012). The National Security Entry-Exit Registration (NSEERS) program, created under the Bush Administration, disproportionately targeted Arab and Muslim men and was only dissolved late in the Obama Presidency. Though the Obama and Bush Administrations did not use language that has become popularized among white supremacists, both presidencies used 'risk management' techniques that placed minority populations under increased surveillance.

Still, a discursive difference remains between the Trump Administration and its predecessors. George W. Bush condemned white nationalism in the United States, arguing that bigotry in the United States "seems emboldened" and that U.S "identity as a nation, unlike other nations, is not determined by geography or ethnicity, by soil or blood...This means that people from every race, religion, ethnicity can be full and equally American" (Vazquez 2017). These statements were widely understood to have been a criticism of the Administration's open support of figures associated with neo-nazi and white nationalist groups. Nor is Bush's condemnation of Trump's insular brand of 'international community' particularly surprising, since his Administration argued fiercely that "freedom-loving people" could be found anywhere, regardless of their racial backgrounds; Indeed, this language justified intervention into Afghanistan because "freedom and democracy [were] under attack" (Bush 2001). Given a change in discourse, can we expect Trump's rhetoric to translate to a greater disregard for civilians outside a "Western community of nations?"

According to Airwars, a not-for-profit organization that tracks and archives strikes and civilian casualties in Iraq, Syria, and Libya, found that approximately 2300 civilians died from Coalition strikes under the Obama Administration. From the beginning of the Trump Administration to July 13, 2017, more than 2200 civilians have been killed by Coalition forces (Oakford 2017). The pace of drone strike has also increased; Under the Obama Administration there was one strike every 5.4 days, while the pace under the Trump Administration increased to one strike every 1.25 day as of March 6, 2017 (Zenko 2017).

Under the Obama Administration, U.S drone warfare expanded to Syria, Yemen, and Libya (the Bush Administration introduced drone strikes in Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Somalia). The Obama

Administration appeared responsive to legal pressures made by advocacy organizations and introducing the "Presidential Policy Guidance" in 2013, a document designed to reduce the rate of civilians killed from drone strikes. Under the 2013 Policy Guidance, drone strikes could only be issued under "near-certainty that no civilian bystanders would die" (The White House 2013). In other ways, however, it is not clear that security practices under the Trump Administration mark a radical U.S shift on the global stage. According to *The New York Times*, Trump loosened the rules designed to limit civilian casualties in Somalia in order to escalate military action against militants associated with al-Shabaab (Savage and Schmitt 2017). Somalia became "an area of active hostilities...for at least 180 days" (*ibid*), according to Presidential decree. This seemingly instantaneous ability to transform a country into a warzone was a legalistic maneuver that originated in the Obama Administration, which used the same mechanism to issue a temporary order labeling parts of Libya as areas of "active hostilities." As the saying goes, the plural of anecdote is not data. This case, however, does illustrate that the recourse to bureaucratic procedure, which according to some observers was a key characteristic of the Obama Administration's approach to foreign policy (Luban 2016), still exists today. The discursive shift that marks the Trump Administration could lay the foundation for future work that examines the connection between discourse and civilian protection. Given the Trump Administration's 'America First' rhetoric, scholars should remain alert to whether officials will continue to position drones as crucial for the protection of civilians and if a change in discourse will be matched by a change in policy.

Despite the rather heavy subject matter of this dissertation, are there any reasons for cautious optimism? I began this dissertation by highlighting a problem—that boys and men were being erroneously excluded from the collateral damage count and that their civilian status had been rendered precarious. Any solution to the problem of civilian precarity needs to, at the very least, include all civilians—boys and men included–in the collateral damage count. Or as Helen Kinsella succinctly writes, "insofar as the war on terror can [be] claimed as war in defense of civilization, it must be constituted as a war in defense of civilians" (Kinsella 2005, 163). As seen throughout this project, however, the word 'civilization' is a fluid term, its membership reconstructed between administrations and across history.

The drone appears as an object born from the tension between protecting civilians and viewing civilian assemblies in Asia and Africa as social risk-sites that frustrate the Principle of Distinction. These populations are increasingly governed with technologies that Keith Guzik describes as "symptomatic" of a "neo-liberal 'risk society'" that operates "through the prediction of behavior and minimization of risk"(Guzik 2009, 5). The same object facilitates the politics of civilian protection and 'preemptive' action. Drones are positioned as a particularly suitable object for following the Principle of Distinction, but they also allocate death by assigning risk to patterns of behavior that are not considered to be combat functions under international law. International law does not consider airport visitation illegal, after all. But increasingly, these (gendered) movements are used as shorthands for determining who should be 'actioned' before they harm the United States. Yet by focusing on the precision capabilities of the drone, "the underlying question...shifts from whether it is ethical to kill, to whether technological systems do the killing better than humans" (Schwarz 2017, 35). The Signature Strike, which is reliant upon surveilling entire populations in order to pattern-match behaviors that are (allegedly) unique to 'insurgents,' widens the scope of battle to include all persons. Ironically, by expanding security sites to include civilians, the United States expands the violence that it seeks to contain.

Similarly, the U.S push towards automation highlights the central role played by 'civilian protection' in pursuing lethal autonomous weapons platforms (LAWS). Ironically, while terms like the 'disposition matrix' may sanitize the policy process by eliminating any language that hints at human presence, the push towards automation only makes human bodily vulnerability more apparent. The body, or more accurately, the body's deficiencies, becomes central to advocating for the presence of AI robots. This is the position advanced by ethicist Ronald Arkin, who writes that "(i)n the Fog of War it is hard enough for a human to be able to effectively discriminate whether or not a target is legitimate. Fortunately...future autonomous robots may be able to perform better than humans under these conditions" (Arkin 2010, 333).

The case for autonomous weapons, therefore, is justified based on two reasons. First, human beings routinely fail to uphold moral standards during wartime. Arkin writes that robots, "even if still imperfect...can result in a reduction in noncombatant casualties...with adherence to the Laws of War as prescribed in international treaties..." (*ibid*, 321). Second, human beings are constrained by biological limitations—our bodies are an obstacle if the goal is to achieve greater situational awareness during wartime. In comparison to humans, robotic systems are "faster, cheaper, [have] better mission accomplishment; longer range, greater persistence, longer endurance, higher precision; faster target engagement; and immunity to chemical and biological weapons among others" (*ibid*, 334). Most who justify the use of automated weaponry argue that war, being an inevitably, can still be an enterprise where its most pernicious effects are moderated. The robot's algorithm—instructions that comply with Geneva protocol—is viewed as a set of rules that necessitate compliance.

Yet, even if drones could serve as a democratic remedy for strengthening the Principle of Distinction, there is no indication that drones create this imperative. So far, drones have been used as high-technology tools that promote centuries old gender stereotypes to distinguish between civilians that deserve protection and those who deserve death. Moreover, foreign policy officials routinely seek legal compliance. Yet laws, safeguards, bureaucratic procedure do not necessarily translate into civilian protection since these very mechanisms have rendered the 'civilian' category precarious. The War on Terror and Drone Warfare have shown that every non-combatant is a civilian, but that some non-combatants are more civilian than others. Appeals for automation that center Geneva as the guiding star for legal compliance would do well to consider how international legal regimes can actually bolster, rather than constrain, state power.

Importantly, international conventions do not cite 'Military-Age Males.' This category is a creation that emerged from American bureaucratic practice (though other NATO countries also use terms like 'fighting-age male.') The Military-Age Male looms prominently as a cognitive shortcut used to decode the battlespace despite its absence in international conventions. Proponents who argue that autonomous technologies 'follow Geneva' will need to come to terms that the Military-Age Male is a category that does not appear in the laws of war but continues to inform military procedure.

As I and other commentators have noted, civilian immunity is often a misleading term, simply because no law of war protects civilians absolutely. "[T]he proportionality principle requires rather modest due care for noncombatants. Force may be used against them, provided that the incidental, or collateral,

harm to them is not excessive when measured against the expected military gains" (McPherson 2007, 530). While advocates for autonomy argue that robots are more likely to follow the laws of war, this work often does not address the fact that U.S foreign policy officials regularly try to ensure legal compliance –the harming of Military-Age Males occurs through bureaucratic procedure, not through wanton disregard of legal codes.

Here we come back to a question with which international law continues to grapple. "How does one observe the principle of distinction, if, in practice, making that distinction is difficult or impossible?" (Crawford 2015, 1). While international law is clear that irregular combatants who take 'Direct Participation in Hostilities' are legitimate targets, enough empirical evidence exists to show that U.S drones target Military-Age Males before they exhibit any kind of combat function. The word 'hostilities' is, of course, a continued source of debate, since no official statement has been made about the criteria that inform Signature Strikes. So far, however, the decision to issue a drone strike on an unidentified target has been based on what officials have described as a "reasonable man standard," which often meant that the daily practices of boys and men constituted risk (Sanger 2009, 250). These justifications often took for granted the ability to 'see' combatants on the ground, but the ability to make a distinction between civilian and combatant is fraught at best. Given the risk factors I have identified in this dissertation, it is not self-evident that automated drones will lead to reduced civilian casualties without first re-assessing the 'male as risky subject' reasoning that informs U.S security practices.

A recent petition signed by prominent members from the AI community like Elon Musk, Mustafa Suleyman, and Stephen Hawking have positioned Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWS) as an existential threat and call for an outright ban on the development of 'killer robots,' a position that is only supported by 22 member countries in the UN (Campaign to Stop Killer Robots 2017). However, this position ignores how policymakers often use 'risk' and 'risk-management' to subvert norms that were once thought to be entrenched in the international system. "It is particularly the discursive recourse to "risk" rather than to "threat" that spurs the normalisation and mainstreaming of what has formerly been assumed to be the exception" (Heller and Kahl 2013, 422). The Military-Age Male category selects boys and men based on probability—they are potentially, not inevitably, threatening. Still captured by the legal category of 'civilian,' military-age boys and men are subjected to differentiated, but often legal, treatment captured by policy documents and regulation, but which renders their lives precarious. Those who call for a cessation of automated weapons platforms (and I include myself in this population) will need to address the mainstreaming of risk-rhetoric that uses gendered and racialized assumptions to enact violence abroad.

In October 2017, the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) released a draft version outlining the military doctrine that will be needed to fight wars from 2025 to 2040. The document argues that in a world where the U.S is "confronted by challenges related to contested norms and persistent disorder...[c]ompetitor states and some powerful non-state actors will increasingly challenge the rules that underpin the current global order" (TRADOC 2017, 4). The future is familiar. The draft contains similar legitimacy claims that position American opponents as norm violators, while U.S pursuit of AI and other technologies is framed as a reaction to an insecure world. TRADOC's position is that this threat should be contained by developing high-technology solutions to meet the challenges of Multi-Domain Battle, a battlespace that extends across physical arenas like airspace, land,

and water. Importantly, however, the TRADOC draft highlights that the United States will have to shift their understanding of time and space to accommodate battle in space and cyberspace (*ibid,* 7). We may anticipate that the security theater will continue to expand.

Despite these developments, there are a few reasons to believe that the foreign policy agenda can change to provide greater protection for all civilians against military violence. Rather than viewing the security apparatus as a monolithic entity where all interests are subsumed into a unitary goal, I borrow a Bourdieusian insight that recognizes security as a "configuration of professionals in competitions for the categorisation of threats...The field of security professionals disturbs the neat separation between 'inside' and 'outside' of the state" (Bigo 2001, quoted in Frowd 2014, 229). Even within the span of the last twenty years, there has been considerable policy 'learning' made by defense and security intellectuals, a primary example being the 'turn' towards counterinsurgency, a paradigm that was shunted to the side by military educators after U.S failures in Vietnam (Jones and Smith 2010, 82). This competition is not restricted to security professionals. Because the Bush and Obama Administrations muted political opposition by appealing to law, the court system has provided an opening for transnational and domestic advocacy groups to push for greater transparency and accountability, especially in regards to trigger issues like Guantanamo Bay and Drone Warfare.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) reports that the 2016 guidelines for drone warfare were published after years of legal pressure from the American Civil Liberties Council, indicating that civil society groups can influence the direction of foreign policy and that using legal procedure through domestic institutions can be a powerful tool for both State and non-State foreign policy goals. TBIJ notes that, after facing pressure from civil societies that criticized the high civilian death count, the Obama Administration created a framework in 2013 that outlined "clear guidelines, oversight, and accountability" for drone strikes (Serle 2017). The Omar Khadr case, cited in chapter 3, is another prominent example where a 15 year legal battle eventually reached the Canadian Supreme Court and resulted in a legal settlement of $10.5 million from the Canadian Government (CBC News 2017). Change may be incremental, fragmented, and frustratingly inadequate, but these examples inject some cautious optimism into a process that often appears unapproachable to those who want to influence the direction of foreign policy. Importantly, the recourse to legality pushes foreign policy away from citizen-led democratic pressures and into the court system, where success is often determined by material resources and collective coordination. Advocates who want to push for increased civilian protections will need to consider that the *way* to do so is subject to these constraints and that the direction of U.S foreign policy will likely be fought through legal memos and judicial rulings.

Importantly, the rapid development of autonomous weapons technologies and the push towards quantifying daily life has created an opening for trans-disciplinary cooperation. Petitions to the United Nations are being spearheaded by those in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) and the Social Sciences alike. The United Nations has now convened four Meetings of Experts to discuss Lethal Automated Weapons Systems. Here too exists another opening for change. The Meetings of Experts has been accurately criticized for perpetuating "good old fashioned gender non-awareness" (Carpenter 2014). In a thought-provoking blog post titled "Robot Soldiers Would Never Rape," Charli Carpenter highlights how gender violence figured prominently during the 2014 LAWS meeting as a justification for automation. "AI humanitarians" highlighted that, unlike the fallible ethics of human

soldiers, robots would have no choice but to execute their software commands in compliance with international law (Carpenter 2014). These arguments only strike harder in a climate where the United Nations is finally taking the rampant sexual abuse committed by its Peacekeeping force seriously (Azad 2017). Yet Carpenter cuts through this narrative immediately. "Underlying these 'techno-optimists' thinking is an important fallacy: they assume that war rape is a crime committed opportunistically by soldiers, often untrained and lawless rebel groups, rather than ordered by state. Yet this is one of many 'myths' of wartime sexual violence" (Carpenter 2014). The autonomous weapon is legitimized through familiar discourse. Now it is the AI who will save the women and children. At the very least, an accurate discussion on lethal autonomous weapons would benefit from a feminist analysis.

There are two important points to note here and which speak to future areas of inquiry. First, autonomous weapons continue to be legitimized through discourse that connects software with flesh and, specifically, the failures of human flesh. The body becomes the site upon which the AI is legitimized. The protection of civilians, generally speaking, becomes an important rhetorical frame, but it is women who are cited as especially vulnerable. Boys and men are not explicitly mentioned as being uniquely vulnerable, even though a visual regime was in part developed to facilitate their targeting. Observers who study military affairs may want to investigate if the push towards AI is cementing or subverting the status of women as subjects in need of humanitarian/military intervention from more powerful states.

Second, given the financial constraints that come with developing autonomous weapons platforms, we can predict that states will be the actors who use the most sophisticated autonomous weapons platforms. Though there have been recent reports of 'drone swarms' used against Russian forces in Syria, the drones were small aircraft partially made of wood and held together by masking tape; Russian forces shot down the drones with a combination of anti-aircraft missiles and hacking (Sanchez 2018). So while smaller forces can be expected to use AI, their weapons are likely to remain paltry in comparison to state technology. This dissertation illustrates, however, that states can be responsible for unique forms of civilian vulnerability. Boys and men are targeted in ways that are simply not technologically feasible for non-state violent actors (the Taliban does not have the resources to staff drone centers, for example.) The 'AI will handle it,' therefore, is not particularly reassuring. Though the Military-Age Male is not a category found in international law, there is good reason for experts who convene at the UN to speak this term aloud and to recognize the specific vulnerabilities faced by this group. In a world where the AI scans the security field and determines who is and is not a 'legitimate target,' scholars should investigate if the same criteria that marks boys and men today will continue to make them vulnerable under AI weapons systems.

Finally, the research that informs military AI is subject to public scrutiny since many of those involved in military programs are academics who make frequent appeals to their expert communities. As illustrated throughout this project, there is significant overlap between the crafting of foreign policy agendas and academia, with the 'soldier-scholars' of counterinsurgency perhaps being the most obvious example. Conferences and academic journals provide a space for debate, but to do so means venturing outside our disciplinary boundaries and alliances. I had the opportunity to attend several conferences throughout the duration of this PhD program. I found, however, that organizing committees tended to place my work on 'gender and war' panels, events where audience were already sympathetic to the arguments in this project. Academia can amplify disciplinary and theoretical divisions. To overcome a

potential echo chamber, and as a practical experiment, I willingly removed myself from the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section from the 2018 International Studies Association conference. I—problematically, no doubt—scraped the word gender and feminism from my abstract and injected myself into the 'Foreign Policy Section' and 'Science, Technology and Art in International Relations' (STAIR) sections. I wanted to give the organizing committee no reason to place me on a panel where my research would be easily welcomed.

When I was conducting my fieldwork, I would end by asking interview participants: "Is there something I forgot to ask?" In hindsight, this question seems to characterize the IR discipline. The Military-Age Male is one more step in institutionalizing forgetfulness, one more way to erase the vulnerability experienced by boys and men in violent conflict. This project reminds IR scholars that some questions are worth remembering and that those who are forgotten often shape the character of war.

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