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Editor's Preface to the Fall Edition

Here at Elon University, we are extremely grateful to host *The Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics.* We are proud to present the Fall 2021 issue and congratulate all authors published in this issue for their high achievement.

This publication seeks to highlight the intellectual curiosity that leads to innovative scholarship in all subfields of political science, scholarship that addresses timely questions, is carefully crafted, and utilizes diverse methodologies. We are committed to intellectual integrity, a fair and objective review process, and a high standard of scholarship as we showcase the work of undergraduate scholars, some of whom pursue questions that have been traditionally ignored in scholarship but that drive our discipline forward.

Following the lead of the American Political Science Review (APSR) Editorial Board, we are excited to publish research in the areas of "American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory, public law and policy, racial and ethnic politics, the politics of gender and sexuality and qualitative and quantitative research methods." This publication also values the relationships formed through student-faculty collaboration and aims to build a culture of scholarship that expands beyond the college campus. We hope to encourage and empower students to seek out knowledge and pursue their potential, contributing to scholarship in a variety of disciplines.

This year, we thank our advisors Dr. Baris Kesgin and Dr. Aaron Sparks for their support, without which the issue would not have been possible. We would also like to thank the entirety of the Political Science and Policy Studies Department at Elon University, especially Dr. Laura Roselle; our Faculty Advisory Board; and all the students who shared their exceptional work with us this semester.

We are excited to present the Fall 2021 edition of the *Journal.* Thank you for your continued support and readership of our publication; we hope you enjoy the edition.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Board at Elon University

Submission of Manuscripts

The *Journal* accepts manuscripts from undergraduates of any class and major. Members of Pi Sigma Alpha are especially encouraged to submit their work. We strive to publish papers of the highest quality in all areas of political science.

Generally, selected manuscripts have been well-written works with a fully developed thesis and strong argumentation stemming from original analysis. Authors may be asked to revise their work before being accepted for publication.

Submission deadlines are October 1st for the Fall edition and February 15th for the Spring edition. Manuscripts are accepted on a rolling basis; therefore early submissions are strongly encouraged.

Students may submit their work through Elon University's submission portal, found here: https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/arts-and-sciences/political-science/psa-journal/

Alternatively, students may email psajournalelon@gmail.com with an attached Word document of the manuscript. In the body of the email, students are asked to include their name and university, the title of the manuscript, and the closest subfield of political science to which their manuscript pertains (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory, or policy studies). Due to the time committed to the manuscript review process, we ask students to submit only one manuscript at a time.

Submitted manuscripts must include a short abstract (approximately 150 words) and citations/references that follow the *APSA Style Manual for Political Science*. Please do not exceed the maximum page length of 35 double-spaced pages, which includes references, tables, figures, and appendices.

The *Journal* is a student-run enterprise with editors and an Editorial Board that are undergraduate students and Pi Sigma Alpha members at Elon University. The Editorial Board relies heavily on the help of our Faculty Advisory Board, which consists of political science faculty from across the nation, including members of the Pi Sigma Alpha Executive Council.

Please direct any questions about submissions or the Journal's upcoming editions to the editors at Elon University: psajournalelon@gmail.com.

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Virtual Realities: Intersectional and Online Violence Against Women in the 117th Congress

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Scholars of violence against women in politics (VAWIP) posit that gendered political violence is an underexplored phenomenon that harms representation. Existing literature acknowledges that traits including race, ethnicity, age, and ideology may interact with gender to exacerbate abuse, but I argue that few have adequately incorporated an intersectional lens. I examine the extent to which representatives' gender identities, intersectional identities, and ideological leanings interact to elicit abuse. Employing unique Twitter data and utilizing a VAWIP framework, I hand code approximately 10,000 tweets sent to pairs of similarly situated men and women in the Congressional Progressive Caucus over a week-long period. Though abusive tweets are rare, the data confirm that the experience of online abuse is shaped by gender as well as other identities. This work offers quantitative insight into the magnitude of abusive tweets that representatives receive and qualitative insight into the ways in which identities shape abusive content.

INTRODUCTION

In July of 2020, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez took to the floor of the House of Representatives to address an incident that occurred on the steps of the United States Capitol building wherein Representative Ted Yoho confronted Ocasio-Cortez and called her "disgusting," "crazy," "out of (her) mind," and a "f***ing b****." In a speech given before colleagues and broadcast widely after the incident, Ocasio-Cortez (2020) said:

> *This is not new . . . It is cultural. It is a culture of lack of impunity, of accepting of violence and violent language against women, and an entire structure of power that supports that . . . What we are seeing is that incidents like these are happening in a pattern. This is a pattern of an attitude toward women and dehumanization of others.*

Ocasio-Cortez was not alone in her condemnation of such treatment. She was joined by a host of other women serving in Congress, including members of the "Squad" of progressive congresswomen as well as Representatives Pramila Jayapal, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Mikie Sherrill, and Speaker Nancy Pelosi, all of whom shared similar experiences.[1]

One does not need to look far to see that this incident was not isolated but rather reflected broader patterns of treatment toward women in politics. In 2020 alone, Governor Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan was targeted by extremists seeking to kidnap her in response to her COVID-19 policies;[2] District Judge Esther Salas was targeted by an "anti-feminist" lawyer who shot and killed Salas' son;[3] and congressional candidate Marjorie Taylor Greene released a campaign ad that depicted her holding a weapon alongside members of the Squad.[4]

Shortly after the altercation between Ocasio-Cortez and Yoho and in response to Greene's campaign ad, Representative Rashida Tlaib led the introduction of a resolution that cited data collected by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the National Democratic Institute, and the United Nations and encouraged the government to act in response to such violence, particularly given women's underrepresentation in politics.[5] Resolutions are symbolic gestures and do not offer enforceable action items. But, Tlaib's resolution speaks to the problem that numerous scholars and civil society organizations have identified and devoted increased attention to recently: violence against women in politics (VAWIP).

Politically active women have long faced treatment in public and private spaces that reflects "darker territory" than sexist or gendered comments alone (Krook 2020, 3). Yet, these experiences have largely been normalized. Recognizing that gender has been left to the margins of political violence scholarship, the small but growing collection of VAWIP literature seeks to label what scholars consider to be a "problem with no name" (Krook 2020). Central to the study of VAWIP is the role that gender plays in motivating violence and shaping manifestations of violence. A VAWIP approach expands our understanding of what constitutes "violence" in politics, where violence can occur, and who victims and perpetrators can be.

Centering the role that gender plays in shaping the quality and quantity of violent acts and broadening traditional definitions of violence is critical, particularly given women's underrepresentation in democracies globally. But in doing so, scholars risk minimizing the ways in which other identities shape both violence and VAWIP. Scholars and civil society

organizations alike have begun to find evidence that identities ranging from race and ethnicity to age and political ideology can also motivate political violence.

Although these findings are vital to the study of VAWIP, an intersectional lens largely appears to be an afterthought in the study of VAWIP rather than something that is central to how scholars conceive of the phenomenon. Yet, in the anecdotes referenced previously, gender rarely appears to be the only factor at play. Indeed, in her speech, Ocasio-Cortez (2020) said:

> Not only have I been spoken to disrespectfully, particularly by members of the Republican Party and elected officials in the Republican Party . . . but the President of the United States last year told me to go home to another country, with the implication that I don't even belong in America.

If factors like race and ethnicity as well as political ideology shape VAWIP, one might reexamine the incident between Ocasio-Cortez and Yoho and ask why Ocasio-Cortez received such abuse. Was it because she is a woman? Was it because she is a woman of color? Was it because she is a highly visible progressive politician?

This research addresses the absence of an intersectional lens in VAWIP scholarship by analyzing the extent to which elected representatives' gender identities interact with other salient identities, including race, ethnicity, and ideology, to elicit online abuse. Employing unique Twitter data and utilizing a VAWIP framework, I examine a week's worth of tweets sent to three pairs of similarly situated representatives serving in the Congressional Progressive Caucus and seek to isolate the effect of gender. I hope to offer quantitative insight into the magnitude of abusive tweets as well as qualitative insight into the ways in which tweets reference representatives' diverse identities.

I find that violence, VAWIP, and intersectional abuse are rare when the data are analyzed at both the tweet level and at the congressmember level. However, differences within the pairs of similarly positioned representatives confirm that gender does shape the experience of online abuse. Indeed, it appears likely that VAWIP may be standing in for or replacing the violence that targets male politicians. This research also suggests that other characteristics, including race, ethnicity, ideology, and visibility, may shape the ways in which as well as the extent to which the public engages with representatives online.

This paper will first review existing VAWIP literature and in doing so will map the emergence of the phenomenon, the unique features that distinguish VAWIP from other phenomena, and the ways that scholars have empirically identified the concept. It will then explore what existing literature lacks: a strong emphasis on intersectionality. The concluding sections will discuss the research design, findings, and future directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Defining and Critiquing Political Violence

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as the "intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (2002, 4). This definition privileges physical acts of violence; however, the WHO acknowledges that defining violence as purely physical is inadequate. Though violence may be physical, it can also include actions that inflict psychological harm on groups and individuals.

While the WHO's definition of violence might be applied to political spaces, scholars conceptualize political violence as a distinct phenomenon. Many agree that political violence consists of the "use of force—or threatened use of force—to achieve political ends" (Della Porta and Tarrow 1995; Krook and Sanín 2019). In influencing a political outcome, political violence can be detrimental to the quality of democracy and undermine trust in political processes (Schwarzmantel 2010).

Others focus on different dimensions of political violence. Höglund (2010), for example, considers political violence in the context of elections, finding that definitions of electoral violence must draw special attention to the timing, motive, and intent of any given violent actor. Other scholars focus on the types of figures who are on the receiving end of acts of political violence. James et al. (2016) examine the reality that politicians and their relatives disproportionately attract "inappropriate, intrusive, (and) aggressive attention" (2016, 177) by virtue of the fact that being an elected official renders one a public figure.

Political violence literature shares certain blind spots. By emphasizing the use of force (Della Porta and Tarrow 1995), existing literature suggests that political violence consists primarily of physical incidents. This formulates a hierarchy wherein physical abuse appears to be the only or most consequential form of political violence (Krook 2020). Bardall, Bjarnegård, and Piscopo (2019) suggest that by privileging physical acts of violence, this literature may privilege men's experiences because research indicates that physical acts of violence target men more frequently than women (2019, 918). Studies of political violence may also reflect biases in their data collection methods (Bjarnegård 2018).

Mapping, Labelling, and Defining Violence Against Women in Politics

Victims' identities and the ways in which incidents of abuse may reflect group hate or bias receive less attention in political violence studies. Given women's increasing presence in democracies as well as the proliferation of digital spaces that allow political figures to interact with the public, global campaigns have emerged to address those violent events that target politically active women.

Efforts to recognize gendered human rights violations increased in the 1980s and 1990s, initiating conversations that garnered the attention of a greater number of stakeholders. These campaigns were vital in making space for women in politics to share their experiences with abuse. Efforts that emerged across the Global South, and particularly those in Bolivia, Kenya, and South Asia, shared a commitment to recognizing and condemning forms of gender-based violence that may depress women's political engagement and representation (Krook 2020, 14; Sanín 2018, 21).

The Global North does not have as strong a tradition of addressing gendered political abuse. However, recent developments point to the fact that gendered political abuse is not unique to the Global South. In the Global North, particularly in the wake of the #MeToo movement, women in politics have raised their experiences to problematize power dynamics that have long been normalized. In the United States, nearly 150 women in California joined forces to address rampant sexual harassment toward elected and unelected women in state politics (Krook 2018, 68). Soon after, efforts to bring the #MeToo movement to national politics resulted in #MeTooCongress (Gillibrand 2017), and in 2018, Congress revised its policy on responding to incidents of sexual assault and harassment.[6]

This is not to suggest that abuse directed toward women in American politics was not widespread before #MeToo. Anderson (1999) explores patterns in the language and media coverage surrounding Hillary Rodham Clinton when she served as First Lady. Analyzing the use of the word "bitch," she finds evidence that this language was used such that "[Clinton's] substantive rhetoric was dismissed" and her authority was "[coded] . . . as primarily sexual" (Anderson 1999, 605–8). During her 2016 presidential campaign, Clinton similarly experienced violent verbal attacks in physical and virtual spaces.[7] Clinton is by no means the only woman in American politics to experience such treatment, but she is a highly visible example.

The consistency with which politically active women have described their experiences with abuse prompted both scholars and civil society organizations to address the issue by labelling it. Between 2006 and 2012, several efforts and campaigns were spearheaded by organizations including the Interparliamentary Union (IPU), International IDEA, iKnow Politics, the United Nations, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) to address VAWIP and its potential to harm the quality of democracies globally (Krook 2019, 85–87).

Scholars have also characterized the origins, implications, and complexities of the concept. Krook and Restrepo Sanín (2019) define VAWIP as a:

> *Distinct phenomenon, whereby the origins, means, and effects of violent acts specifically aim to exclude women from the political sphere, disrupting the political process as a means of reinforcing gendered hierarchies (2019, 742–43).*

Krook (2020) expands upon this definition, specifying that "its defining feature, therefore, is not gender differentiation but gender motivation to exclude women *as women* from participating in political life" (2020, 65). Scholars have outlined five distinct categories of VAWIP, including physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and semiotic violence (Krook and Sanín 2019, 740).

According to Krook and Restrepo Sanín (2019), physical violence includes actions that bring about "bodily harm and injury" (2019, 743). Examples of physical VAWIP may include murder or attempted murder, mutilation, beating, arbitrary arrest, and torture (Krook 2020, 128–34). Gender must be central to physical abuse in such a way that it serves as a motivating factor. These incidents may be the most visible and least contested forms of VAWIP.

The second and most common form of VAWIP is psychological violence. A recent report by the IPU (2018) found that 85.2% of women surveyed experienced psychological and gendered forms of violence during their time in office (2018, 1). Psychological VAWIP "inflicts trauma on individuals' mental state or emotional well-being" (Krook and Sanín 2019, 744). Unlike physical violence, psychological violence can consist of threats of abuse rather than attacks themselves.

A third form of VAWIP is sexual violence, which includes "sexual acts and attempts at sexual acts by coercion" as well as "unwelcome sexual comments or advances" (Krook and Sanín 2019, 744). Krook (2020) includes rape, sexual assault, sextortion, rape insults, and sexual harassment in her analysis (2020, 155–61). Though sexual VAWIP may be the most obviously motivated by gender, challenges exist. A report from the United States Government Accountability Office (2020) finds that as few as six percent of victims of sexual assault and harassment working for the government may be reporting such incidents (2020, 1). Hesitancy to report such acts of abuse frequently stems from a fear of retaliation, which speaks to the implications of certain power dynamics within institutions.

Economic violence constitutes the fourth form of VAWIP. This includes "acts seeking to control women's access to, or behavior in, the political realm by systematically restricting access to economic resources which are otherwise available to men" (Krook and Sanín 2016, 141). Economic VAWIP may involve property damage, vandalism, or withholding resources (Krook & Restrepo Sanín, 2019, p. 744). Few solutions have been proposed to address such violence because of its relative invisibility.

The fifth category is semiotic VAWIP, which involves the use of symbols, including "degrading images and sexist language" (Krook and Sanín 2019, 744) that demonstrate that gender is a motive. Krook (2020) further describes the intent behind semiotic manifestations of VAWIP, finding that most incidents involve attempts to render women invisible or incompetent by highlighting their "incongruity" with institutional norms (2020, 187). Studying semiotic VAWIP

speaks to the structural nature of the issue, given that such symbols and language are central to many institutions (Krook 2020, 190).

Despite this expansive definition of VAWIP, acts of abuse that fit into the framework remain invisible and underreported. This may be partly due to the fact that victims have internalized that violence is the cost of doing politics (Krook 2020, 5). Low rates of reporting VAWIP may also reflect victims' fears of retaliation by those in power or the fact that victims lack the language to label their experiences (United States Government Accountability Office 2020, 12).

Measuring Violence Against Women in Politics

VAWIP is a concept with numerous complexities, many of which may perpetuate its invisibility. However, proposed legal frameworks and data collection strategies suggest what paths forward may look like in terms of identifying the concept.

Some scholars recommend drawing from hate crimes legal frameworks to determine which acts of violence constitute VAWIP. Krook and Restrepo Sanín (2016) note that both hate crimes and acts of VAWIP act as "message crimes intended to deny equal access to rights and to create a ripple effect that heightens the sense of vulnerability among other members of the community" (2016, 137). Given these commonalities, Krook (2020) argues that it is critical to employ a "bias events" framework and proposes six criteria to determine whether incidents are VAWIP.

Insight can also be gained from understanding the methodologies that have been employed by other scholars and organizations. Studies of online abuse—including Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah's (2020), Southern and Harmer's (2019), and Rheault's (2019)—often employ web-scraping or machine-learning techniques that allow researchers to collect content sent to representatives in a sample, gauge incivility or abuse, and identify whether identity shapes the quantity or substance of abuse. Other methods of documenting VAWIP include conducting interviews, distributing surveys, and collecting testimonies. For example, the IPU (2016, 2018) interviewed women members of Parliament (MPs) and applied a version of Krook's (2020) definition by asking elected women about their experiences with psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, and economic violence (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018, 4). Similarly, the NDI (2018) interviewed party leaders to gauge the extent to which parties shape gendered political violence (2018, 45). This is not an exhaustive list of alternative methods by which to identify VAWIP, but it offers insight into practical options that have been effectively employed.

The Case for a Violence Against Women in Politics Approach

A VAWIP framework enables scholars, practitioners, and activists to not only broaden their views of what violence consists of but also to broaden their views of where violence

can occur. For example, several recent studies highlight acts of VAWIP occurring online (Atalanta 2018; Di Meco 2019; Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah 2020; Judson et al. 2020; National Democratic Institute 2019; Rheault, Rayment, and Musulan 2019). Though online interactions may not fit with traditional definitions of violence or political violence, the VAWIP framework emphasizes that other forms of abuse deserve to be addressed as much as physical acts of violence.

A VAWIP framework is also well-suited to expand our understanding of those figures who are considered victims and perpetrators. The word "politics" is intentionally broad, leaving open the possibility that the concept may describe the experiences of women in elective office, women political staffers, women who work in unpaid political positions, women working in political advocacy or activism, and women in other professions related to politics and government, such as political journalism (Krook 2020, 117).

Finally, by invoking the notion of a spectrum of violence, the VAWIP framework highlights the structural roots of gendered abuse in politics (Krook 2020, 119). Indeed, the VAWIP framework recognizes the role that symbols have played in reinforcing misogynist themes, thus demonstrating how and why certain acts of violence have remained invisible. Without a label like VAWIP, public-facing and academic studies alike risk downplaying the pervasiveness of VAWIP and placing the burden on individuals to prove that their experiences with abuse were motivated by their identities and had a cost on their engagement.

Intersectional Critiques of a Violence Against Women in Politics Approach

Intersectional theory is rooted in the recognition that considering salient identities like race and gender separately further decenters those individuals who experience multiple levels of marginalization. Early work utilized a "double jeopardy" analogy to highlight the oppression that Black women experience on the basis of both race and gender (Beale 1970). However, critics argue that in treating levels of oppression as being additive, such an approach obscures the ways in which "multiplicative relationships" exist between levels of oppression as well as the ways in which race and gender may also interact with other salient identities, such as class (King 1988, 47). The term "intersectionality" was formally coined by Crenshaw (1989), who not only considered the experiences of individuals who are multiply marginalized but examined how feminist theory and antidiscrimination law have rendered such individuals invisible (1989, 139). By implying that identities are monolithic and share certain experiences, academic work may further decenter diverse individuals while "maintaining social inequalities" (Collins 2000), hence the importance of incorporating intersectional theory in political science (Junn and Brown 2008).

Kuperberg (2018) offers one of the first and only explicit applications of an intersectional lens to the study of

VAWIP, arguing that although intersectionality has remained "peripheral" to this work, the interaction of identities like race, ethnicity, and gender may heighten political violence (2018, 687). This claim has been corroborated by numerous studies. Dhrodia's (2017) study of MPs finds disproportionately high levels of abuse targeting women of color. Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah (2020) present similar evidence in their study of 2020 congressional candidates, finding that women of "ethnic minority backgrounds" experience the most online abuse (2020, 3).

Scholars studying VAWIP suggest that this work could benefit from an emphasis on the interaction of other identities as well. Krook (2017) references age as being one identity that may exacerbate the abuse that women in politics experience (2017, 83). This comment has been supported by data collected by the IPU (2016, 2018), which show that women below the age of 40 are the most likely to experience abuse. This trend led the NDI (2018) to develop a methodology that addresses whether such abuse "has a chilling impact on the political engagement of young women" (2018, 19).

Others argue that political ideology exacerbates the abuse targeting women in politics. Some suggest that demonstrating support for feminist causes can heighten the levels of abuse that women in politics receive (Biroli 2018, 683). A report from the UN notes that women who voice "minority, dissenting, or controversial views" are more likely to experience violence (Simonovic 2018, 5). Amnesty International (2018) similarly finds that "women working for left leaning parties . . . received slightly more problematic and abusive mentions." Likewise, though Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah (2020) do not draw a causal link between ideology and abuse, they find that prominent progressive women politicians receive more abuse (2020, 3).

Kuperberg (2018) writes, "The field of VAWIP is so new, it seems unfair to discuss its 'gaps'; rather, the study of VAWIP is defined by its uncharted territory" (2018, 685). The study of VAWIP does represent uncharted territory, and the framework serves as a powerful tool, but by failing to account for the ways that gender may be neither the only nor the most significant factor shaping political violence, it suggests that there is a shared experience among women-identifying political figures. Though the study of VAWIP is rooted in a critique of political violence research, it tends to amplify a narrative of cohesion that benefits the most privileged groups in academic and policy spaces.

METHODOLOGY

This study selects a sample of three pairs of similarly situated men and women serving in the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the 117th United States Congress, yielding a total of six members of Congress; employs a web scraping technique to gather tweets sent directly to these representatives over a one-week period; and hand codes a random sample of tweets to analyze the presence or absence of abuse, as well as the types of abuse directed toward different members of Congress.

To select a sample for analysis and isolate the effect of gender, I draw on research by Herrick et al. (2019). Work by the IPU (2016, 2018), the NDI (2018), Dhrodia (2017), and Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah (2020) motivated my decision to prioritize representatives who hold left-leaning ideologies, belong to historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and lie on the younger end of the age spectrum. I analyze online violence and VAWIP both because Krook and Restrepo Sanín's (2019) definition of VAWIP accounts for a wide variety of sites and manifestations of abuse, and because practitioners have found significant quantities of identity-driven abuse on platforms like Twitter (Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah 2020; Southern and Harmer 2019). Finally, I modify Southern and Harmer's (2019) coding scheme to analyze my data.

This study looks for evidence of violence, VAWIP, and intersectional violence and VAWIP in tweets sent to six representatives. To code for the presence or absence of nongendered but violent content, I utilize the WHO's (2002) definition of violence, and to code for the presence or absence of content that demonstrates VAWIP, I adopt Krook and Restrepo Sanín's (2019) definition. To operationalize intersectional violence or VAWIP, I adopt VAWIP scholars' and practitioners' broad definition of intersectionality, which accounts for numerous potentially salient social identities including race, ethnicity, age, and sexuality, as well as political ideology (Biroli 2018; Krook 2017; Kuperberg 2018). If tweets reflected violence or VAWIP, as well as references to salient social identities or progressive political ideologies, they were deemed intersectional violence or intersectional VAWIP.

Consistent with previous studies, this research hypothesizes that the data will support the assertion that congresswomen experience gendered abuse on Twitter.

> **Hypothesis 1:** *Congresswomen will experience online VAWIP in numbers comparable to if not greater than the online violence that their male counterparts experience.*

This research also expects that intersectional references will shape incidents of online VAWIP more so than incidents of online violence.

> **Hypothesis 2:** *Intersectional references will coincide with online VAWIP more often than with nongendered online violence.*

The Sample

The pairs selected for this study include Representatives Andy Kim (D-NJ) and Angie Craig (D-MN); Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) and Yvette Clarke (D-NY); and Ro Khanna (D-CA) and Pramila Jayapal (D-WA). Given scholars' findings that political ideologies—and particularly left-leaning ideologies—interact with gender and exacerbate the abuse that women

in politics experience (Amnesty International 2018; Biroli 2018), this research analyzes representatives belonging to the Congressional Progressive Caucus.[8] Because the study of VAWIP has fallen short of properly incorporating an intersectional lens but scholars have found evidence that historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups tend to experience more violence and VAWIP than other groups, representatives who belong to racial and ethnic groups that have historically been underrepresented in the United States were prioritized during the case selection process (Dhrodia 2017; Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah 2020). Finally, the sample consists of representatives who lie on the younger end of the age spectrum because scholars have also found evidence that age may interact with identities like gender, race, and ethnicity to shape and motivate abuse (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016, 2018; National Democratic Institute 2018).

Before settling on this sample, data pertaining to congressmembers' personal and district characteristics were collected for all caucus members, including data about gender identity, race and ethnicity,[9] age, seniority, leadership positions,[10] district competitiveness,[11] and district demographics.[12] Pairs were selected if congressmembers were alike in most of these categories but differed in their gender identities. The decision to isolate the effect of gender while controlling for district and personal qualities was inspired by Herrick et al.'s (2019) methodology.[13]

Kim and Craig are both below the age of 50 and have served in their current positions for two years. They serve in competitive congressional districts that receive R+2 scores from *The Cook Political Report*. They also represent a similar number of predominantly white constituents: Kim represents 735,981 total constituents and Craig represents 717,698. Kim is Asian American, while Craig is white. Craig also sits at a unique identity intersection as a member of the LGTBQ+ community.

Jeffries and Clarke are both Black representatives who are in their fifties and have represented their districts for eight years.[14] They serve on New York's congressional delegation and represent uncompetitive districts that have earned D+36 and D+34 scores respectively. Jeffries and Clarke represent a similar number of predominantly Black constituents: 776,825 for Jeffries and 720,316 for Clarke. Jeffries holds a leadership role as chair of the House Democratic Caucus, but Clarke holds no comparable position.

Finally, Khanna and Jayapal are both Asian American representatives who are in their mid-forties and mid-fifties respectively and have been serving in Congress for four years. Khanna and Jayapal's districts receive D+25 and D+33 scores, indicating that both are uncompetitive. These districts are comparable in size, with Khanna representing 790,519 constituents and Jayapal representing 817,787. Although Khanna's district primarily consists of Asian constituents, Jayapal's is predominantly white. Neither Khanna nor Jayapal hold a party leadership position, but Jayapal is the chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Data Collection

Given the magnitude of online abuse and gendered abuse that other scholars have found, this study examines the treatment of similarly positioned progressive congressmen and congresswomen on social media. Twitter was evaluated because of the availability of its data compared to other social media platforms (Bruns 2019). The TAGS tool for Google Sheets was utilized,[15] which interacted with the Twitter API and automatically collected all tweets sent to the members of Congress in the sample. To complement the Twitter data with a qualitative archive of topical events and noteworthy news items that might offer additional context and explain certain findings, Google Alerts[16] were set up for each of the congressmembers in the sample.[17]

TAGS used search terms denoting representatives' personal Twitter handles to generate an archive of Twitter data for each representative in the sample.[18] Though members of Congress typically have two verified Twitter accounts—one for their official duties and one for personal use—this study engaged with verified personal accounts wherever possible because abusive content directed toward government accounts could be monitored or removed.[19]

The Twitter API limits retrievable content to tweets from the past six to nine days. As such, one week's worth of tweets was examined. The data collection took place between March 16 and March 26, 2021.[20] During this period, the House of Representatives was in session from March 16 until March 19, 2021, and again from March 22 until March 25, 2021. Initially, 75,822 tweets were collected. Because TAGS retrieved all tweets mentioning representatives in the sample, the initial archives included retweets and duplicate tweets. These data were cleaned using RStudio, and retweets and duplicate tweets were discarded. After cleaning the data, 13,737 tweets remained.

Coding Scheme

This methodology was inspired by Southern and Harmer's (2019) design. The authors' ten variables were consolidated to four, which measured the presence or absence of violence, VAWIP, references to representatives' intersectional identities, and references to representatives' progressive political ideologies. To gauge whether tweets demonstrated violence, the WHO's definition of violence (2002, 4) was adopted, and to gauge whether tweets demonstrated VAWIP, Krook and Restrepo Sanín's (2019) definition of VAWIP (2019, 742–45) was adopted. References to intersectional identities could include tweets that mentioned a representative's salient social identities beyond gender, including race, ethnicity, age, and sexuality, whereas references to progressive ideologies could include tweets that invoked a representative's affiliation with progressive causes or the Congressional Progressive Caucus. If tweets demonstrated violence or VAWIP and references to intersectional or progressive identities, they were deemed instances of intersectional violence or intersectional VAWIP.

Tweets were assigned values of "0" or "1" for each of the four variables based on the presence or absence of relevant substance. Wherever possible, a random sample of 2,000 tweets was hand coded for each representative.[21] 2,000 tweets were coded for Khanna, Jayapal, Jeffries, and Kim, and the universe of tweets was coded for Craig and Clarke. This yielded 9,569 tweets, or 69.66% of 13,737 codable tweets.

RESULTS
Quantitative Findings

Violence and VAWIP occur infrequently. This trend is observed at both the tweet level and the congressmember level.[22] Of the 9,569 tweets coded overall, 0.16% reflect violence. Because VAWIP can only, by definition, impact those identifying as women, the tweet level measurement of VAWIP reflects tweets sent to congresswomen. 0.08% of these 3,569 tweets reflect VAWIP.

Violence and VAWIP also occur infrequently within each similarly situated pair. Congressmen experience more nongendered, violent tweets than congresswomen. Between 0.15% and 0.3% of the tweets sent to congressmen demonstrate violence, but among congresswomen, only Jayapal received violent tweets, constituting 0.15% of 2,000 tweets. However, two of the three congresswomen received tweets that demonstrate VAWIP. 0.05% of Jayapal's 2,000 tweets and 0.56% of Craig's 356 tweets demonstrate the phenomenon.

Similarly, intersectional violence and intersectional VAWIP are not frequently observed among the tweets coded for the purpose of this study. Where these phenomena are observed, intersectional VAWIP does not occur any more frequently than intersectional violence. Out of a total of 15 violent tweets, 33.33% demonstrate intersectional violence, and out of a total of three VAWIP tweets, 33.33% demonstrate intersectional VAWIP.

Table 1. Tweet Level Violence and VAWIP					
	N	%		*N*	%
Violence	15	0.16	VAWIP	3	0.08
Other	9,554	99.84	Other	3,566	99.92
Total	9,569	100	Total	3,569	100
Note: VAWIP can only affect women-identifying individuals. 3,569 reflects the tweets coded for women.					

Table 2. Member Level Violence and VAWIP							
		N	%			*N*	%
Jayapal	Violence	3	0.15	Khanna	Violence	6	0.3
	VAWIP	1	0.05		VAWIP	--	--
	Other	1,996	99.8		Other	1,994	99.7
	Total	2,000	100		Total	2,000	100
Clarke	Violence	0	0	Jeffries	Violence	3	0.15
	VAWIP	0	0		VAWIP	--	--
	Other	1,213	100		Other	1,997	99.85
	Total	1,213	100		Total	2,000	100
Craig	Violence	0	0	Kim	Violence	3	0.15
	VAWIP	2	0.56		VAWIP	--	--
	Other	354	99.44		Other	1,997	99.85
	Total	356	100		Total	2,000	100
Note: Pairs of similarly positioned members of Congress appear alongside one another.							

Qualitative Findings

At the tweet level, certain themes are apparent.[23] Though incidents of online VAWIP are rare, those observed reflect semiotic violence. Rather than explicitly referencing physical abuse, these tweets tend to "dehumanize, degrade, and humiliate" through the use of language and symbols (Krook and Sanín 2019, 192), including those that involve "sexual objectification" (2019, 202–3). The following tweets were sent to Jayapal and Craig:

> "@PramilaJayapal pull your t****n out of your mouth!"

> "@TeamPelosi @JahanaHayesCT @katieporteroc @AngieCraigMN @sharicedavids Women don't need school, as heels-up Harris proved, it is also possible to sleep your way to the top. So inspirational!"

Among the tweets sent to women that convey violence or VAWIP, several tweets further reference congresswomen's political ideologies. For example, among the nongendered but violent tweets sent to congresswomen, one refers to a congresswoman's progressive leanings. Additionally, among the tweets conveying VAWIP, one invokes a representative's "feminist" ideology (Biroli 2018, 683):

> "@PramilaJayapal Performative tweets by false hope sellouts only serves to further enrage the people. The people are on to you, the democratic party and the 2 party system. The people see right through you. The Pitchforks Are Coming. You insist. There will be Socialism or Tyranny."

> "@TeamPelosi @JahanaHayesCT @katieporteroc @AngieCraigMN The sick world of fascist feminist sexism-a clear hate crime against men-democrats constantly lobby pro women, & while women destroy one man after another with sex harassment attacks — this is an evil, insane sexism resulting from spineless, cowardly male leaders @HouseDemocrats"

Tweets of this nature speak to the argument that ideology shapes gendered abuse in politics. The second tweet conveys what scholars see as the motivating factor behind incidents of VAWIP: a desire to uphold gendered hierarchies (Krook and Sanín 2019).

Finally, several violent tweets sent to both men and women reference identities beyond gender, as is indicated by the measure of intersectionality. For example, Kim authored several tweets detailing his experiences with racism while working for the State Department.[24] He received the following response, invoking his race:

> "@AndyKimNJ you all are destroying the Great UNITED STATES you should all be jailed and charged with treason"

The act of othering that takes place in this tweet through the use of the phrase "you all" conveys collective violence (World Health Organization 2002), as it sends a message that group members are outsiders (2002, 5).

DISCUSSION

Normatively, observing such low rates of online violence and VAWIP is good, particularly as it concerns the quality of democracy. However, this is not to suggest that online violence and VAWIP do not occur in American politics. The fact that the data show different quantities of violence and VAWIP within similarly situated pairs indicates that gender is shaping progressive politicians' experiences with online violence. As the data show, progressive congressmen may experience online violence more frequently than progressive congresswomen, but these congresswomen experience online VAWIP. This finding is in line with scholars' findings and lends support to the first hypothesis.

The second hypothesis expected to observe both intersectional violence and intersectional VAWIP because all representatives in the sample sit at identity-based intersections and are progressives, which aligns with the broad definition of intersectionality adopted. This did occur, as one third of the tweets conveying violence demonstrate intersectional violence, and one third of the tweets conveying VAWIP demonstrate intersectional VAWIP. But, the data show no evidence that intersectional references shape VAWIP to a greater degree than

Table 3. Tweet Level Intersectional Violence and Intersectional VAWIP					
	N	%		N	%
I. Violence	5	33.33	I. VAWIP	1	33.33
Other	10	66.67	Other	2	66.67
Total	15	100	Total	3	100

Note: Intersectional violence (I.Violence) is measured as a proportion of tweets that had been previously coded as demonstrating violence. Intersectional VAWIP (I.VAWIP) is measured as a proportion of tweets that had been previously coded as demonstrating VAWIP.

violence. As such, this research does not support the second hypothesis.

Putting the quantitative findings of this study in conversation with studies of a similar nature shines light on factors that may have shaped the results. Southern and Harmer (2019) collect 117,904 tweets sent to 500 MPs. Their study does not adopt a VAWIP framework but looks for differences in levels of incivility targeting men and women. 9.8% of codable tweets are uncivil (Southern and Harmer 2019, 7). Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah (2020) collect 234,269 tweets sent to ten American candidates over a period of 14 days. This study similarly looks for abusive tweets without using a VAWIP framework. Between 3,454 and 76,259 tweets are coded for each candidate. For women, no less than 15% of messages are abusive, but for men, between 5% and 10% are abusive (Guerin and Maharasingam-Shah 2020, 9). Finally, Atalanta (2018) examines how gender shapes online discourse. The sample consists of three pairs of male and female politicians across three continents, and 2.8% of 27,952 tweets indicate gender bias (Atalanta 2018, 5).[25] Thus, the low levels of violence and VAWIP observed in this research may be partly explained by the comparatively small universe of codable tweets and the small sample of representatives.

Beyond methodological choices, other traits may also shape online abuse. Though the pairs in the sample were selected because they are similarly situated in terms of their personal and district characteristics, this measure of similarity is imperfect. After analyzing close to 10,000 tweets, anecdotal evidence points to the fact that characteristics like visibility, years in office, or caucus leadership positions may shape violence and VAWIP.

Though few studies examine politicians' visibility as it relates to gendered abuse in politics, those that do find that there may be a link between visibility, gender, and abuse experienced. Some scholars studying online incivility consider social media follower counts to be indicators of visibility (Rheault, Rayment, and Musulan 2019). Adopting such a measure in the context of this study reveals that some pairs are less than perfect. Most notably, whereas Clarke has 87.2 thousand Twitter followers, Jeffries has 399.9 thousand.[26]

Moreover, representatives' caucus leadership positions may shape abuse. Tweets sent to Jeffries suggest that his position as the chair of the House Democratic Caucus may boost his visibility as well as the ways that the public engages with him. The same is true for Jayapal, who chairs the Progressive Caucus. These leadership roles were mentioned on multiple occasions. For example:

> "Chair of @HouseDemocrats Caucus @RepJeffries joined @MetCouncil & Shorefront JCC to thank volunteers, hand out PPE and pack emergency food for upcoming Passover holiday."

> "@ThomB01 @ryangrim @PramilaJayapal @SenSchumer It isn't bs. Jayapal is leader of the house

> *progressive caucus and has more than enough influence to make such demands."*

Tweets of this nature suggest that by heightening representatives' visibility, leadership positions may increase the public's recognition of members of Congress as well as the abuse targeting these members.

The length of time a representative has spent in Congress may also shape the public's engagement with them. Craig and Kim were just out of their freshman years when this study was conducted. Neither holds a leadership position, which reflects the fact that they are new to the institution. Given that others in the sample do hold leadership positions and have served for more than two years, it is unsurprising that they might attract different levels or types of attention. Future research should consider these factors.

This project's method of selecting pairs was imperfect because of factors like visibility. However, progressive members of Congress who did not belong to highly visible groups like the "Squad" were examined to better portray the typical online experience of progressive congressmen and congresswomen. Because scholars find that youth is correlated with online and gendered abuse, representatives below the age of 60 were also prioritized during the selection process. This includes representatives like Craig and Kim, who are younger but not as well-established as their colleagues.

Adopting a broad definition of incivility or evaluating gender differences rather than motives would have likely yielded a larger number of abusive cases. Most other studies do not adopt Krook and Restrepo Sanín's (2019) definition, but given that their work has been instrumental to the study of VAWIP, this definition was adopted. It is challenging to understand a Twitter user's motive in 280 or fewer characters, which speaks to the limitations of conducting a study on online abuse. However, understanding when gender serves a motivating factor rather than an incidental factor may say more about episodes that have a chilling effect on political representation.

CONCLUSION

This research answers some questions about VAWIP and raises others, but above all else it speaks to the fact that within an already small field of study, there is a paucity of existing literature that incorporates an intersectional lens. The VAWIP field is new and growing, and it centers the role that gender plays in shaping incidents of violence because the study of political violence has left gender to the margins of research for too long. The case for adopting a VAWIP framework is discussed extensively at the beginning of this paper, and this research confirms what scholars have argued: gender shapes politically active individuals' experiences with abuse. This demonstrates that VAWIP deserves greater attention in academic and practitioner spaces, particularly if such trends have a chilling effect on women's participation.

However, this research does not uncover quite as clear an answer to questions regarding the ways in which gender interacts with other salient identities to shape abuse. Intersectional violence and VAWIP are observed infrequently, but the interaction of numerous factors is qualitatively apparent. The similar number of tweets representing intersectional violence and intersectional VAWIP suggests that identity is a dynamic concept, but without a multitude of intersectional studies with which to put this research in conversation, it is challenging to articulate how identity-based and ideology-based traits affect men and women in politics. Adopting a broad measure of intersectionality may have complicated this effort, but this speaks to the reality that there have been so few studies incorporating an intersectional lens, and those that have often overcompensate by considering all potentially salient identities at once.

There is a strong case to be made for amplifying the study of VAWIP, which receives support from this research. But, there is no universal experience belonging to politicians in different gender groups, and the VAWIP field must not speak on issues of political consequence in falsely universal terms. Though the roles that identities like race and ethnicity as well as political ideology play in shaping incidents of abuse warrant greater attention, to conflate the ways that such identities interact with gender is to continue to sideline identities that have been historically de-centered in academic and policymaking work alike. ■

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APPENDIX

Additional Information Regarding Data Collection and Cleaning

One week's worth of tweets was collected for each representative between March 16 and March 26, 2021. Initially, 75,822 tweets were collected using TAGS. 19,909 were sent to Kim; 1,857 to Craig; 21,090 to Jeffries; 6,951 to Clarke; 14,118 to Khanna; and 11,897 to Jayapal. Using RStudio, a variable was created to search the first five characters of each tweet for the letters "RT," denoting retweets. Retweets and duplicates were discarded. After the data were cleaned, 13,737 tweets remained. 2,254 of these were sent to Kim; 356 to Craig; 2,416 to Jeffries; 1,213 to Clarke; 4,768 to Khanna; and 2,730 to Jayapal. A random sample of 2,000 tweets was coded for Khanna, Jayapal, Jeffries, and Kim, and the universe of tweets was coded for Craig and Clarke. 9,569 tweets were coded, representing 69.66% of 13,737 tweets.

Additional Information Regarding Coding Scheme

Southern and Harmer's (2019) coding scheme was modified so that the authors' ten variables were consolidated to four. The variables included in this study assessed violence [violence], VAWIP [VAWIP], references to representatives' intersecting identities [intersectional], and references to representatives' progressive ideologies [progressive]. Broad measures of intersectional violence [I.Violence] and intersectional VAWIP [I.VAWIP] were constructed, which combined the variables for intersectionality and ideology. If tweets referenced violence or VAWIP as well as intersectional or progressive identities, they were deemed instances of intersectional violence or intersectional VAWIP.

General Coding Rules

The sentiment in tweets had to be directed at the representatives in the sample to be assigned a value of "1." References to caucus memberships or words like "you" and "we" often indicated this. Tweets were not coded based on political issues mentioned unless such tweets made direct reference to representatives in the sample. If tweets referenced race, ethnicity, ideology, or abuse but did not link these themes to the representatives, they were not assigned a value of "1." If tweets referenced representatives' community outreach activities and such activities were linked to the congressmember's identity, these tweets were coded as such. Illegible tweets were assigned a value of "0."

Identifying Violence

This study adopted the WHO's (2002) definition of violence as the "intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (2002, 4). The WHO further defines psychological violence as actions that "compromise the well-being of individuals, families, and communities" (2002, 4). The WHO's typology of violence includes self-directed violence, interpersonal violence, and collective violence (2002, 5). Violent tweets targeting congressmembers were assigned a value of "1."

Identifying VAWIP

Krook and Restrepo Sanín's (2019) definition of VAWIP was adopted for this study. The authors define VAWIP as a phenomenon whose "origins, means, and effects of violent acts specifically aim to exclude women from the political sphere, disrupting the political process as a means of reinforcing gendered hierarchies" (2019, 742–43). The authors break VAWIP into five categories: physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and semiotic violence. Tweets referencing these categories in relation to congresswomen were assigned a value of "1."

Identifying Intersectional Tweets

"Intersectional" tweets referred to a representative's identities beyond gender. Intersectional tweets could affect both congressmen and congresswomen. Tweets had to connect these identities to the representative to be assigned a value of "1." Scholars argue that intersectionality in the study of VAWIP should include race and ethnicity as well as identities like age and religion, so any explicit mention of an identity belonging to a representative beyond gender alone was included. Tweets were coded for the presence or absence of references to political ideology separately.

Identifying Progressive Tweets

"Progressive" tweets referred to a representative's progressive political ideology or caucus membership. This includes tweets that invoked stereotypes or phrases associated with progressive politics. Some of these phrases included: squad, progressive, leftists, radical left, #FraudSquad, fauxgressives. To be assigned a value of "1," the substance of tweets had to be explicitly connected to the representative.

Identifying Intersectional Violence and Intersectional VAWIP

This study drew from existing VAWIP literature and constructed broad measures of intersectional violence [I.Violence] and intersectional VAWIP [I.VAWIP]. If tweets demonstrated violence or VAWIP as well as references to intersectional identities or progressive identities, they were deemed intersectional violence or intersectional VAWIP.

NOTES

1   See The *New York Times* (2020): <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/us/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-sexism-congress.html>.

2   See *Business Insider* (2020): <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-crowd-chants-lock-her-up-after-whitmer-kidnapping-plot-2020-10>.

3   See *The New York Times* (2020): <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/20/nyregion/esther-salas.html>.

4   See *CNN Politics* (2020): <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/04/politics/marjorie-taylor-greene-gun-post-squad/index.html>

5   Representative Tlaib's House Resolution: <https://tlaib.house.gov/sites/tlaib.house.gov/files/TLAIB_120_xml.pdf>.

6   Public Law 115-397 was passed in 2018 to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, which was the first piece of legislation to extend antidiscrimination laws to employees of the legislative branch.

7   Beinart describes the treatment that Clinton experienced during the 2016 presidential election for *The Atlantic*: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/10/fear-of-a-female-president/497564/>.

8   For a full roster of caucus members, see: <https://progressives.house.gov/caucus-members/>.

9   Race and ethnicity data were collected using the rosters provided by the House of Representatives Press Gallery.

10 Data pertaining to leadership positions were gathered using Ballotpedia.

11 District competitiveness was gauged using *The Cook Political Report's* Cook Partisan Voter Index.

12 District demographics were determined using the data collected by the United States Census Bureau.

13 Herrick et al. (2019) similarly analyzed local elected officials but controlled for "individual mayoral characteristics," "city characteristics," and "political variables" (2019, 7).

14 Clarke has been serving in the House of Representatives for 14 years since she was first sworn in in 2007. However, she has represented her current district for just 8 years because this district was redrawn in 2013.

15 TAGS is a free plugin for Google Sheets that allows researchers to interact with the Twitter API.

16 Google Alerts allows users to monitor the internet for certain terms and to receive updates regarding these terms.

17 If the coding and data analysis indicated that certain representatives received heightened abuse on a particular day or over numerous days, the Google Alerts archive could be referenced and might reveal that a representative had cast a vote or introduced a policy that could have sparked controversy or hostility.

18 For example, the search term for Representative Andy Kim was his verified personal Twitter handle, @AndyKimNJ. This search term allowed TAGS to collect all tweets tagging Kim's verified personal account

19 This was not possible for Representatives Hakeem Jeffries and Yvette Clarke because Jeffries' personal account was not verified and Clarke's personal account was designated as her "campaign" profile and was not active.

20 Though one week's worth of tweets was collected for each member in the sample, the start dates were staggered during data collection to ensure that the TAGS archives were running correctly.

21 There were just 356 and 1,213 codable tweets for Craig and Clarke respectively.

22 Consistent with Southern and Harmer (2019), data were analyzed at both the tweet level and the congressmember level. Doing so allowed me to examine the extent to which the relevant phenomena were represented as a proportion of all tweets coded as well as the extent to which these phenomena impacted individual members of Congress within similarly situated pairs.

23 All tweets included in this section appear unedited.

24 The following news article details Kim's Twitter thread and was collected using the Google Alerts archive set up for Kim: <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/25/980779037/rep-andy-kim-on-state-department-racism-my-own-government-questioned-my-loyalty>.

25 Of these studies, only Southern and Harmer (2019) hand code their data.

26 These values represent the number of followers that members of Congress in the sample had on May 9, 2021.

The Modern Totem: An Overview of the National Animal On its Role in Forming National Identity

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National symbols play a significant role in contemporary politics by shaping national identities. However, national animals receive little attention in scholarship. This paper provides a study of the animal as a national symbol, proposing a possible model to fit the national animal into the rich nationalism literature. It generates theories about the formation, strengths, and challenges of the national animal, supported with case study analysis. The central hypothesis is that the national animal is a distinctive national symbol. It is a symbol of the national rather than of the nation. It is not a purely top-down political design; it embeds concrete traits; and it creates space for international interaction. Theoretically, the national animal can forge a strong national identity. However, many real-life challenges prevent it from becoming prominent in modern nations.

INTRODUCTION

If you are a fan of political cartoons, you are probably familiar with the idea of using animals to represent countries. Politicizing animals as a symbol for the nation is not a new practice, but it receives little dedicated research attention. Scholars have conducted in-depth research on many national symbols but not national animals.[1] There are papers studying the significance of an animal species to a particular nation (De Visser and Coleman 2008; Platoff 2012). However, no one has evaluated the national animal as a distinctive political symbol, comparing it with other national symbols. This paper studies the national animal in general, exploring its origins and history as well as its present political effects.

In doing so, this paper seeks to add to the literature on nationalism. It should be made clear that this paper does not aim to offer a rigorously worked out alternative to existing approaches to nationalism. Rather, it is a discussion piece, aiming to open up debate. This paper proposes a possible model to fit the national animal into the rich nationalism literature. Constrained by the availability of data and existing literature, this paper should be viewed primarily as a tool of encouraging and pinpointing future research into this topic.

The central hypothesis is that the national animal is a special national symbol with the distinctively strong power to forge national identity. To investigate this hypothesis, the paper proceeds as follows: first, it starts with a review of national symbols and national identity. Second, it highlights the challenges of conventional national symbols before discussing the national animal. Then it will analyse the national animal around four topics: history, formation, strengths and

challenges. Finally, it proposes some directions for future study, explaining why the study of national animals is significant.

NATIONAL SYMBOLS AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

National symbols are entities that represent a nation. A national symbol can be a song, a flag, or a ceremony, among other things. While a national symbol has many functions (Marsland 2001, 521–30), its main purpose is forming, maintaining and consolidating national identity (Geisler 2005). National identity refers to the quality or condition of believing oneself to be part of a nation. Despite some disagreements, the most prominent schools of thought, namely social constructionism (Anderson 2006; Hobsbawm 1994) and ethnosymbolism (Smith and Hutchinson 2000), agree that national identity is crucial for modern nations. National identity offers international exclusiveness and intranational inclusiveness. Externally, it justifies the rights and duties exclusively shared by nationals. It delegitimizes foreign intervention in domestic issues, especially from former colonizers. Internally, it provides a bond among domestic individuals, creating a social cohesion that functions at a national level.

Forming national identity requires the participation of the national symbol for two reasons. Firstly, the concept of *nation* is abstract. People cannot directly see or feel the existence of a nation (Walzer 1967, 194). Benedict Anderson (2006) famously described the nation as an imagined community formed by people you never meet. The concrete national symbol crystalizes the abstract national identity. It

makes the identity tangible. Nationals are able to project their feelings towards the nation on the symbol, which otherwise might be impossible to meaningfully express and apprehend (Geisler 2005). Secondly, it is hard to achieve unity or "oneness" at the national level. Nationals are naturally and socially heterogeneous. Every nation more or less experiences some internal diversity in terms of ethnicity, economic status, religion and history. A national symbol aims to create a focal point above all diversities. It helps form national identity by temporarily weakening one's individual or sub-national identities and highlighting the commonality shared with other nationals.

COLLECTIVE MEMORY: A SOURCE OF THE MEANING

Most national symbols' symbolic power does not originate from their physical properties. There are no inherent qualities that reflect a symbol's national significance (Kolstø 2006, 696). Colours, lines, lyrics, or bricks are useful in disseminating or preserving a message, but they do not produce the message. Instead, the emblematic power relies on the community's interaction with the symbol. Successful symbols are the "witness" or "participant" of the shared experience. They remind nationals of their common endeavour, which triggers a sense of belonging and unity. This explains why many national anthems are old-fashioned battle songs (Mosse 1993). They allow nationals to recall the wars they suffered through together as a nation. The American "Star-Spangled Banner," the French "La Marseillaise," and the Chinese "March of the Volunteers" are some good examples. When these anthems are played, nationals feel they are sent back to the battlefield where they put their lives in each other's hands. War-time trust and solidarity among nationals serve as the source for unified national identity in peacetime.

However, only limited generations experience direct interaction with the symbol. For citizens who never participate in those unforgettable communal events, the power of the national symbol is indirectly activated via collective memory. Collective memory is a hotchpotch of historical facts, cultural myths, unconscious absorption and conscious manipulation (E. Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012; Kansteiner 2002; Reicher and Hopkins 2000). It is a subjective contemporary interpretation of the past. Philosophers like John Stuart Mill and Ernest Renan embrace collective memory as an important pillar for national identity (Renan 1990, 19; Tombs 2014). They argue that collective memory is the underlying force in many if not most national symbols. Think of the Scots and Bannockburn, the French and the Bastille, the English and Trafalgar Square. These places are still symbolically powerful for people today because they *appear* to refer to unique events of central importance to the nation. It is the relevant stories, anecdotes and artistic emulations, rather than the actual experience, that trigger the sense of national identity among the modern population.

Collective memory is dynamic. It is continually edited, renegotiated, rewritten, or newly created by different generations (Geisler 2005). It is subject to unconscious (Berger 2009, 490) or active (Reicher and Hopkins 2000) construction. The flexible nature of collective memory is crucial in forming national unity. By transforming and renewing the national narrative, collective memory can adjust itself to new challenges and social progress. Adjustable collective memory preserves the appeal of the national symbol even for new generations. For example, to ensure Muay Thai's national trappings are not eroded, the Thai government created a royalist national history from nowhere, with concretization in the form of museums, academic institutions and official-led publicity (Vail 2014).

However, the same flexibility also brings problems. When a national symbol fully relies on collective memory, it is hard to form a concrete, determined national identity. By singing "The Star-Spangled Banner," people have a strong sense that they are Americans. However, people do not have an answer on the concrete meaning of "being an American," or "Americanness."[2] In other words, given the wide range of possible interpretations, it is hard for nationals to agree on the criteria for national self-definition. There is very little information behind the homogeneity or "oneness" of national identity.

Mainstream wisdom argues that ambiguity is beneficial for nation-building. With undetermined criteria, national identity tolerates different interpretations and appeals to many sub-national groups. However, absence of a specified, concrete interpretation also means the constructed image of *the nation* is fuzzy. As the embedded national identity is vague, a symbol can accommodate competing interpretations from groups with conflicting agendas (Perera 2005). For instance, the British flag has been used to "connote imperial power, tradition and national pride" by far-right groups; but it was also adopted by anti-authoritarian mobs to convey "progressive modishness" in the 1960s (Edensor 2016, 25–26). Such contradictory symbolic meaning of "both traditional and fashionable" is caused by the abstractness of the flag symbol (Edensor 2016, 25–26). If varying interpretations of the same symbol cannot coexist, existing inter-group hostility can intensify.

Besides, national symbols with a vague national identity do not have instrumental power. A concrete national identity not only unifies the people, but also infuses illusionary national personalities into the individual (Hassin et al. 2007). Concomitant personalities can affect a person's thoughts and behaviours (Rafaeli and Pratt 2006). For instance, if one believes that being the national of country X means *fighting for freedom,* then they are inclined to support the proposal to violently overthrow an authoritarian foreign government, even if the national is a peace-loving individual in daily lives. On the contrary, if a symbol only constructs a vague identity, it provides "psychological abstraction." The identity has very limited influence on nationals' concrete political engagement. It only provides *blind patriotism.* The nationals are strongly emotionally

attached to the nation, prioritizing the national interest and practicing xenophobia (Schatz and Lavine 2007, 329–55). However, there is not much political predilection beyond the "nation first" mindset. For example, researchers show that the subliminal presentation of national flags only neutralizes the patriotic sentiments, drawing participants to the political centre (Hassin et al. 2007). In brief, abstract symbols are useful in creating unity, but such unity does not have a specific direction. While there is consensus on protecting the interest of the nation, there is no collective personality-based thinking on what nationals should do to maximize the national interest. Later in this paper, I will argue that the problem of abstract national identity is less severe for the national animal. However, before I address that issue, it is necessary to review the history and formation of the national animal as a national symbol.

ANCIENT TOTEMISM AND THE MODERN HISTORY OF NATIONAL ANIMALS

The national animal is not a novel modern creation. Its historical roots trace back to ancient totemism. While I cannot conclude that the national animal is the direct heir of ancient totems, the great similarities mean it is beneficial to study the two concepts side by side. In this section, I present an overview of Émile Durkheim's study of totemism. In his work, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life,* Durkheim studies totemic societies in Australia from a sociological perspective.

Durkheim (1995, 169) argues that totemism stresses the sacred and reverential qualities given to the totemic animal, which serves the purpose of social organization. Members of a single clan are not necessarily consanguineous or live close to each other. The cult of the common totemic beast serves as an "anonymous and impersonal force" (Durkheim 1995, 191) that is identifiable in all but identical to none.

Totemism is not zoolatry (animal worshipping). It presupposes a human-animal consubstantiality (W. R. Smith and Ignác 1907). The relation between the alive totemic animal and the tribe members is genealogical. Each person has dual identities: an individual human-being and a collective animal-being. When the person takes the animal identity, she shares the perceived (sometimes mystical) qualities of the totemic animal. For example, the Eagle tribe members have the ability to see the future; members from the Bear tribe are clumsy and easily trapped. In some closed communities, there is even cross-tribe recognition. The Snake people are recognized by other tribes as having snake attributes. If one totemic animal is universally despised, all the members from that animal tribe suffer humiliation from other tribes (Durkheim 1995, 160–61).

Totemism consecrates the figurative representation of the totemic animal, which is usually a stone or a piece of wood with animal emblems (Durkheim 1995, 118). It is an interesting observation that the emblems are taken almost exclusively from animals (rather than plants, stones or other things). Durkheim provides two explanations. Firstly, there is the kindred relation joining human species and other animals, which creates a natural intimacy. Secondly, animals play a significant role in people's economic life (for both hunting and fishing populations), which creates a social intimacy. The two types of intimacies are not enjoyed by plants, stars or the sun (Durkheim 1995, 235–36). While the religious colour seems to be fading, the ancient totem's social function is preserved by the modern national animal.

National animals have heterogeneous origins. Some result from top-down design, and others are more appropriately categorized as bottom-up creations. In fact, the modern national animal can be inherited, created or imported. Firstly, historical inheritance is a common way of forming a national animal. Some animals have a strong historical connection with nationals. The animal may be featured prominently in local mythologies, live closely with the indigenous population, or play a significant economic role. It is natural for modern nationals to embrace such an animal as their collective symbol. For example, the brown bear is the widely acknowledged national animal of Finland (Weaver 2014). It has a very strong cultural root. According to *Kalevala,* the national epic poetry of Finland that compiles Finnish folklore and mythology, the bear was regarded as a woodland deity by the ancient indigenous population. Finns widely practiced bear-worshipping (Bonser 1928, 350). Reverence towards the bear continues in modern Finland. The beast is regionally perceived as the "king of the forest" (Weaver 2014).

For some countries, the national animal is a new creation. This can be caused by the absence of a prominent pre-political animal, or the intention to break away from old cultures. For instance, the USA's bald eagle was officially established in 1782. Six years after the establishment of the new country, Americans were trying to cut the link with their previous metropole in London. After discussions and disagreements, the founding elites confirmed the bald eagle as the national symbol (Nix 2018). They believed the big bird well represented the USA's "supreme power," "courage" and "struggle for freedom." At the beginning, the bird was only used officially. After great efforts of publicity and practice, the bald eagle has been accepted by the American public as a national symbol.

The national animal can also be imported. For example, the French cock was initially imposed by foreign countries before being acknowledged and adopted by the locals. In the thirteenth century, several foreign writers started to compare the French to cocks. In the middle of the fifteenth century, hostile neighbours of the Valois dynasty used the cock to humiliate the French king and his subjects. They adopted a pejorative image of the cock: vain, combative, oversexed, ostentatious. However, in the late Middle Ages, several Valois sovereigns started to acknowledge and even embrace the cock symbol, with reinterpreted positive attributes of the cock from Christian symbolism. The cock became the symbol of courage, victory and vigilance. Decades later, the cock shifted from royal propaganda to a civil representation (Pastoureau 1998).

FORMATION OF NATIONAL ANIMALS

The characteristics of the animals in their natural forms inspire the symbolic meaning of the national animal. However, the connection is not straightforward. In this section, I hypothesize a mechanism explaining how national animal identity is constructed from the natural animal.

Natural Animal → Constructed Animal

Animals are natural beings. However, animals in human conversations are constructed beings (DeMello 2012, 19). Humans' attempt to make sense of foreign species (Kellert and Wilson 1993), together with the capacity of mentalization (Frith and Frith 2001), prompt them to assume human mental processes in alien species.[3] This practice of treating non-humans as humans is anthropomorphism. This paper focuses on animal anthropomorphism. Humans project human personalities, such as "evil," "aggressive," "cowardly" on natural animals (Midgley 2002, 344). There are two levels of animal anthropomorphism. In pet ownership, individual anthropomorphism is practiced by the pet owner to comprehend the individual thinking of their pet. The more common practice is collective anthropomorphism. Humans de-individualize animals and treat the whole species as homogenous (Servais 2018). For instance, many societies stereotype that lions are brave, rabbits are cowardly, and pigs are lazy. This is also evident by the prevalent usage of animal idioms such as "as busy as a beaver" and "as sly as a fox."

Many contributing factors determine the human attributes assigned to animal species. One factor is animals' biological traits. These include the animal's diets, physical properties and living environment. For instance, carnivores such as lions and tigers are often labelled as powerful and charismatic. The Mandarin duck always acts in pairs, so it represents enduring love in Chinese culture. Bats live in dark caves. They are affiliated with "evil" and "witchery" in many cultures (Lawrence 1993).

Another crucial factor is human-animal interaction. Arnold Arluke and Clinton Sanders (1996) developed a *sociozoological scale* to categorize animals based on their influence on human society (DeMello 2012, 51). Based on their theory, the animals that bring benefits to humans usually have positive human traits. For example, cows provide milk to humans and are thus labelled as selfless and hard-working. Dogs, serving as humans' companions, are perceived as loyal and faithful. On the contrary, animals that hurt humans are given negative traits. Rats are perceived as filthy and evil partially because of their association with plague and many other deadly diseases (DeMello 2012, 52). Religions and mythologies illustrate the cultural human-animal interaction. Christian theology plays a significant role in the Western world's anthropomorphism. The story about Noah's Ark in Genesis 8:7 portrays doves as the messenger for peace and good news, while ravens symbolize ignorance and bad news (DeMello 2012, 311). Being the incarnation of Jesus, lions and lambs are given positive traits such as courage and purity. These connections are strengthened by the medieval bestiary, the compendium that illustrates beasts with small moral stories (Morrison n.d.). Many of these matches are succeeded by contemporary societies, even among non-believers.

While different contributing factors can enforce each other, sometimes they are also contradictory. It is impossible to lay out a general mechanism for the formation of the constructed animal. Cases vary in different societies. Large predators, specifically tigers, lions and bears, are seen positively in some societies despite the threat they have posed to humans in the past. However, the same species can be seen negatively in other societies.

Constructed Animal → National Animals

As a national symbol, the national animal represents the nation. The specific political usage implies the national animal's attributes must be similar but distinctive from the socially constructed attributes. Firstly, the national animal's attributes should be similar to those of the constructed animal. The constructed animal represents the community's general impression about the animal. If the attributes of the national animal are very different, it will be difficult to convince the public. For example, establishing the wolf as the national animal with the attributes "affectionate" and "contented" will be challenging in a community that has long deemed wolves as "wicked" and "bloodthirsty." The obvious incoherence between the national animal and the socially constructed animal hinders the credibility of the symbol.[4]

Meanwhile, the national animal requires careful modifications. Socially constructed attributes are derived from the mixture of biological traits, socio-zoological scale and theological portrayal. A tiger can be both courageous and overbearing; a cock can be both vigilant and oversexed. However, for the national animal, with a clear purpose as a self-representation, undesirable traits must be abandoned. This practice can be explained by social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979). People seek a positive understanding of themselves (Reicher and Hopkins 2000, 33). When it comes to a collective group, they have a predilection for a positive collective image. The national animal's attributes are cautiously modified to represent the self-perception of the nation. They express and reaffirm the ideal shared values of the nationals. When nationals interpret their own national animals, they will not perceive eagles as "bullying" but "sharp-sighted." Similarly, even if both "clumsy" and "powerful" are aligned with the general social impression about bears, the nationals will pick "powerful" while ignoring "clumsy."

Natural Animal → Natural Animal Identity

Different from conventional national symbols, the national animal is not merely a tangible representation of a group (Schatz and Lavine 2007, 332). Instead, it takes a step forward, transforming state representation (symbol of the nation) into personal self-understanding (symbol of the

national). Although anthropomorphism assigns specific traits to the national animal, these traits never become the nationals' self-perceived personal characteristics. Positive animalization, the process of treating humans as animals with positive attributes,[5] enables nationals to adopt the tangible traits of the anthropomorphized national animal.

Positive animalization is possible thanks to human-animal intimacy. From a biological perspective, Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory has provided strong scientific support for human-animal similarity. Humans share 98% genes with chimpanzees (Marks 2003). Many traits which we once perceived as unique to humans such as complex communication systems and sophisticated emotions are in fact possessed by many animals (DeMello 2012, 42). Humans also have been socially close to animals for a very long time. In hunter societies, humans treat animals as equal sharers of natural resources. Research papers have demonstrated animals' ability to understand and respond to human emotions and vice versa (Alger and Alger 1997; Fidler, Light, and Costall 1996; Sanders 2003). Additionally, as I have mentioned, the practice of humans taking animal identity has a long history. Totemic tribes believed tribe members possessed the characteristics of the totem animal. The shamans believed they could hold animal spirits temporarily (Durkheim 1995).

ACTIVATION OF NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTITY

In modern societies where people possess multiple identities, national animal identity cannot be dominant at all times. Even in aboriginal societies, the totem is not significant in everyday economic life (Durkheim 1995, 116). It is reasonable to argue that national animal identity requires some activation. Externally, it requires some national political upheavals. This can be caused by a war, a disaster or even an intense national election.

Upheaval serves two purposes. Firstly, it brings affront to the citizens' national perspective. It urges people to temporarily put aside their global perspectives as cosmopolitans and displace their individual sentiments in the collective national identity. National identity becomes the main source of decision-making. Secondly, upheaval creates an identity crisis that generates widespread anxiety, stress, and trauma. Political upheavals temporarily or permanently challenge or destroy some long-established social networks, such as families, neighbourhoods, political parties or ideological alliances. In such situations, citizens are desperate to find a stable vicarious identity to relieve ontological anxiety (Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele 2021). They are more vulnerable to provocative, emotionally appealing propaganda and political campaigning, in order to make sense of themselves in relation to their surroundings. They become more receptive to the constructed national animal identity and its affiliated traits, even if the animal identity does not reflect the real traits and preferences of the individual.

Internally, the active role of governments cannot be ignored. Through compelling posters or charismatic leaders' speeches, governments not only remind citizens of their animal identity, but also link the identity to specific actions or policies. By these top-down means, the government can exploit animal identity to further their agendas.

In a broadcast on May 14, 1943, UK prime minister Sir Winston Churchill (1944) made an explicit mention of the British lion identity:

> [I]f the Nazi villains drop down upon us from the skies any night, in raid or heavy attack upon the key production centres, you will make it clear to them that they have not alighted in the poultry-run, or in the rabbit-farm, or even in the sheep-fold, but that they have come down in the lion's den at the Zoo!

Churchill reminded the British that they were not cowardly animals that waited for the Nazis' slaughter. Rather, the British were proud lions that were never afraid of challenges and provocation. They must stand up against the Nazis and bravely fight back. Churchill connected the nationals (British), the animal identity (Lion), the animal trait (Proud), and the specific action (Never give in to the Nazi).

Similarly, in 2014, when Russia suffered from disapproval and sanctions because of its military action in Crimea, President Vladimir Putin used a bear metaphor to describe the Western attitude towards Russia in a domestically televised conference:

> [T]he bear guards his Taiga (forest)…Sometimes I think, maybe they'll let the bear eat berries and honey in the forest, maybe they will leave it in peace…They will not. Because they will always try to put him on a chain, and as soon as they succeed in doing so they tear out his fangs and his claws...Do we want our bear to just become a stuffed animal? (Cullinane 2014; Saul 2014)

The metaphor highlighted the Western countries' undoubtful threat to Russia and its people. By depicting the image of a stuffed bear bullied by the West, Putin urged the public to support his leadership and his government's foreign military actions. The trapped Russian nationals needed to stand up to preserve the freedom and great power that characterized the Russian bear.

THE ROLE OF POPULAR CULTURE

A symbol must be convincing to be effective. Like all the other national symbols, the national animal needs endemic and continual ritual-like activities to consolidate its relevance. However, the national animal does not have the privilege of being emphasized by political elites. Limited top-down support makes bottom-up consolidation crucial. Indeed, the national animal relies on popular culture to stay relevant.

Popular culture is the culture that involves mass consumption. Contrast to "high culture" which is sophisticated

and exclusive, popular culture is accessible and embraced by commoners (Dittmer and Bos 2019, 23–24). The broad audience base grants popular culture a great outreach capacity. It fosters common understandings among the population (Dittmer and Bos 2019, 30). Popular culture is usually intriguing and attractive. The masses are drawn by dramatic, funny, mysterious elements. This means the identity formation process can be "mindless, occurring as other activities are being consciously engaged in" (Billig 1995, 41). This makes the identity enforcement process effective because there is little conscious resistance, which frequently occurs during explicit, purposeful political propaganda.

Popular culture facilitates anthropomorphism well. By utilizing the power of analogy and exaggeration, it captures and amplifies the constructed attributes of the animals. A good example is animal tales. According to *Aesop's Fables,* snakes are always evil ("The Farmer and the Viper") and foxes are always sly ("The Fox and the Crow"). Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories,* as well as the works of Beatrix Potter, also personify animals with constructed traits. Animal tales rely on the existing social impression of the animals. Stereotypical impressions can convey the stories' moral lessons effectively. The popularity of animal tales further strengthens the social impressions of the animals.[6] In Homer's *Odyssey*, Argos the dog waits for his master for

a decade before it dies, emphasizing the quality of loyalty (Homer 1990). In George Orwell's 1945 novel *Animal Farm,* the power-lusting dictating class is portrayed as pigs, drawing on and enforcing the social impression that pigs are lazy, filthy and greedy.

Popular culture also facilitates the formation of the national animal and national animal identity. This can take the explicit form of putting the national animal together with other established national symbols. A lion with a Union Jack Flag decorated helmet is a good example. Sometimes, the link is implicit. A newspaper headline "The British are roaring" connects the nation with the action of the animal. The political cartoon is one important form of popular culture. It has made a great contribution in connecting the animal and the nation. Many political cartoons embrace the usage of national animals in order to deliver their political messages in a simple, comprehensive but relatively unprovocative way. The PUNCH magazine, a well-established popular political magazine in the UK, is one of the pioneers. PUNCH publishes many cartoons that use lions as the representative of Britain and its people. Most of these cartoons reflect the UK's international status, especially its relationship with other nations.

Figure 1 portrays the British as a huge lion and Australians and Canadians as much smaller lion cab soldiers who wait for

Figure 1: PUNCH cartoon 1 *"My Boys"* (Tenniel 1885)

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"MY BOYS!"

the lion's command. It emphasizes the lion's great leadership as a father-like figure. This illustrates Britain's international status as the leader of the British Empire, and its relationship of dominance with the member nations of the Empire. Figure 2 is about the British leading the way in putting down the uprising in Egypt. The cartoon illustrates many animal representatives including the bear (Russia), donkey (Spain), eagle (Germany), double-headed eagle (Austria) as well as Italy and Turkey. They are all around the lion and waiting for its decision on the share of the dead crocodile (Egypt). This cartoon assumes the lion's central role in the animal kingdom. It signals the unquestionable leadership and significant status of the British in international society, with trust and loyalty from other countries.

The influence of the PUNCH spread beyond cartoons. In the 1967 film *The Charge of the Light Brigade,* PUNCH cartoons were used in the opening of the movie, narrating a story about how the British lion (with the support of the French cock) saved the Turkish turkey from the Russian bear. The influence of the political cartoon is so strong and long-lasting that the depiction of British lions in the 1850s still resonated with a British audience in the 1960s.

THEORETICAL STRENGTHS OF THE NATIONAL ANIMAL

The national animal has its unique strengths as a national symbol. It creates a more concrete national identity and introduces the international dimension. Firstly, the national animal forms a concrete national identity. Thanks to anthropomorphism and positive animalization, concrete personalities are embedded in national animal identity. Compared to one's "Star-Spangled Banner" identity, it is much easier to visualize one's "bald eagle" identity (which reminds people of traits such as "fearless" and "fight for freedom"). National animal identity provides the population a holistic national self-perception and a specific guidance for thinking and actions.

Certainly, national animal identity is not invincible to political sways and manipulations. However, it is more resilient compared to other symbols. This is because conventional national symbols are purely political entities. Political agencies dominate the power to interpret their meanings. In contrast, animals not only have a political presence, they also have salient presence in the natural world, in operas, in novels and many other everyday aspects beyond the political realm. When political elites attempt to reinterpret the national animal for their own agenda, they are chained by the existing social understanding of the animal. It is very costly for political elites to fight against popular culture and overturn the social impression of the animal.[7] When the social impression remains unchanged, the image of the national animal is relatively stable.

An important caveat is that these concrete national attributes are illusionary. Just as national animal identity

Figure 2: PUNCH cartoon 2 *"The Lion's Just Share"* (Swain 1882)
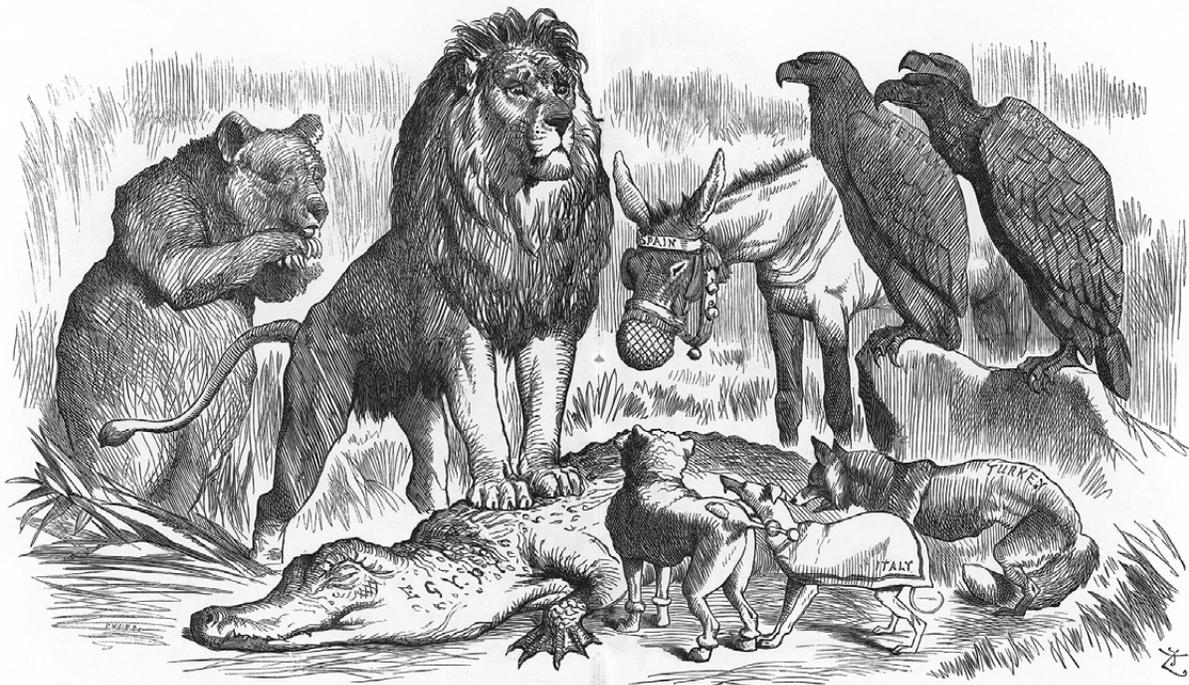
Used with permission

THE LION'S JUST SHARE.

itself, these national attributes are imaginary constructions. The predominant opinion among psychologists is that there is no distinctive personality difference among people with different nationalities (Inkeles and Levinson 1969). Within the nation, citizens possess very different characteristics. However, illusionary attributes are sufficient to affect citizens' self-evaluations and policy preferences. After all, we see people willing to sacrifice their lives for unknown strangers just because they are members of the same country (Anderson 2006). It is reasonable to assume that, with some top-down influence, the citizens will choose policy preferences based on their imaginary animal traits.

Secondly, the national animal provides an international dimension for national identity. Conventional national symbols are inward-oriented. They construct commonality among nationals while assuming an oversimplified understanding about foreign countries. There is only a demarcation between "domestic" and "foreign." While the uniqueness of the homeland is heavily emphasized, the uniqueness of individual foreign countries is sacrificed. To the concern of the domestic people, the complex nature of bilateral and multilateral international relations is neglected. The same type of symbols from individual countries are parallel to each other without meaningful interaction. For example, putting the national flag of China and the USA side by side does not create meaningful space to illustrate the Sino-US relation.

On the contrary, the national animal has an international dimension thanks to the presence of the zoological interspecific interactions. For an ecologist, the main types of interspecific interactions include competition, predation, mutualism, commensalism and parasitism (Brewer 1979). However, the discussion about the national animal concerns the socially constructed interspecific interaction rather than the natural interaction among natural animals.[8] When the local national animal is placed together with animals that represent foreign countries[9] in an artful way, it can convey a clear and convincing message. The second PUNCH cartoon quoted earlier is a good example. British leadership in Figure 2 is persuasive because the lion is socially believed to have the highest ranking in the zoological food chain.

Figure 3 is another good example. This Pulitzer Prize winning cartoon by Bruce Alexander Russell illustrates the Cold War US-USSR Rivalry well by portraying the national animals of the USA and the Soviet Union. The two beasts aggressively stare at each other without any sign of compromise. The competitive, hostile bilateral relationship cannot be more explicit. Readers can easily get this message because they know that both the bald eagle and the bear are powerful, fierce regional giants in the natural world. Any conflict between them will be disastrous.

In brief, the national animal enables nationals to have a concrete identity at the international level. They do more than merely assemble the masses based on some abstract commonality. They never advocate for blind patriotism or

support for the nation and the governing regimes. Rather, they advocate for actions aligned with certain values and attributes.

CHALLENGES OF THE NATIONAL ANIMAL

Despite its strengths, the national animal does not enjoy the same political attention as many other symbols. Even the very limited promotion efforts are mostly along the conservation line, rather than for the sake of delivering political messages. This section is devoted to analysing why the national animal is not favoured by political elites.

The obvious answer is traditions and norms. Conventional symbols, even if they cannot provide a concrete national identity, have been functioning well to provide a sense of unity. Prominent symbols have been embedded into the mainstream system. For instance, national anthems and flags are given the status as the essential elements of a sovereign country in international society. They are stated in many countries' constitutions. In many international organizations, all member states have their national flags exhibited in the headquarters to indicate their membership. National animals do not enjoy such prominence. It is much easier for national governments to promote a symbol that has been unquestionably tied to the nation, rather than creating and promoting a new symbol.

Figure 3: *"Time to Bridge That Gulch"*

Time to Bridge That Gulch

Source: commons.wikimedia.org

However, the tradition of prioritizing other national symbols is more a consequence of lacking popularity than a reason. As we have seen, using animals to form group unity used to be orthodox in totemic societies. A more plausible reason is concern about the uniqueness of the symbol. The desirable national identity must be internationally exclusive. If the symbol is shared by other countries, it will undermine the distinctiveness of national identity. Conventional national symbols such as the flag are new creations by modern nations. They are designed to be unique and exclusive. In contrast, uniqueness is much less attainable for the national animal. Different from the ancient totemic societies that are formed by very few totem tribes, modern international society consists of hundreds of nations. While there are countless animal species, only very few have meaningful interaction with the community and therefore have the potential to arouse public sentiment. The list is even shorter because people desire species with superior social attributes in order to boost national morale or get an "imaginary competitive edge" over others.

Finding an internationally unique animal is not the only challenge. Selling it to the public is equally difficult. We have mentioned that the national animal can be constructed, inherited or imported. If the animal is inherited, it should be culturally rooted in the region. However, modern nations hardly have a homogenous culture. There are many sections (e.g., different religions, ethnic groups) and therefore many cultures in a single nation. Each culture can have its own culturally significant animal. Promoting one animal rather than the others may be interpreted as the government's bias and favouritism. Thus, it is hard to pin down a particular animal without causing disunity or exacerbating existing social conflicts. For example, India officially established the Royal Bengal Tiger as the national Animal in 1972 (IndaiGov n.d.). The tiger has a strong historical significance in India, but mostly within Hinduism. It represents power in Hindu mythology and the Vedic era. However, the tiger is not as prominent in Islam, which is another popular religion in India. India's constitutional commitment to secularism and its use of a "Hindu animal" as a national symbol bring accusations of hypocrisy, especially when the Hindu-Islamic relation is intense. Proposals about changing the national animal to the cow or the elephant have been raised in recent years (Oneindia Staff Writer 2017; Thapar 2015).

Even for a relatively homogenous population, there can still be debates. For instance, competition between the beaver and the polar bear occurred in Canada in 2011. The beaver was adopted as the official national animal of Canada in 1975. It has a strong historical and cultural significance. The beaver was also central in the fur trade, the pillar economic industry for Canada. The animal has been featured in many places including the back of the Canadian nickel. In Canada, it has a long-established reputation of being diligent, humble and efficient. However, the beaver's critics argue the beaver is agriculturally destructive and represents a colonial past (Mallinder 2011). The polar bear, on the other hand, is majestic, noble and beautiful. It is a symbol of power, resourcefulness and dignity (Reuters Staff 2011). The beaver's supporters accuse the polar bear of being a bullying, aggressive animal, violating the Canadian people's peace-loving trait. The debate has undermined the credibility of the beaver as the national symbol. People become more sceptical about their "beaver national identity."

For those countries that construct or import the national animal, establishing a convincing symbol is equally, if not more challenging. Only if the animal is closely relevant to the masses, and has a strong cultural significance, is it likely to be stable and lasting. Some countries promote an official national animal linked with particular ideologies, parties, regimes or persons. Narrow affiliation with these ephemeral elements makes the animal vulnerable. During the First Empire in France, Napoleon I favoured the eagle over the cock. In his eyes, the cock was a "poor bird at grips with the eagles of Austria, Prussia, and Russia" (Pastoureau 1998, 421). Hence, he chose the eagle as the national animal. The eagle did not have mass support and was merely attached to the Napoleon regime. Unsurprisingly, it immediately lost its prominent status after the collapse of the First Empire. The eagle only made a short comeback with Napoleon III's Second Empire, while the cock had a triumphant return with the revival of the Republic after 1870.

Even if governments successfully establish the national animal, it is increasingly difficult to convince citizens that they possess the animal identity. In modern society, humans keep away from animals, treating the latter as inferior beings. The human-animal divide could originate from human domestication of animals. It has turned the human-animal relationship from competitors to "the controller and the controlled." In the West, the divide is reinforced by classical Greek thoughts and biblical narratives (DeMello 2012, 37). In *Politics*, Aristotle argues animals were created to serve humans; based on Genesis 1:26 in the Bible, humans were created emulating the look of God and were given domination over animals. The more abominable forces for today's human-animal divide are modernization and industrialization. Modernization exacerbates the physical, and subsequently emotional, alienation between humans and animals. Animal zoos and factory farms mean animals are no longer treated as independent living beings. They are downgraded to mere sources of nutrition or tools for entertainment. Animals are seen as having no agency, and therefore are used metaphorically to derogate others. Negative animalization is also popular at the national level. Some political artworks depict one country as a brutal animal while depicting the other as humans in the same piece, to demonstrate the former's barbarism and cruelty. This is evident by Figure 4 where Russia is portrayed as a violent bear trying to seize Ukraine while the USA and the European Union are portrayed in the human form trying to stop the injustice from happening.[10]

Additionally, political elites may worry about the elite-mass fissure created by the national animal. The national animal is a symbol of the nationals rather than a symbol of the nation. Conventional abstract national symbols crystalize the nation. They serve as the object of worship. By venerating and protecting the symbol, the citizens foster loyalty and respect towards the nation and its governing body. National unity comes from the sharing of the common target of worshipping. Political elites, as guardians of the country, enjoy great privileges and support from the people. However, the national animal does not provide a target of worshipping. Instead, it highlights a common (constructed) trait within each citizens' personality. The national unity is formed based on the similarity among members. The common admiration and trust towards a third party is not central. The national animal is not as effective in creating fanaticism towards the nation, which facilitates blind support towards the government decisions. Rather, there can be criticisms and rejections if governments fail to demonstrate the common traits that nationals should uphold. The potential fissure between nationals and the government is exemplified by the phrase "lions led by donkeys." The phrase was originally used to describe the defeated British soldiers led by the British generals in the First World War. In the last few years, it was recycled to criticize the British politicians such as Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage for leading the British people into the Brexit abyss. It hints these political leaders have betrayed their national "lion" identity that contains courage, responsibility and great leadership.

Political elites may also have concerns about the national animal's close connection with the social impression, especially on the international stage. Different countries can have different opinions about the same species. If the national animal has a bad foreign reputation, it can negatively affect the international image of the nation and its nationals. Durkheim mentioned how ancient tribes perceived members of the Bear Tribe as clumsy and easily trapped. The same applies to

Figure 4: *"Ukraine: The Russian giant has awoken"* (Latuff 2014)

Source: commons.wikimedia.org

modern national animals. For example, the dragon has been historically treated as the totem for the Chinese people. It has a very positive local image. It is thought to bring rain to the farmers to help the development of agriculture. It is associated with wealth, power, and mercy. However, in Western culture, especially in the Christian thinking, the dragon is a symbol for Satan and evil. It is the monster that destroys the castle and snatches the princess. The awful impression about the dragon in the West makes the dragon a convenient tool to disseminate anti-Sino sentiments and provoke the China threat theory among the Western population. This harms China's international development.

THE ROAD AHEAD

In conclusion, this paper analyses the national animal's history, formation, strengths and challenges as a political symbol. It argues that the national animal is distinctive from other national symbols because it is not merely backed up by collective memory, but also by the animal's natural traits and the communal impression. Its unique formation process enables it to create a concrete national identity that puts emphasis on the similarity among nationals. It has the potential to create illusionary national traits that can guide citizens' political behaviours. Also, the existence of zoological interactions means that the national symbol can illustrate international interactions. However, political elites hesitate in using the national animal for political purposes. The biggest challenge is finding an animal species that is not adopted by other countries and can also be widely acknowledged within the domestic border. Also, the human-animal division in modern society means positive animalization is increasingly difficult. The mobilizing power of the national animal is weakened because people are not willing to adopt the animal identity.

In the last section, I will explain how researchers can continue working on the subject. As I have acknowledged, not all claims in this article are backed up by strong empirical evidence. We need to find creative ways to explore many interesting questions. Whether a popularly acknowledged national animal(s) exists in all countries? For those countries that have adopted an official national animal, is the animal merely a cultural symbol or does it have a political meaning? Other than serving as a tool to consolidate national identity, does it also send political messages to the international community? For example, some argue Canada's debate about replacing the beaver with the polar bear in 2011 coincided with tougher Canadian foreign policy (Mallinder 2011). Is it true that countries with more aggressive (based on conventional understanding) animals have more aggressive foreign policies?

At the more theoretical level, the study of the national animal should relaunch our discussion about the meaning of nationalism and national identity. We should reflect on whether national identity emphasizes the relation between nationals or

the relation between nationals and the nation. Many people are unsatisfied with blind patriotism and worshipping of the motherland. Should we put emphasis on (illusionary) common national traits instead? Will national animals successfully form a national identity that facilitates solidarity, unity but also tolerance?

Lastly, we may want to study national symbols as a system. It is interesting to explore how the national animal complements other symbols that are traditionally prominent. What kind of national identity will we obtain if we combine abstract patterns and the concrete animal image? For example, some countries' national flags consist of the animal image. Are these flags more effective in unifying the nation? Is there an ecosystem for national symbols that maximizes their influence? Answers to these questions can help us solve many problems in political psychology and political iconography. ∎

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NOTES

1 This paper defines "national animal" as the animal that is broadly embraced by the nationals of a country as the representation of its community. National animals include both non-mythical and mythical creatures. And official political endorsement is unnecessary.

2 American identity is so nebulous that authorities thought it was necessary to establish an Un-American Activities Committee in the early 1950s, trying to establish what was not American behaviour (Carr 1951).

3 From the perspective of evolutionary anthropology, this practice can be traced back to the eras when humans lived in hunter societies (Mithen 1999). On the one hand, human hunters tend to perceive animals as intelligent counterparts who share the same natural resources for survival (Ingold 1994). On the other hand, the capability to "understand animals' thinking" is a societal survival value (Serpell and Paul 2002) because hunters need to think like prey to predict their actions in order to capture them (Mithen 1999).

4 Natural wolves behave like "faithful spouses and parents" and seldom kill more than they need for survival (Midgley 2002, 26–27). However, when it comes to credibility, what matters is the social impression.

5 Positive animalization is different from dehumanization, which involves depriving humans of their dignity or treating humans as a mere means (Bar-Tal 1989, 172).

6 The social impression can be different for different cultures. For example, rabbits are stupid and arrogant in some cultures (think about "The Tortoise and the Hare" in *Aesop's Fables*). However, they are intelligent and sly in African culture (DeMello 2012, 307).

7 Although French elites successfully turned the image of the cock positive, they did not fight against popular culture. The bad personalities of the cock were popular in neighbouring countries. However, at the domestic level, the cock actually enjoyed historical significance. In the Gallo-Roman era, the cock was frequently connected to the cult of Mercury, which the people venerated (Pastoureau 1998, 406).

8 The socially constructed interaction is likely to be simplified and naïve. It largely resembles the food chain, with the species at upper chains dominating the species at the lower chains. The relation between species at similar ranks are contingent and ambiguous. Again, popular culture plays a huge role in constructing this interaction.

9 These are representative animals perceived by foreigners. Locals may not endorse the representation.

10 Fortunately, the socially constructed human-animal division is not universal. There is still a strong animistic culture in some societies. Australian aboriginal tribes believe humans are equal to other animals, sharing the same rights and obligations to nature (Flannery 2002). Other examples include the native American Indian cultures, the San cultures in Africa and the Maori cultures in New Zealand.

On the Basis of Race & Gender: How Intersectional Identity Informs Peremptory Strike Decisions in Arkansas Capital Trials

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Since the 1986 landmark Supreme Court case Batson v. Kentucky *declared the striking of jurors on the basis of race to be unconstitutional, group-based peremptory protections have been expanded to include the gender, religion, and ethnicity of the juror. Despite these developments, the Supreme Court has yet to expand* Batson *protections to intersectional identities, failing to acknowledge the unique ways in which racial and gender stereotypes intersect to affect prosecutorial and defense perceptions of venire members. This article examines the peremptory strike patterns of seven Arkansas capital cases, paying close attention to how both the prosecution and defense invoke peremptory strikes on the basis of race, gender, and intersectional identity. Though I hypothesized that prosecutors would strike Black men and defense attorneys would strike white men at the highest rates from the venire, the data suggest something else entirely: neither prosecutors nor defense attorneys struck venire members disproportionately across intersectional identity, though prosecutors* were *shown to disproportionately strike Black prospective jurors from the venire. While several scholars have analyzed peremptory strike patterns in terms of intersectional identities, this research marks the first in the field to focus exclusively on intersectional strike patterns, as well as the first to examine jury selection in the context of Arkansas capital trials, where the state's supreme court overturned a murder conviction on the basis of* Batson *as recently as 2019.*

INTRODUCTION

I n 1985, an all-white jury convicted Edward James Motton of second-degree murder, sentencing him to fifteen years to life in prison. The jury panel was created in spite of the objections of Motton's defense attorneys, who repeatedly asserted that the prosecutors were deliberately striking Black women—four in total—from the jury panel via peremptory challenge until no Black women were left. In response to the defense's objections, Alameda County Superior Court Judge Jacqueline Taber argued against the notion presented by the defense that Black women were a cognizable group, asserting that Black women were no more of a cognizable group than those who wore toupees:

> *What's so magic[al] about Black women? … I'd like to hear from you what it is about the Black woman that has some special quality in it … You can have a cognizable group of people who wear toupees. Actually, everybody that I have been able to detect that wore toupees with respect to jurors have been excused, too; but is there some significance to that? You have got women on the jury. What function does a Black woman fulfill that the white woman doesn't? (People v. Motton 1985)*

There is extensive literature detailing just what makes Black women "so magical," as well as other ways in which both racial and gender stereotypes coalesce to form stereotypes that are wholly unique to one's intersectional identity. Wage gaps persist between both racial and gender identities, with Black men making more per dollar than Black women yet less per dollar than white men (Graf et. al 2019). Black women were arrested during traffic stops at the highest rates in 2015, followed by Latino men, Black men, white men, Latina women, and white women (Prison Policy Initiative 2019). The list goes on. The combinations of one's race and gender identities intersect in ways that make them unique—"magical"—from both their racial and gender counterparts, affecting how employers, police officers, doctors, and potentially lawyers view them.

The decision of the Alameda County judge came just months prior to the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Batson v. Kentucky* (1986), which declared that race-based peremptory strikes violate the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. Yet *Batson* did not determine a venire member's intersectional identity to be a cognizable group worthy of protection, either. As *Batson* protections have been extended to include gender, religion, and ethnicity of a venire member, American courts have stopped short of recognizing the unique way in which one's race and gender identity intersect to affect the way attorneys perceive them. Judges uphold even the most egregious peremptory strike patterns, often denying that a prima facie argument has been made and pointing to jurors

passed by the prosecution or defense that are members of an intersectional identity's separate racial and gender identities.

Likewise, the vast majority of scholars examining the strike patterns of prosecutors and defense attorneys have focused exclusively on how race, and to a lesser degree, gender, play a role in *voir dire*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they have found that prosecutors disproportionately strike Black and female venire members from the jury while, to a lesser degree, defense attorneys exercise peremptory strikes against white and male venire members in a myriad of trial settings (Baldus et al. 2001; Craft 2018; DeCamp 2021; Eisenberg 2017; Flanagan 2018; Grosso and O'Brien 2012; Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018). Only a handful have broken down strike patterns into intersectional groups—Black men, Black women, white men, white women, etc.—and none have focused exclusively on the question of whether prosecutors and defense attorneys strike venire members disproportionately according to a venire member's intersectional identity.

In this article, I aim to do just this and examine the peremptory strike patterns of prosecutors and defense attorneys in seven Arkansas capital trials. While I pay special attention to how attorneys exercise peremptory strikes across intersectional identities—namely Black men, Black women, white men, and white women—I also examine the way they exercise peremptory strikes across race and gender. I compare strike patterns across these identities in order to determine whether, like race and gender, the intersectional identity of a venire member should be granted constitutional protection. Such research marks the first of its kind to not only focus exclusively on the issue of intersectionality at the peremptory stage of *voir dire*, but to do so within the state of Arkansas, where the state's supreme court overturned a murder conviction on the basis of *Batson* as recently as 2019 and denied the defense's *Batson* challenge against the prosecution's removal of Black women in 2006, pointing to Black men and white women on the panel as evidence that no wrongdoing had been done. All seven of the defendants whose trial transcripts were analyzed were Black men, and all were sentenced to death.

BACKGROUND

In the Constitution of the United States of America, the right to trial by an impartial jury is enumerated in the Third Article, illustrating its significance to the founding fathers. The issue of impartiality was so important to the framers, in fact, that each stage of the jury selection process aims to remove prospective jurors that may be biased, unqualified, or ultimately unfit to weigh in on a defendant's guilt or innocence. As will be discussed below, however, each of the three stages of the jury selection process admits racial and gender discrimination by attorneys under the guise of impartiality, allowing for all-white or nearly-all white juries to convict Black defendants at significantly higher rates than white defendants (Anwar, Bayer, and Hjalmarsson 2012).

The Selection of the Venire

The first stage of the jury selection process occurs outside of the courtroom with the determination of who will—and consequentially, who will not—be eligible to serve on a jury. In order to create the pool of prospective jurors, two things must happen. First, an updated list of those eligible to serve on a county's jury must be created. In Arkansas, these lists may be created from a combination of both voter and driver registration records or consist only of voter registration records, depending upon the specific procedures within a county. Venire members are then randomly selected from these lists and notified of their jury duty shortly after. Prosecutors and defense attorneys send jury questionnaires to the selected venire members—inquiring about their education, family, and employment—and the prospective jurors are given a date to come to court.

This process is not unique to Arkansas; voter and driver registrations are commonly invoked to create jury pools across the United States. While these lists may be the most comprehensive records available to court officials, however, they may not be the most representative. Women and the elderly are less likely to have a driver's license than other members of society, and voter rolls may omit upwards of a third of a county's adult citizens, with a disproportionate number of those being people of color (Fukurai 2006). Thus, before a jury is even created, white and male venire members may be overrepresented in the pools from which they are selected.

Voir Dire & Strikes for Cause

Once the venire is selected, prospective jurors gather in the courtroom and begin the process of *voir dire*, where prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges question venire members in order to determine their suitability to serve on a jury panel. Before handing the floor over to the attorneys, the trial judge poses questions to the jury pool as a whole. They ask whether venire members are family or friends with the victim, defendant, attorneys, or witnesses. They ask whether the member would give more or less weight to the testimony of a police officer versus the testimony of another witness. They ask whether they have been exposed to media coverage or small-town gossip that led them to conclude that the defendant was guilty or innocent before the trial began. They ask whether they have any work or health conflicts that would render them unable to serve on the jury panel for days, weeks, or even months at a time. If a venire member answers in such a way to indicate that they have pre-existing biases or are ultimately unfit to serve on the jury panel for other reasons, both litigants hold the ability to request that a venire member be struck for cause. Though there are no limitations to how many venire members can be removed for cause, the reason for such a challenge must be approved by the judge presiding over the trial. In small counties, Black venire members have been shown to be disproportionately struck for cause, with prosecutors citing the venire member's relationship to the defendant's family or their conviction of a family member as means for their removal (Craft 2018).

In capital trials, the Arkansas Supreme Court has also affirmed that venire members can be struck for cause if they either could never vote to impose the death penalty or would always vote to impose the death penalty. In turn, attempts to acquire a "death-qualified" jury have been found to disproportionately exclude Black and female venire members from the venire on the basis of their opposition to capital punishment. In a recent analysis of death-qualified juries in two racially diverse counties in Northern California, for instance, about half of the Black Americans in the jury pool were removed on the basis of their views on the death penalty, compared to approximately a third of white venire members. Likewise, nearly half of the women were potentially excusable due to their view of the death penalty, compared to approximately a third of male venire members (Lynch and Haney 2018). The result is the creation of a venire heading into the final stage of *voir dire* that overrepresents a county's white and male citizens and underrepresents its female and minority citizens.

The Peremptory Stage of *Voir Dire*

After all the appropriate prospective jurors have been removed for cause, the court moves into the final stage of the jury selection process, in which both prosecutors and defense attorneys are allowed to exercise peremptory strikes against otherwise venire-eligible jurors. In Arkansas capital trials, the defense is granted twelve peremptory strikes while the prosecution can only exercise peremptory strikes against ten venire members.

Unlike strikes for cause, peremptory strikes can be exercised without any sort of explanation at all. Therefore, it is often impossible to know why an attorney decided to strike one prospective juror over another. They may remove those who they believe will be overly sympathetic to the defendants or victims, those who express some discomfort with the death penalty, or those they simply do not like. In theory, there does not even have to be a reason at all, since attorneys are not required to justify their strike before the court. It is often impossible to tell.

Peremptory strikes are both highly controversial and incredibly powerful in the formation of juries. While some hold peremptory strikes to be vital to the creation of fair and impartial juries, others have advocated for their total elimination, pointing to the ability of prosecutors to utilize peremptory strikes against Black venire members until none are left on the panel. In one trial judge's words, the peremptory strike may be "the last best tool of Jim Crow"—a persistent yet obscure vestige of racial segregation (Hoffman 1997, 827).

In *Batson v. Kentucky* (1986), the Supreme Court attempted to put an end to race-based peremptory strikes with the introduction of the Batson challenge. For the first time in American history, attorneys were now required to give an identity-neutral reason for peremptory strike decisions when the opposition provided a prima facie case that their opponent exercised a peremptory strike on the basis of one's race. If an attorney is unable to provide an identity-neutral reason for the strike, then the strike is reversed and the venire member is placed upon the jury panel. Most often, however, these "identity-neutral" reasons—the venire member's age, demeanor, marital status, employment, etc.—are upheld as valid by the trial court, the Batson challenge is overturned, and the prospective juror is dismissed from the venire. The jury selection process then carries on, with both sides either striking or passing prospective jurors until twelve are seated on the panel and up to six more are selected as alternates.

In his concurring opinion of *Batson v. Kentucky* (1986), Justice Thurgood Marshall expressed his pessimism about the decision's ability to put an end to race-based peremptory strikes. Despite its incongruity with the 14th Amendment, he argued that "any prosecutor can easily assert facially neutral reasons for striking a juror, and trial courts are ill-equipped to second-guess those reasons" (Batson v. Kentucky 1986, 106). Thirty years later, it is widely believed that Justice Marshall was correct. All-white and nearly all-white juries continue to convict Black defendants to death across the United States, in spite of the function of the Batson challenge to end peremptory strikes based solely upon race.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The role of race in the jury selection process is well documented, even if the motives of prosecutors and defense attorneys are not completely understood. In the peremptory stage of *voir dire*, when attorneys do not have to state their reasoning for striking a juror who is otherwise qualified, this is especially true. Peremptory strikes based upon the gender or intersectional identity of the prospective juror are less documented by scholars of the jury selection process, though may not be of equal importance.

The Role of Race

The vast majority of empirical research within the field has come to the same conclusion: prosecutors often disproportionately strike Black venire members from the jury pool. These conclusions have been upheld in a myriad of trial settings, with empirical support arising from general criminal trials (Craft 2018; DeCamp 2021), felony criminal trials (Flanagan 2018; Rose 1999; Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018), and capital trials (Baldus et al. 2001; Eisenberg 2017; Grosso and O'Brien 2012). Several studies also assert that the defense disproportionately strikes white venire members (Baldus et al. 2001; Craft 2018; Eisenberg 2017). Race even persisted as the most pertinent factor when Catherine Grosso and Barbara O'Brien controlled for 65 non-racial variables in their analysis of 173 North Carolina capital trials (2012).

Despite scholars' inability to truly determine why one venire member is peremptorily challenged over another, a consensus has formed on what motivates prosecutors and

defense attorneys to disproportionately strike Black and white venire members: racial stereotypes. Trial attorneys, hoping to create a jury they believe will side with their client, utilize centuries-old stereotypes to inform strike decisions. Specifically, prosecutors in capital trials will strike venire members they believe to hold reservations against the death penalty or embody anti-government biases—typically Black and female citizens—and defense attorneys will strike white venire members who they perceive to be overly trusting of the government. Further, when the defendant is Black, prosecutors have been revealed to strike Black venire members at higher rates than if the defendant was white, as they likely assume that Black jurors will be biased in favor of the member of their same race (Baldus et al. 2001). Thus, 145 years after Congress aimed to eliminate racial discrimination in jury selection, all-white and nearly all-white juries continue to be formed, convicting Black defendants at significantly higher rates than white defendants. The promise of an impartial "jury of your peers" has thus languished for the nation's people of color (Anwar, Bayer, and Hjalmarsson 2012; Flanagan 2018).

The Role of Gender

Scholars have also examined the ways in which gender may play a role in the jury selection process, though to a lesser extent. The results have been mixed. On one hand, several empirical analyses have suggested that gender does play a role in influencing peremptory strike decisions (Craft 2018; Eisenberg 2017; Hightower 1999; Rose 1999). In a large empirical analysis of 35 South Carolina capital cases, for instance, the prosecution was significantly more likely to strike women than men; 22% of eligible women faced peremptory challenges compared to only 14.5% of men. Meanwhile, defense attorneys disproportionately utilized their peremptory challenges against men, with 48.5% of all eligible men being struck from the jury pool compared to 39.4% of women (Eisenberg 2017). An analysis of 418 criminal trials in Mississippi's 5th Circuit Court District—the jurisdiction of the infamous District Attorney whose excessive removal of Black jurors was the focus of *Flowers v. Mississippi* (2019)—yielded similar results. The state struck women at a rate of 1.16 times that of men (Craft 2018).

If one is to believe the rationale that peremptory strike decisions are often rooted in stereotypes, these results make sense; women are often perceived to hold anti-government bias and reservations against the death penalty, just like Black citizens (Baldus et al. 2001). However, gender has never appeared to be more influential than race in influencing peremptory strike patterns. The racial analysis of the 418 criminal trials in Mississippi's 5th Circuit Court District illustrates this point exactly; while 25.27% of venire-eligible women were struck from the jury, a staggering 49.81% of Black venire members were struck by the same prosecutors (Craft 2018). Compared to gender, race appears to be the most powerful factor, time and time again.

The role of race is so powerful, in fact, that some scholars argue any gender discrepancies in peremptory strike patterns to be the result of race-based discrimination, not gender discrimination. In order to make this point, Whitney DeCamp analyzed the same dataset of 418 Mississippi criminal trials as Will Craft, who deduced that prosecutors struck women at 1.16 times the rate of men just two years prior (Craft 2018). Unlike Craft, however, DeCamp could find no significant difference between the strike patterns of men and women once he controlled for race and other factors (DeCamp 2021). DeCamp's findings suggest that gender-based discrimination is not a systemic factor, contrary to race. Several other studies also reached the same conclusions, though they did not tackle the claims of past literature so directly (Clark et al. 2007; Grosso and O'Brien 2012).

The Role of Intersectional Identity

No matter the conclusion, all of the studies described above have ultimately fallen short in acknowledging the role that the *combination* of one's racial and gender identity plays in informing peremptory strike patterns. Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw describes the unique relationship between racial and gender stereotypes most eloquently in her book *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex*, asserting that "Black men and women live in a society that creates sex-based norms and expectations which racism operates simultaneously to deny; Black men are not viewed as powerful, nor are Black women seen as passive" (Crenshaw 1989, 155). Descriptions of strike patterns in broad terms like Black or white, or men or women, as the literature above utilized, thus fails to address the nuances that likely exist between Black women and Black men, or Black women and white women. A myriad of empirical research has demonstrated that such nuances between intersectional statuses do exist and have enduring social significance in various aspects of American life (Ayres 1991; Montoya 1995). For example, one study reveals that white women, Black men, and Black women cannot purchase the same car for the same price as white men can. Despite using identical bargaining strategies, the prices of cars were 40% higher for white women, twice as high for Black men, and three times as high for Black women (Ayres 1991). Car salesmen appeared to perceive separate intersectional identities in unique, consequential ways, with Black women facing the worst of the discrimination. Therefore, gender stereotypes likely clash with centuries-old stereotypes of race to form perceptions of intersectional identities that are entirely separate from those of their racial counterparts.

As issues of intersectionality have made their way into scholarly circles, more and more research has focused upon the unique ways in which Black men, Black women, white men, and white women—not Black, white, male, and female venire members—are peremptorily challenged in the jury selection process. Perhaps surprisingly, the findings of this research contradict those that focus solely on peremptory

strike patterns across racial or gender identities. The first study to analyze peremptory strikes in terms of separate, intersectional categories was conducted in 2001 and even went so far as to consider age alongside racial and gender identities. Analyzing the peremptory strike decisions of 317 capital trials in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania between 1981 and 1997, David Baldus and his colleagues ultimately found that the prosecution, respectively, peremptorily challenged young Black men and women 78% and 67% of the time whenever they were present in the *voir dire* process (Baldus et al. 2001). While these results are consistent with the wider field's consensus that Black venire members are disproportionately peremptorily challenged by the prosecution, they contradict many of those that concluded women to be the greatest victims of gender-based discrimination at the hands of the state.

Seventeen years after Baldus and his colleagues published their work, Ronald Wright, Kami Chavis, and Gregory Parks arrived at similar conclusions. In what is perhaps the largest study of the jury selection process to date, Wright and his colleagues analyzed all North Carolina felony trials that proceeded in 2011 and found that Black men were more likely to face a peremptory strike from the state than Black women. Out of all the Black men that were eligible to serve on a felony trial, 23.6% were removed; only 18.5% of Black women faced the same fate. Meanwhile, there was no significant difference in the prosecution's utilization of peremptory challenges against white venire members across gender, and no significant difference between defense strike rates across both race and gender identities (Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018).

Like Baldus' study, Wright's results also conflict with existing literature about the role of gender in the jury selection process; however, their findings are not totally unsurprising. After all, America's criminal justice system is composed disproportionately of Black men. This fact, coupled with the likelihood of anti-governmental biases as well as the persistence of stereotypes characterizing Black men to be violent, likely coalesce to motivate prosecutors to strike Black men from juries because they believe they will be overly sympathetic to the defendant (Baldus et al. 2001; Gramlich 2020; Quillian and Pager 2001).

To this day, Baldus', Wright's, and their colleagues' works are the strongest indication that both race and gender identity do intersect with one another to play a unique role in the peremptory stage of the jury selection process. Specifically, their findings suggest it to be Black men, not Black women, who experience the highest rates of removal via prosecutorial peremptory challenges. Their results contradict the findings of existing literature that hold Black and female venire members to have the highest peremptory removal rates; however, their conclusions should not be called into question simply because they conflict with the analyses of previous scholars. In fact, I would argue instead that such discrepancies validate the need for further empirical analysis of peremptory challenges in

terms of intersectional identities, as analyzing race and gender as wholly separate, distinct aspects of one's identity appears to yield incredibly different results. My research aims to do just this and expand upon the limited literature that exists to address the role of intersectional identities in influencing peremptory strike decisions in Arkansas capital cases.

THEORY

In this article, I hypothesize that prosecutors and defense attorneys make peremptory strike decisions that are informed by a venire member's intersectional identity, with prosecutors striking Black men and defense attorneys striking white men at the highest rates from the venire. I, therefore, challenge the narrative put forth by previous scholars that asserts race and gender are separate, unrelated facets of one's identity and instead argue that a new narrative, rooted in Crenshaw's (1989) intersectional framework, should be applied to peremptory strike research. However, I theorize that attorneys' strike decisions lie as much in their broader understanding of how members of a particular intersectional identity generally feel towards the government and death penalty as in their reliance upon centuries-old stereotypes.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys are undoubtedly aware of broad trends in the way in which Black men, Black women, white men, and white women feel about issues pertinent to capital trials, as well as how prospective jurors themselves may utilize stereotypes to determine a defendant's guilt. Despite public opinion surveys typically relying upon separate racial and gender analyses to portray their findings, those that do break down their data amongst intersectional identities suggest that support for the death penalty varies between white men, white women, Black women, and Black men. The 2020 American National Electoral Survey, for instance, reports white men to be the most likely to support the death penalty, followed by white women, Black men, and Black women. An analysis of the 2014 General Social Survey yielded similar results, with 71.2% of white males, 65.4% of white females, 48.7% of Black men, and only 41.2% of Black women respondents supporting the death penalty as a form of capital punishment (Pittroff 2020). While it is true that both a venire member's refusal to invoke the death penalty or promise to always invoke the death penalty are justifiable reasons for capital trial attorneys to strike a juror for cause, Batson challenged attorneys continue to cite their lingering concerns about an individual's opinion of the death penalty as the reason behind their peremptory strike—even if the prospective juror states that they would ultimately be able to sentence someone to death (Lynch and Haney 2018).

Yet, I posit that death penalty trends amongst intersectional identity matters the most to defense attorneys, whose clients have the most to lose if jurors sentence their client to death. The very process of death-qualification is shown to favor the prosecution, with evidence suggesting

that death-qualified jurors are more likely to possess racial animosity, distrust defendants, and be overzealous supporters of the death penalty than non-death qualified jurors (Fitzgerald and Ellsworth 1984; Haney 1984). In order to combat this phenomenon, I theorize that trial attorneys utilize statistics regarding the likelihood that a member of an intersectional identity will support the death penalty, ultimately striking white men at the highest rates from the venire, followed by white women, Black men, and Black women.

However, I hold that death penalty support could not alone explain potential differences in prosecutorial strike rates amongst intersectional identities. I instead theorize that centuries-old stereotypes coalesce with intersectional analyses of institutional trust to play the largest roles in shaping prosecutors' perceptions of Black male, Black female, white female, and white male venire members. Specifically, I believe that prosecutors assume that all Black men distrust law enforcement and, in turn, the state. There are several bodies of intersectional research that suggest prosecutors are at least somewhat accurate about the likelihood of a Black man distrusting the government. Most, however, break down their findings between Black men and Black women, or white men and white women, but not all four intersectional identities together. Nevertheless, a general picture can be drawn from tying these findings together. Black intersectional analyses of trust in governance and police suggest that Black men—not Black women—are most likely to distrust law enforcement, while white intersectional analyses suggest that both white women and white men generally display trust in law enforcement agencies, with white men being the most likely of either (Dobrin et al. 1996; Ludwig 2000; Mangum 2016; Nofziger and Williams 2005). I thus theorize that prosecutors strike Black men at the highest rates from the venire, fearful that assumed anti-governmental biases coupled with stereotyped criminality will incentivize Black men to sympathize with defendants that are also Black men. Meanwhile, I hypothesize that Black women, whom prosecutors assume to harbor slightly lower levels of anti-government biases yet similar predispositions as mothers of Black men themselves, will be struck at the second highest rate from the venire. Finally, I predict white women and men, who are more likely to trust law enforcement officers and perceived as neither aggressive nor criminal, will be struck at the lowest rates from the venire, with their peremptory strike rates paralleling the likelihood that they would harbor anti-government sentiment.

Baldus (2001), Wright (2018), and their colleagues are the only scholars in their field that broke down strike rates into intersectional identities, such as Black men, Black women, white men, and white women. However, neither discussed the role of intersectionality in their separate analyses. Though, by the very nature of peremptory strike research, this intersectional analysis ultimately proves unable to determine what *exactly* influenced attorneys' peremptory strike decisions in seven Arkansas capital trials, it nevertheless acts as an extension of the work previously done by Baldus (2001) and Wright (2018) by applying Crenshaw's (1989) intersectional framework to the jury selection process and analyzing a data source that has never before been studied: Arkansas capital cases.

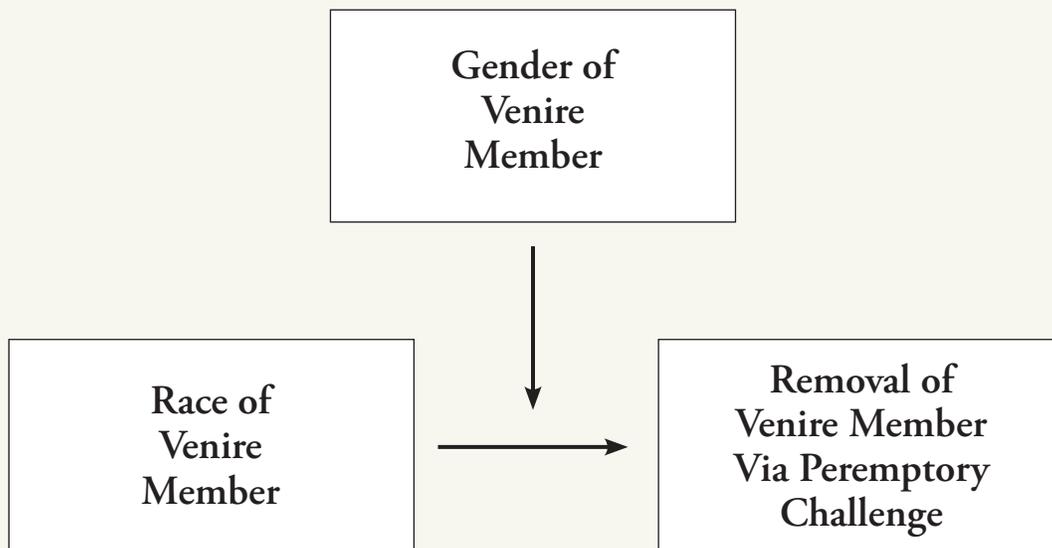Figure 1. Model of the Role of Race & Gender in Peremptory Strike Decisions

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Table 1. Expected Likelihood of Peremptory Strike		
Model	Independent Variables	Corresponding Dependent Variable Values
Race & Gender Identity of Venire Member → Likelihood of **Prosecutorial** Peremptory Strike	Black Men	Expect highest likelihood of peremptory challenge
	Black Women	Expect high likelihood of peremptory challenge
	White Men	Expect lowest likelihood of peremptory challenge
	White Women	Expect low likelihood of peremptory challenge
Race & Gender Identity of Venire Member → Likelihood of **Defense** Peremptory Strike	Black Men	Expect low likelihood of peremptory challenge
	Black Women	Expect lowest likelihood of peremptory challenge
	White Men	Expect highest likelihood of peremptory challenge
	White Women	Expect high likelihood of peremptory challenge

RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to examine the intersectionality of peremptory challenges in the jury selection process, I analyze the *voir dire* processes of seven Arkansas Death Row capital cases with Black defendants. I thus utilize a small-n case study research design, with 211 venire members to be included in the final statistical analysis of the data. My independent variables are prosecutorial/defense peremptory strikes in Arkansas capital cases, and my dependent variable is the rate at which each intersectional identity—Black men, Black women, white men, and white women—is struck peremptorily from the jury. Only one venire member did not fit within this Black/white dichotomy: a Hispanic woman who was ultimately struck by the state. In order to draw more succinct conclusions about perceptions of white men, white women, Black men, and Black women in the jury selection process, this individual was ultimately removed from the analysis.

My research faces some limitations due to the small sample size of capital cases analyzed, the inability to determine the race of every venire member, and the nature of the small-n case study research design. It is important to note that this is primarily exploratory research; however, I am attempting to determine *if* a relationship can be established between prosecutorial/defense strike patterns and intersectional identities, first and foremost. While a small-n case study may have its limitations, such a research design allows me to draw conclusions—albeit narrow ones—of whether the intersection of race and gender uniquely affects venire members' likelihood of being peremptorily challenged.

Nevertheless, the internal validity of my research is boosted by the ability to control for several trial characteristics including the race of the defendant, the severity of the crime, and the state where these trials occurred. Specifically, all data are derived from the jury selection processes of Black defendants facing capital charges in the state of Arkansas from 1995 - 2015. Four of these trials were decided in rural counties and three were decided in urban counties, mirroring Arkansas's rural/urban county divide during this period; in 2011, just over half of the state's counties were composed of less than 20,000 people (University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture 2011). Meanwhile, the external validity of this analysis is enhanced by Arkansas being a "typical case," where gender and race-based jury selection is likely to be found and upheld by the court (Howard 2017, 127). After all, the Arkansas Supreme Court has acknowledged the pervasiveness of race-based peremptory challenges on at least ten separate occasions (Stevenson 2010).

DATA SOURCES & OPERATIONALIZATION

The trial transcripts that I utilize for my research were provided to me by the Arkansas Habeas Corpus Capital Unit, an organization of federal public defenders that represent nearly a third of those currently on Arkansas's Death Row. Despite the significant role that these lawyers played in these trials' jury selection processes, however, there is no threat of bias being portrayed within the transcripts themselves. Transcripts are written by court stenographers, independent of both the prosecution and defense, and are thus impartial and complete records of a trial's *voir dire* process. Within these transcripts, I was able to determine the names and gender of the potential jurors, the way they might have been struck (for cause or

peremptorily), and the questions asked to the venire members by the prosecution and defense. The race of the jurors was not always explicitly stated in these trial transcripts, so jury questionnaires, public records searches, and appeals made by the defense were utilized to supplement my research whenever they were available.

It is possible, however, that the examination of trials represented by federal public defenders may be indicative of just one type of capital trial: those with defendants that cannot afford to hire private counsel. Thus, I analyze the trial transcripts of capital cases with poor, Black defendants. Though some may argue that this could limit my data, I would assert that such characteristic acts as a further control to my analysis of how prosecutors and defense attorneys exercise peremptory strikes against venire members. Both the prosecution and defense are making strike decisions based upon the identity of the defendant as a poor, Black male, not a wealthy Black man who might be both well-connected and able to escape the violent stereotypes associated with poor Black men.

In the following analysis, the trial transcripts are measured and analyzed in terms of the intersectional identities of the venire members. As the jury selection process played out within these documents, potential jurors were placed into one of four categories: Black men, Black women, white men, and white women. The race of twenty venire members could not be determined altogether. From there, they were categorized once more, dependent upon whether they were peremptorily struck by the prosecution, the defense, or at all. A coding protocol for the analysis of the trial transcripts can be found in Appendix A.

METHODOLOGY
To examine the relationship between my independent variables—Black men, Black women, white men, and white women—and two dependent variables, prosecutorial and defense peremptory strike patterns, I conduct two separate statistical analyses. Both statistical analyses were administered in Excel and compare the number of venire members struck to all those present at the beginning of the peremptory process. To coincide with this statistic, the number of those passed by the defense or prosecution was compared to the total number analyzed. A two-way ANOVA test analyzed whether the differences in prosecutorial and defense peremptory strike rates

between intersectional identities were statistically significant.

To illustrate the importance of intersectional analyses of peremptory strike patterns, I also include four tables that exclusively analyze race-based and gender-based prosecutorial/defense strike patterns. I followed the same protocol as before, with the total number struck and passed compared to the total present in the analysis, though I examine race and gender as two separate entities; Black and white members were examined independently of male or female analyses. A chi-squared test was utilized to determine statistical significance in strike patterns between racial and gender identity, and these statistics were compared to the analysis of intersectional identities in order to illuminate any discrepancies that arise in the data.

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION
Despite the broad range of research examining the separate roles of race and gender in the jury selection process, very few scholars have focused exclusively on how both the prosecution and defense take intersectional identity into account when exercising peremptory challenges. To do just this, I analyzed the peremptory strike decisions made by the prosecution and defense in seven Arkansas capital cases. In each trial, the jury panel decided the defendants to be guilty and sentenced them to death. A total of 210 otherwise venire-eligible prospective jurors were analyzed, with 119 of these venire members ultimately being peremptorily struck from the jury. Among those eligible to be peremptorily challenged, thirteen (6.19%) were Black men, fifteen (7.14%) were Black women, 74 (35.24%) were white men, and 88 (41.9%) were white women. The race of twenty (9.52%) venire members could not be determined.

Even before accounting for the combination of racial and gender identity, some prosecutorial peremptory strike patterns begin to emerge from the *voir dire* processes of these seven Arkansas capital cases. In the analysis of 211 venire members, prosecutors exercised peremptory challenges at significantly higher rates against Black venire members than against white venire members; as indicated in Table 2, only 12.96% (22/162) of venire-eligible white men and women were removed from the jury, compared to 53.57% (15/28) of Black venire members. A p-value of less than .01 indicates that these results are statistically significant and supposes with 99% confidence that the null hypothesis is void. This is consistent with the findings of previous literature that examined

Table 2. Prosecutorial Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Racial Identities

	Black	White	Unknown	Total
Struck	15 (53.57%)	21 (12.96%)	2 (10%)	38 (18.1%)
Passed	13 (46.43%)	141 (87.04%)	18 (90%)	172 (81.9%)
Total	28 (100%)	162 (100%)	20 (100%)	210 (100%)

Table 3. Prosecutorial Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Gender Identities

	Men	Women	Total
Struck	14 (14.74%)	24 (20.87%)	38 (18.1%)
Passed	81 (85.26%)	91 (79.13%)	172 (81.9%)
Total	95 (100%)	115 (100%)	210 (100%)

Table 4. Prosecutorial Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Intersectional Identities

	Black Men	Black Women	White Men	White Women	Unknown	Total
Struck	5 (38.46%)	10 (66.66%)	8 (10.81%)	13 (14.77%)	2 (10%)	38 (18.1%)
Passed	8 (61.54%)	5 (33.33%)	66 (89.18%)	75 (85.23%)	18 (90%)	172 (81.9%)
Total	13 (100%)	15 (100%)	74 (100%)	88 (100%)	20 (100%)	210 (100%)

peremptory strikes solely with regards to a venire member's race, and these results are not particularly surprising when examined at their face.

An analysis of prosecutorial peremptory strike patterns across male and female venire members also yielded relatively unsurprising results. As indicated in Table 3, the prosecution peremptorily challenged 20.87% (24/115) of the 115 women eligible to serve on the venire. Men, who composed a smaller percentage of the jury pool, were struck 14.74% (14/95) of the time. Ultimately, however, the disparity in prosecutorial strike rates between male and female venire members is not as great as it is between Black and white venire members; the differences in strike rates between men and women were not statistically significant. Therefore, it appears that prosecutors struck male and female venire members more proportionally than they did Black and white venire members in Arkansas capital cases, just as they did in South Carolina and Mississippi (DeCamp 2021; Eisenberg 2017).

The analysis of the peremptory strikes exercised by the defense yielded completely different results. As seen in Table 5, defense attorneys removed white venire members at slightly higher rates than Black venire members, with the defense striking 37.65% (61/162) of the eligible white venire members and 25% (7/28) of the eligible Black venire members. However, the difference between these respective strike rates was much smaller than prosecutorial strike rates across racial identities; the defense struck white venire members at a rate that was just 12.65% higher than Black venire members, while the prosecution struck Black venire members at a rate that was *40.61% higher* than the rate at which they struck white venire members. Further, unlike prosecutorial strike decisions across race, defense peremptory strike patterns across race were found to be insignificant, holding a p-value greater than 0.5, and the null hypothesis was thus not voided. While it is likely that such values may not totally reflect the totality of the defense's strike patterns due to the existence of twenty "unknown" venire members, these findings nevertheless align with previous research within the field that found there to be no significant difference between defense strike rates across racial identities (Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018).

Similarly, defense attorneys invoked peremptory challenges against male and female venire members at nearly identical rates.

Table 5. Defense Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Racial Identities

	Black	White	Unknown	Total
Struck	7 (25%)	61 (37.65%)	12 (60%)	80 (38.1%)
Passed	21 (75%)	101 (62.35%)	8 (40%)	130 (61.9%)
Total	28 (100%)	162 (100%)	20 (100%)	210 (100%)

Table 6. Defense Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Gender Identities			
	Men	Women	Total
Struck	37 (38.95%)	43 (37.39%)	80 (38.1%)
Passed	58 (61.05%)	72 (62.61%)	130 (61.9%)
Total	95 (100%)	115 (100%)	210 (100%)

As indicated in Table 6, the defense struck 38.95% (37/95) of the venire's eligible men and 37.39% (43/115) of its eligible women, meaning that men were struck at a rate that was just *1.56% higher* than women. In fact, a chi-squared test rendered these differences in male and female strike rates insignificant. These findings contradict previous research, which suggests that the defense strikes men at greater rates than women (Craft 2018; Eisenberg 2017). However, these numbers may not be truly reflective of the strike patterns of Arkansas defense attorneys; a single capital case, in which the defendant was accused of murdering two women, was responsible for *twelve* of the 32 strikes that the defense exercised against women as a whole. Without this case, women would have been struck at a rate of 29.81% (31/104), which is considerably less than that of men and aligns more clearly with the results of existing literature on peremptory strike patterns of defense attorneys (Craft 2018; Eisenberg 2017). Nevertheless, these findings align with previous research within the field that found there to be no significant difference between defense strike rates across gender identities (Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018).

Once again, however, a more complete understanding of how Arkansas defense attorneys exercise race-based peremptory strikes can potentially be acquired when one examines peremptory strikes across intersectional identity. As seen in Table 7, the defense struck white men (37.84%) and white women (37.5%) at almost identical rates, followed by Black men (30.77%), and Black women (20%). Therefore, unlike the prosecution, which disproportionately invoked peremptory strikes across intersectional identities, defense attorneys challenged white men and white women the most and at rates that were nearly identical to one another; only 0.34% separated the strikes rates of white men and women. As stated in the

analysis of defense peremptory strikes across gender, however, this may be in part due to the strike decisions of a single capital case, in which the defense exercised eleven of their thirteen peremptory challenges against white women. Without this trial, white women would have been struck at a rate of 31.37% from the venire, which is just slightly higher than the strike rate of Black men.

Meanwhile, the defense struck Black men at a rate that was 10.77% higher than the rate at which they removed Black women, suggesting that the intersectional identity of the venire member mattered most to the defense attorney when the prospective juror was Black. The magnitude between the strike rates of Black men and Black women, however, is likely due in part to the small number of Black venire members that were present at the peremptory stage of *voir dire*. If just one more Black woman was struck by the defense, the rate at which they were struck (26.67%) would be within 4.1% of Black men. Further, when compared to the difference between prosecutorial strike rates across Black men and women, 10.77% is relatively small; as a reminder, prosecutors invoked peremptory strikes against Black women at a rate that was 28.2% higher than the rate at which they struck Black men. That said, the difference in strike rates across intersectional identities was not statistically significant and the null hypothesis was upheld. A complete breakdown of the results of the two-way ANOVA test can be found in the Appendix.

Therefore, across both prosecutorial and defense peremptory strike patterns, the intersectional identity of a venire member did *not* appear to have a significant effect on peremptory strike decisions. In fact, in the six analyses of seven Arkansas capital trials with Black defendants, only one acquired statistical significance: prosecutorial peremptory strike

Table 7. Defense Peremptory Strike Patterns Across Intersectional Identities						
	Black Men	Black Women	White Men	White Women	Unknown	Total
Struck	4 (30.77%)	3 (20%)	28 (37.84%)	33 (37.5%)	12 (60%)	80 (38.1%)
Passed	9 (69.23%)	12 (80%)	46 (62.16%)	55 (62.5%)	8 (40%)	130 (61.9%)
Total	13 (100%)	15 (100%)	74 (100%)	88 (100%)	20 (100%)	210 (100%)

patterns across racial identities. Meanwhile, neither gender nor intersectional identity appeared to play a significant role in prosecutorial peremptory strike decisions, and neither gender, intersectional identity, *nor* race appeared to play a significant role in the peremptory strike decisions of Arkansas defense attorneys.

Even so, it is impossible to know precisely why prosecutors struck Black venire members, not white venire members, at the highest rates from the jury, or even why they struck Black venire members at higher rates at all. The peremptory challenge, unfortunately for its researchers, functions precisely to conceal—to hide the intentions and aims of the legal counsel from all those in the court. Previous research points to overly simplistic beliefs harbored by the prosecution that Black jurors are biased towards Black defendants, harboring anti-governmental bias that may lead them to doubt testimonies from police officers or hold reservations against the death penalty (Baldus et al. 2001; Grosso and O'Brien 2012). Earlier in this paper, I endorsed a similar theory.

Besides speculation, however, the only means of understanding prosecutors' peremptory challenges of Black venire members is to examine the race-neutral reasonings they gave the court when the defense invoked a Batson challenge. Surprisingly, most prosecutors cited a venire member's reservations against the death penalty. Of the nine Black venire members whose removals were Batson challenged, in fact, six were supposedly due to these death penalty reservations, the others purportedly being struck because the prosecutor tried their family members (4), they were sleeping in court (1), they would not be able to understand DNA evidence (1), or they were not making eye contact (1) (the defense contested this, arguing that the venire member had a physical disability causing their eyes to be "crooked"). While it is impossible to tell whether the prosecutors truly believed the race-neutral reasonings they were giving, such findings do align with previous research that suggests that the prosecutors in capital cases primarily strike Black venire members on the basis of holding reservations against the death penalty (Grosso and O'Brien 2012).

CONCLUSION

Since the Supreme Court declared the striking of jurors on the basis of their race to be unconstitutional in the 1986 ruling of *Batson v. Kentucky*, the courts have extended Batson protections to include the gender, religion, and ethnicity of venire members. They have stopped short, however, of determining one's intersectional identity to be worthy of the same protection, allowing judges to point to members of one's separate racial and gender identities sitting on the jury panel as the means to allow for venire members' continued exclusion. The preceding analysis of seven Arkansas capital trials rejects the initial hypothesis that the race and gender of a venire member intersect to affect their likelihood of

being peremptorily challenged, though paints a more familiar picture about how litigators, particularly prosecutors, exercised peremptory challenges according to a venire member's separate racial and gender identities.

The patterns revealed from the peremptory strike decisions of Arkansas defense attorneys, however, are relatively unsurprising, despite contradicting my initial hypothesis. The above analyses of peremptory strike decisions across racial, gender, and intersectional identities, found there to be no significant pattern at all; Arkansas defense attorneys peremptorily struck Black and white, men and women, Black men, Black women, white men, and white women at relatively proportional rates.

The same cannot be said for Arkansas prosecutors. While they exercised peremptory strikes relatively proportionately across gender and intersectional identity, Arkansas prosecutors disproportionately struck Black venire members from the venire. In the seven capital trial transcripts that were analyzed, prosecutors removed Black venire members at more than four times the rate of white venire members; of the 38 peremptory strikes that they exercised, 53.57% (15/38) were against Black prospective jurors, despite Black venire members composing only 13.27% of the venire. Though gender and intersectional analyses of their peremptory strike decisions indicated that Arkansas prosecutors struck women and Black women at the highest rates from the jury, these variances were ultimately determined not to be statistically significant. Therefore race, not intersectional identity, appears to have been the aspect of a venire member's identity that was most influential in prosecutorial peremptory strike decisions in Arkansas capital cases, just as previous empirical analyses have suggested (Craft 2018; DeCamp 2021; Flanagan 2018; Rose 1999; Wright, Chavis, and Parks 2018).

While these results do not suggest that intersectional identity influenced peremptory strike decisions in Arkansas capital cases, the peremptory strike patterns of one trial, in particular, indicate that *whether* intersectional identity matters may depend upon the intersectional identity of the crime's victim. In the trial of a Black defendant accused of murdering two white women, Arkansas defense attorneys exercised 84.61% (11/13) of their peremptory strikes against white women. Though this pattern was only obvious in one of the seven analyzed capital trials, further research is necessary to determine whether this is unusual or part of a larger trend in peremptory strike decisions.

However, future research about the role of intersectional identity in the jury selection process should not end there. All subsequent research should aim to incorporate intersectional discussions and analyses into their work, even if there may not always be evidence that they played a significant role in the jury selection process. Describing strike patterns in terms of Black, white, male, and female venire members fails to acknowledge the different ways in which systems of oppression manifest themselves in the identities of venire members to potentially

affect attorneys' perceptions of them. While this body of research did not conclude that the strike decisions of Arkansas attorneys were influenced by the intersectional identity of a prospective juror, it faced limitations due to the small sample of venire members analyzed. Meanwhile, previous analyses of peremptory challenge patterns that found evidence of strikes based upon intersectional identity were noteworthy for just how *large* of a data set they utilized; Wright analyzed nearly 30,000 prospective jurors, while I analyzed just 210 (2018).

Despite its limitations, however, the preceding analysis of seven Arkansas capital trials is noteworthy on several fronts. First, it is the first research of this kind to take place in Arkansas, where the Arkansas Supreme Court has overturned a conviction on the basis of *Batson* (1986) as recently as June of 2019 (LaRowe 2019). The trials of nearly half of the Black men sitting on Arkansas' Death Row are represented in such analysis, illustrating the potential implications prosecutorial manipulation of the juries may have had—and may continue to have—in Arkansas capital trials. Second, this article represents the only in the field to focus exclusively on peremptory strike patterns across intersectional identity and to do so in conversation with broader analyses of peremptory strike patterns across racial and gender identity. While this article does not find that Arkansas prosecutors or defense attorneys exercised peremptory strikes disproportionately across intersectional *or* gender identity, it does suggest that the state's prosecutors disproportionately strike Black prospective jurors from the venire. As the American courts continue to grapple with the implications of *Batson v. Kentucky* (1986), this article indicates that race-based peremptory strikes are alive and well in Arkansas capital trials, 34 years after the Supreme Court declared them to be unconstitutional. ∎

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APPENDIX

Trial Transcript Coding Protocol A1

MR. LONG: Your Honor, I would ask that the Court to show for the record, that the Defendant has exercised two peremptory challenges in this go around. One of them is

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against a white male, Mr. Oxner and the other against a white female, Ms. Wilson. I don't ask for anything else. I just want that noted for the record.

Trial Transcript Coding Protocol A2

Defendant	Name of Juror	Race	Gender	Peremptory	By Whom
Johnson	Mr. Oxner	White	Male	1	Defense
Johnson	Ms. Wilson	White	Female	1	Defense

APPENDIX (CONT'D)

ANOVA Table of Defense Intersectional Peremptory Strikes A3					
Source of Variation	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F	*p*-value
Between rows	*SSR*=0.4602	*r*-1=6	*MSR*=0.46026=0.0767	0.07670.0724=1.0591	0.4219
Between columns	*SSC*=0.2024	c-1=3	*MSC*=0.20243=0.0675	0.06750.0724=0.9317	0.4962
Error (residual)	*SSE*=1.3035	(*r*-1)(c-1)=18	*MSE*=1.303518=0.0724		
Total	*SST*=1.9661	*rc*-1=27			

ANOVA Table of Defense Intersectional Peremptory Strikes A4					
Source of Variation	Sums of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F	*p*-value
Between rows	*SSR*=0.1413	*r*-1=6	*MSR*=0.14136=0.0235	0.02350.0798=0.2952	0.9313
Between columns	*SSC*=0.5173	c-1=3	*MSC*=0.51733=0.1724	0.17240.0798=2.1618	0.0958
Error (residual)	*SSE*=1.4357	(*r*-1)(*c*-1)=18	*MSE*=1.435718=0.0798		
Total	*SST*=2.0942	*rc*-1=27			

A Two-Colombia Model: How the "Hidden Colombia" Emerges with Qualitative Analysis

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At first glance, state stability seems to be on the rise in Colombia; however, closer examination gives rise to a two-Colombia model. The "Visible Colombia" is represented by the currently available statistical data, while the "Hidden Colombia," lost in the statistical aggregation, emerges through qualitative analysis. This paper analyzes rural poverty and cocaine profitability across three Colombian departments to better understand the "Hidden Colombia." Evidence suggests a correlation between high levels of rural poverty and decreased state stability within these departments due to the intervention and activity of illegal armed groups. Although cocaine is the primary product trafficked by illegal armed groups, substitution of another product for cocaine would leave the model unchanged. Therefore, it is not the presence of cocaine trafficking that decreases state stability within a department, but the activities of illegal armed groups associated with trafficking that decrease state stability within a department.

In the United States, Colombia has become a household name associated with cocaine trafficking as public concern about drug abuse has become more prominent. Considering that most of the cocaine in the United States originates in Colombia, this association is warranted (Colombia Reports 2019b; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2019). However, the situation is far more complex than it appears, and reliance on an incomplete description of Colombia has led to US policy that fails to address underlying problems and does not lead to lasting solutions. For example, the US spent $10 billion on cocaine eradication efforts via Plan Colombia between 2000 and 2015 (Alpert 2016). However, since the rate of cocaine production outstrips the rate of eradication, trade continues (White House 2018). Therefore, it is essential to understand the context in which cocaine trafficking occurs in order to develop effective policy that promotes stability. By studying the dynamics between rural poverty, cocaine profitability, and illegal armed groups (IAGs), effective policy proposals can be developed. However, the illicit nature of the cocaine trade and the deliberate concealment of information by IAGs engaged in trafficking makes it a particularly challenging topic to research accurately. Moreover, the available data lead to inaccurate conclusions because they do not adequately capture the disparity within the country that leads to two vastly different profiles.

This is a case of two Colombias: the "Visible Colombia" and the "Hidden Colombia." The Visible Colombia is the part of Colombia represented by the data. When Colombia is referenced generally, it is usually about the Visible Colombia. Meanwhile, the Hidden Colombia is characterized by conditions of rural poverty and exploitation by IAGs. The *de facto* power of these groups is exercised in a variety of ways including forcible displacement, strict regulation, and local relationship building through the provision of resources. Between the deliberate concealment of illegal activity and the minimal impact on aggregate data due to population size, this part of Colombia has been pushed into the shadows. Until this Hidden Colombia is revealed, the country as a whole cannot be fully understood.

BACKGROUND

Colombia's Central Role in Cocaine Trade Destined for the United States

Cocaine is derived from the coca leaf, which is indigenous to several Latin American countries, including Colombia. For centuries, the coca leaf formed part of local culture and agricultural tradition. As drugs became a profitable commodity, cocaine came into prominence. This shifted coca production from its traditional role and local consumption to its production as the primary component of increasingly popular cocaine. After harvesting, the coca is dried and then transformed into coca paste by undergoing chemical treatments, finalizing it into cocaine (Mejía 2016; Office of the Inspector General and Department of Justice 1997; Russo 2014). This last step is the most complex and has historically been carried out by one country (Gootenberg 2007).

Early cocaine routes were dominated by Chile, which sourced coca paste from other countries and completed the chemical processing into cocaine prior to trafficking (Gootenberg 2007). However, after a shift in the 1970s, Colombia replaced Chile as the primary cocaine producer, sourcing much of the coca paste from Bolivia and Peru (Alpert 2016; Gootenberg 2007; Mejía 2016). In addition to its historical importance, Colombia gained additional attention

from the United States because the cocaine trafficked into the United States primarily originates from Colombia (Colombia Reports 2019b; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2019). Although other countries continue with their production, Colombia is the most dominant since it cultivates its own coca crop and produces its own cocaine.

Illegal Armed Groups (IAGs)

Aside from their infamous reputation, the actions, involvement, and impact of IAGs were relegated to the Hidden Colombia. Within Colombia, there are two dominant types of IAGs: guerrilla groups and paramilitary groups. Generally, guerrilla groups emerged in connection with Marxist or socialist movements that claimed to fight on the side of the people with the express goal of procuring more equitable land distribution. In order to achieve their objective, many of these groups employed violent tactics and eventually came to rely on the drug trade as a source of revenue for their movement (Colombia Reports 2018, 2019d, 2019e; FARC-EP n.d.; International Crisis Group 2017).

Paramilitaries emerged within this context, purportedly to defend the people from the violence of the guerrilla groups (Colombia Reports 2019c). However, the paramilitaries also relied on non-sanctioned violence in their effort to stop the guerrilla groups. Although many groups, especially the paramilitaries, denounced involvement in drug trafficking, the need for funding and interest in protecting their assets led many to become involved in trafficking (Colombia Reports 2019c; Holmes, Piñeres, and Curtin 2006; International Crisis Group 2017; Otis 2014). Their shared participation in the cocaine trade and use of violence to defend their interests have blurred the lines distinguishing these groups. Thus, in order to observe the larger dynamics of poverty and cocaine profitability that are impacted by behaviors common to both groups, they will be collectively referred to as illegal armed groups. Further research into the ideological motives behind various groups would be an insightful contribution to future research but would distract from the focus of this analysis.

The Visible Colombia

The Visible Colombia is the representation of the state in aggregate. Thus, it portrays more populated regions, typically in urban cities. This Colombia is also more routinely analyzed because there are quantitative data available. This information is frequently sourced from the World Bank because it offers a variety of aggregate data about Colombia that shows signs of improvement, such as an overall increasing trend in GDP and increasing primary school enrollment (World Bank n.d.). The World Governance Index, which offers data on state stability and relies on data collected and shared by the World Bank, indicates a rise in state stability in Colombia (Kaufmann and Kraay n.d.). Moreover, because the data provided by the World Bank have become the foundation for subsequent research, the presumption that they reflect the state as a whole is interwoven

with each analysis, and the presentation of Visible Colombia as Colombia prevails.

THEORY/STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PURPOSE

Exposing the Hidden Colombia is essential to developing a clear picture of Colombia. By establishing this accurate foundation, precise and directed policy is possible. IAGs exploit the conditions of rural poverty and rely on non-governmental sanctioned force to procure profits, which undermines state stability within the region. Thus, state stability within departments decreases as conditions of rural poverty and the profitability of cocaine trafficking increase.

Due to the qualitative differences between rural and urban poverty, the implementation of governmental programs can have divergent results. Since land is a vital component of cocaine production and trafficking, IAGs fight to control it. But they are more likely to openly exert their authority in regions with high levels of rural poverty away from dense metropolitan centers. Because public goods are not distributed in the same centralized way, unmet needs are different in areas with rural poverty. Therefore, access to clean water, basic sanitation, and maintenance of public structures like schools are often lacking. IAGs can exploit these gaps to win over loyalty from locals by providing resources. Or, IAGs can use physical distance to their advantage because isolated, local organization and mobilization against IAGs is far more difficult and unlikely to succeed, especially with insufficient resources.

Consequently, populations living in rural poverty are more susceptible to IAG authority and manipulation. As levels of poverty decrease, the leverage that IAGs use to control the area is also reduced, allowing for greater state stability in the region. If a correlation between high levels of rural poverty and IAG authority is shown across different departments, then IAGs are motivated by more than environmental location.

Hypothesis 1: *If rural poverty decreases in a department, then state stability within the department will increase.*

Since coca is the essential element of cocaine, its exclusivity to the region makes it an easier subject to study than other drugs that are more widely sourced or have synthetic variations. Additionally, Colombia's central role in the production and trafficking of cocaine is a key way that IAGs support themselves financially. Increased profits allow for greater expenditures to protect their interests through financial arrangements, by offering provisions to people in exchange for support, or by violent means. This expansion of force and designation as the *de facto* local power puts IAGs in direct opposition to the *de jure* authority of the state.

Hypothesis 2: *If profit from cocaine is reduced, then state stability will increase.*

LITERATURE REVIEW

The State

The state forms the basic unit of international organization, so it is a fundamental component of political analysis. Despite disagreement regarding its definition, there is consensus that sovereignty and territory characterize the state (Storey 2017).

One model considers the state from an international context, classifying a state as a state when other states do not intervene in that state's domestic affairs (Croxton 1999; Storey 2017). This classification based empirically on external relations does not place specific demands on the state to secure its recognition. Utilizing Thomson's (1995) delineation of authority as the ability to make rules and control as the ability to enforce them, this conceptualization of the state prioritizes authority rather than control.

A second model shares in the idea of sovereignty and requires the state to exhibit a monopoly on violence within its territory (Eriksen 2011; Thomson 1995). This idea includes nonintervention by other states while introducing a domestic component that connects the state to power, increasing the connection between the notion of a state and its citizenry. This idea views the state as an authority with the capacity for control.

A third definition of the state includes the responsibility for service delivery, which connects to the idea of social contract theory. Enlightenment thinkers and contemporary scholars alike name security as the principal service provided by the state. The state is responsible for providing other services, including access to political participation, education, and infrastructure (Rice 2003; Rotberg 2004). Thus, this understanding requires the state to exhibit both authority and control. Due to variation between populations about their expectation of the state, this theory is subject to criticism because it is difficult to generalize and, depending on the expectations of the citizens, potentially impossible to achieve (Eriksen 2011). However, it also offers the most insight about domestic factors that contribute to a state's strength or weakness.

These interpretations of the state represent ideal notions, so state proximity to these standards rather than their achievement determines state designation (Eriksen 2011). Strong states approach these ideals. Conversely, as states grow more distant from the model, they are classified as weak states. Failed states occur when a state does not meet the standards.

Poverty

National-level poverty statistics distort the distinction between urban and rural poverty. Fortunately, as poverty studies become more common, there is increasing effort to represent the delineation, but the data deficiency remains. For example, the World Bank provides data for 2014 and 2015, but that is insufficient for a time-series analysis because there is not enough information to indicate trends (World Bank 2020). Furthermore, no comparison between distinct periods of time can be substantiated due to the proximity of the years (World Bank 2020). Moreover, the rural designation is based on the unilateral headcount ratio set by the national poverty line, which neglects a nuanced consideration of qualitative differences between urban and rural conditions (World Bank 2020). While some models moved beyond a unilateral poverty approach, they are still confronted with the task of determining what criteria should designate poverty. Union models automatically classify a household as poor if at least one indicator is insufficient, independent of other indicators, and even if the recorded insufficiency is by choice (Angulo, Díaz, and Pardo 2016). This interpretation is too broad and leads to imprecise policy generation. As an alternative, intersection approach indexes try to compensate for imprecision by requiring demonstrated insufficiency in each indicator to be classified as poor (Angulo, Díaz, and Pardo 2016). This standard is too strict since unlivable conditions and a substandard quality of life persist despite meeting the standard set by one or a few indicators. In an effort to reconcile these differences, Alkire and Foster (2011) developed a model that allows for greater flexibility on the part of the user in hopes of combining qualitative and cardinal data. Their model led to the development of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which marks substantial progress for poverty studies as it better reflects the complexity of poverty. One of the valuable tenants of this model is the ability to disaggregate key features; however, the ability to do so with regard to rural poverty and urban poverty, independent of the total, is an underdeveloped but essential feature. In addition, the newness of this model limits its use for research, as there is currently only one data point available in the harmonized case data set for Colombia (Human Development Report Office 2019). While this is valuable information, more data are needed for comparison. Hopefully, as these data are collected and interpreted they can be used for future research. Building upon the Alkine and Foster framework, the Colombian Multidimensional Poverty Index (CMPI) shows a general decrease in multidimensional poverty across Colombia and notes the imbalance between rural and urban poverty (Angulo, Díaz, and Pardo 2016). But this determination comes from analysis after the collection of data and results in convoluted findings such as a simultaneous decrease in the rural/urban gap and an increase in the rural/urban multidimensional poverty headcount ratio (Angulo, Díaz, and Pardo 2016).

IAG Use of Violence

Since IAGs work independently, the extent of violence used and the form it takes vary; however, the willingness to use force is standard. Kidnappings constitute one common form of violence utilized by IAGs and have become a source of revenue (Colombia Reports 2018, 2019e). The National Center for Historical Memory estimates that kidnappings by guerrilla

groups between 1970 and 2010 total around 25,000 people (Felter and Renwick 2017). Some kidnappings are focused on a particular target. For example, ELN has routinely targeted the oil industry by bombing pipelines and taking officials hostage, conducting around 50 attacks of this nature in 2016 (Molinski 2017). In addition to targeted kidnappings, IAGs also carry out mass-scale civilian kidnappings, such as a kidnapping at a church in 1999 that resulted in the capture of 186 people (Colombia Reports 2019e). Other acts of violence include attacks against armed forces, extortion to secure payments related to mineral mining, and hijacking (Felter and Renwick 2017; International Crisis Group 2017). Assassination and the use of landmines have also resulted in extensive casualties; estimates suggest around 10,000 people died by January 2017 as a result (Felter and Renwick 2017).

Violence as it Relates to Cocaine

Given the persistence of conflict in Colombia, much of the literature has come to focus on violence in the state. Changes in drug prices, crop cultivation, eradication, and interdiction strategies are predictors of both domestic and international terrorism according to Piazza (2011). Therefore, decreasing the price of cocaine and increasing enforcement will lead to a reduction in terror (Piazza 2011). Contextualized to IAGs specifically, Millán-Quijano (2020) demonstrates that the number of homicides increases as cocaine prices increase due to the oligopolistic competition between IAGs. While these authors demonstrate the connection between profit and violence, they insufficiently explain which groups are responsible and what conditions enable them to use force. Focusing on the effects of crack cocaine in particular, De Mello (2015) confirms the relationship between cocaine and homicides, clarifying that the increase in homicides is associated with cocaine trafficking, not possession. Similarly, Holmes, Gutiérrez de Piñeres, and Curtin (2006) reach the conclusion that violence is not dependent on cultivation, but they note a correlation between cultivation and displacement.

State Stability within the Department

Both violence and displacement suggest weak government authority and low levels of state stability within a department, as the government is unable to respond to the needs and demands of the people. This is stated more clearly by Shelley (1995), who finds that transnational organized crime decreases stability by increasing corruption. The acknowledgement of decreasing state stability is a valuable contribution, but the complexity of IAGs, which Shelley mentions as a unique and defining feature of Colombia, extends beyond corruption. Thus, it is a helpful but incomplete description. Another conceptually valuable claim is that increasing prices in Colombia, caused by reinvestment of drug revenue, do not necessarily result in improved quality of life for the people (Shelley 1995). This claim is made but not substantiated with evidence regarding quality of life. Thus,

there is an informational gap concerning living conditions amid complex and dynamic circumstances best met with qualitative evaluation. Finally, the idea of crimilegality, or authority in which the line between legal and illegal blurs, provides another model of stability (Schultze-Kraft 2018; Schultze-Kraft, Chinchilla, and Moriconi 2018). These crimilegal systems are often maintained by violence and coercion, especially in societies with a history of violence (Schultze-Kraft 2018; Schultze-Kraft, Chinchilla, and Moriconi 2018). The blurred lines indicate a loss of *de facto* power by the *de jure* government, especially as criminal groups take unsanctioned, violent action to achieve their goals that are uncontested despite local petitions for help by Colombian citizens.

By combining the insight on poverty, the relationships between IAGs, cocaine, and violence, and an analysis of state stability on a department level with qualitative case studies, the Hidden Colombia can emerge to provide a more comprehensive view of the country and its inner workings.

METHODS

To test these hypotheses, an in-depth case study on one Colombian department, Chocó, supplemented by two additional department-level case studies in Vichada and Vaupés are used. The relationships that emerge from the Hidden Colombia by studying Chocó in depth can be confirmed by the subsequent cases of Vichada and Vaupés (see Figure 1). The exclusivity between the demand in the US cocaine market and Colombian production and supply allows for the complexity of the world-wide cocaine trade to be simplified to a single chain, making Colombia an ideal state for observation. This simplification allows the study to better isolate the relationships between poverty and the profitability of cocaine trafficking on state stability within each department.

There is currently no international standard of classification for rural and urban poverty. So, using all of the public services statistics available for each department, I calculated the total and average amount of services provided for each department (Dane 2018b). Given these data, I ranked the departments according to their lack of services and compared them to the unsatisfied basic needs data (Dane 2018a). Chocó, Vichada, and Vaupés consistently ranked in the lowest five departments after using department-level population density to help verify that they are rural regions. All three departments, Chocó (10.4 inhabitants/ km2), Vichada (0.8 inhabitants/km2), and Vaupés (0.8 inhabitants/ km2), have population densities far lower than the national average of 42.4 inhabitants per square kilometer (AdminStat Colombia 2020). Thus, these three departments were selected out of the thirty-two Colombian departments. Conditions of rural and urban poverty differ qualitatively. For example, distance from government centers and unaddressed problems associated with rural poverty allow large-scale, decentralized networks of IAGs

Figure 1: Map of the Location of the Three Case Studies: Chocó, Vichada, and Vaupés.

Caribbean Sea

VENEZUELA

Choco

★ Bogota

Vichada

Pacific Ocean

Vaupes

ECUADOR

PERU

BRAZIL

Source: Mapsopensource

to thrive as they engage in interdepartmental and international trade (Shelley 1995).

State stability is the ability for the government to execute governmental functions and is characterized by the public's perception of their ability to participate within the political system. The government effectiveness and voice and accountability data collected by the World Governance Index operationalize these concepts using multiple indicators (Kaufmann and Kraay n.d.). Government effectiveness

indicates the government's quality of service delivery and its commitment to such policies, while voice and accountability represent the ability of the public to freely participate within the political system (Kaufmann and Kraay n.d.). The data demonstrate increasing government stability in Colombia (see Figure 2); however, they represent an aggregation that only allows the Visible Colombia to be seen. Therefore, qualitative department-level findings are necessary to see past the Visible Colombia into the Hidden Colombia.

Another element of the Hidden Colombia is illegal cocaine trafficking. Because of the illegal nature of the cocaine trade, profitability must be approximated based on circumstantial evidence. One common way of estimating cocaine production is by considering the number of hectares of coca crop in cultivation (Holmes, Piñeres, and Curtin 2006). This allows for a reasonable projection of cocaine production, but it only represents the supply side of the equation. Since this research is particularly concerned with the profitability of cocaine trafficking, both the supply and demand must be taken into account to satisfy the quantitative formula for profit. Even with rough estimations of demand in destination markets, there are no data to represent the variable costs incurred in the trafficking process. This lack of information makes the projections of profitability inaccurate and results in misleading numerical conclusions. Another strategy is reliant on interdiction data (De Mello 2015; Piazza 2011). But, rates of interdiction rely upon state stability to enforce state policies regarding drug trafficking and conflates the independent and dependent variables. In other words, data obtained by interdiction cannot be used to study the impacts of cocaine trafficking on state stability when state stability is inherent to obtaining the data. Thus, qualitative data that describe how the drug trade occurs and highlight the role of profit allow for an analysis of trends and can provide an explanation.
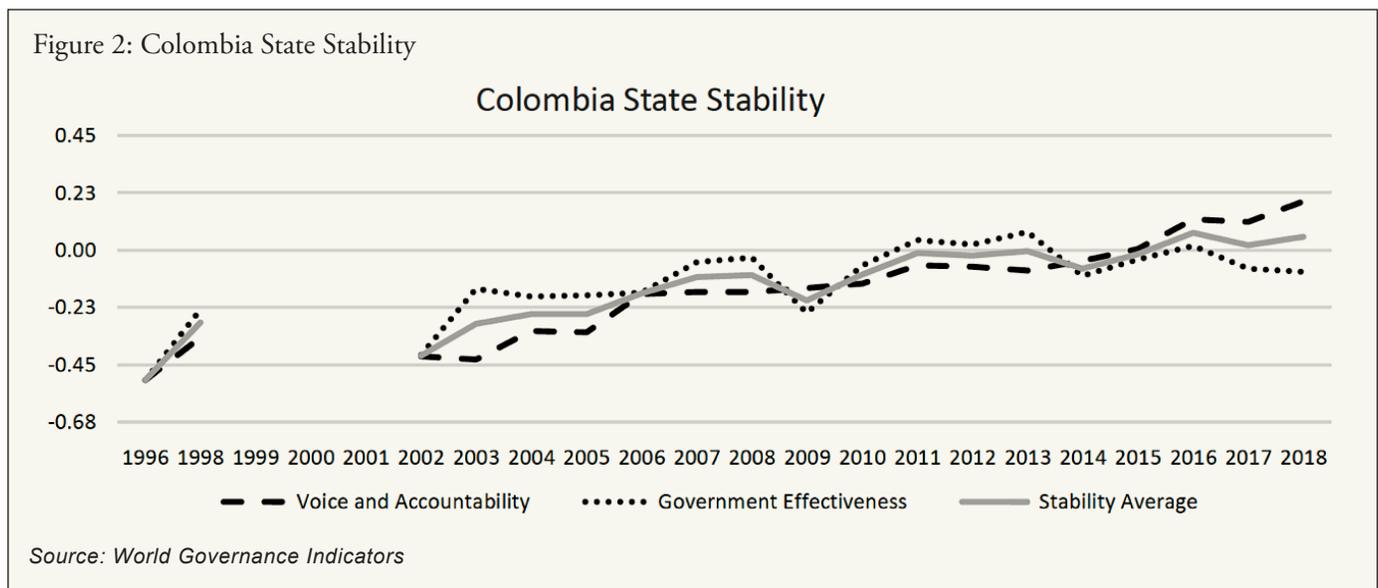
FINDINGS

Chocó

As part of the Hidden Colombia, there is limited journalistic coverage of Chocó. This resulted in sparse historical coverage of the region, but contemporary accounts provide valuable insight. Chronic poverty in Chocó made it susceptible to exploitation by IAGs that in turn have undermined state

authority. Chocó consistently ranks as one of the more impoverished departments and demonstrates more unstable rates of economic development than the national average (Colombia Reports 2019a; Dane 2018a; Eustance 2016; Friedmann 2018; Restrepo 2019). According to data from 2011, 80% of the population living in Chocó experienced unmet basic needs, and approximately 30% lived in extreme poverty (Human Rights Watch 2017). In 2013, according to a World Bank document, Chocó was recorded as the department with the highest poverty rates. Citizens of Chocó have limited access to basic infrastructure; about 29% of the department has access to an aqueduct, while approximately 20% of the department has access to sewage systems (Dane 2018a). The lack of infrastructure and services is also apparent in the education system. Because schools are limited, students are forced to rise early in the morning and commute long distances to reach the nearest school (Human Rights Watch 2017). The lack of access to essential resources and services demonstrates the high levels of poverty the department endures.

The extreme scarcity is illustrated by the return of displaced Colombians to their homes after seeking refuge in other municipalities where they expected to receive resources, as stipulated by the constitution (Human Rights Watch 2017). In one example, displaced people were collectively placed in a room and forced to sleep on a concrete floor for eight months with inadequate food and sanitation, resulting in the spread of preventable diseases (Human Rights Watch 2017). The unmet needs were so severe that many Colombians risked returning to the violence they fled, indicating widespread poverty throughout the department.

Conditions of poverty made Chocó particularly susceptible to exploitation by IAGs by two primary forms. The first capitalizes on the poverty of the people by providing services to build relationships, while the second implements

Figure 2: Colombia State Stability

Colombia State Stability

Source: World Governance Indicators

Legend: Voice and Accountability · Government Effectiveness · Stability Average

strict regulations and relies on threats for control (Council on Hemisphere Affairs 2010). For several decades, the dominant IAG in the department was Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (N. Ávila and Clavel 2017; Restrepo 2019). Its hegemony in the region allowed for a certain level of predictability, and local leaders were able to work with FARC, which preserved some aspects of civil society (Restrepo 2019). Beyond some relationship formation between local leaders and FARC members, FARC also assumed the role of the *de facto* government in a few cases (Council on Hemisphere Affairs 2010), such as when FARC provided access to education and medical services (Stanford 2015). There are also reported cases of FARC charging a tax in order to create school programs and infrastructure and thus filling a central role of government (Leech 2013). The relationships between local communities and FARC were not consistent across the entire department, nor were they uniformly peaceful. However, providing necessary resources fostered greater reliance and trust in the authority of the IAG than in the government (Restrepo 2019). The 2016 Peace Accord signed between FARC and the Colombian government transitioned FARC into a political party and created a power vacuum that other IAGs rose to fill (ABC Group 2019; Clavel 2017; International Committee of the Red Cross 2019; International Crisis Group 2017). Prior to the agreement, FARC occupied a quasi-governmental role, thereby limiting state stability in Chocó by undermining government effectiveness.

The voice and accountability component of state stability was also undermined in Chocó. For example, the 2016 Peace Accord called for governmental reforms to address the unviable conditions, but its slow and limited implementation did not restore authority to the government (Palau 2019). In fact, the Ombudsman for the region, Carlos Negret, claimed that the emergence of 17 IAGs was due in part to the unanswered requests for government assistance (Alsema 2019c). The emergence of these new groups often led to violent clashes between them that spilled over into the population. Some residents of Chocó commented that under FARC's authority they were still able to engage in civil society, but as other IAGs fight to control the department, their ability to do so has declined (Restrepo 2019). In many cases the IAGs that emerged to contend for power subverted local traditional leaders, either by assassination or through threats, as a way to assert control over the area (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2017). This is especially true among indigenous leadership. At least three indigenous leaders were assassinated in Chocó in 2017 and 2018, with a fourth assassination taking place in 2019 (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2017; Veitch 2019). In Jurado, Chocó, more than 1,600 members of indigenous communities were displaced within two weeks (Veitch 2019).

The variation of IAGs' strategies creates confusion for citizens as they determine how to act. There are two primary strategies: the first relies on winning over local support,

while the other involves the use of threats and fear. The 2002 pipe bombing highlights both simultaneously. The bombing occurred in the Bojayá municipality, which was contested by several IAGs (Navarrete 2020). When the locals heard rumors of an attack, they took precaution by gathering together in a church, assuming that it would be a safe location (Cárdenas 2019; Navarrete 2020). However, FARC initiated an attack on the church as a display of power that would allow them to take control of the region; it resulted in 80 casualties and wounded hundreds of others (Cárdenas 2019; Navarrete 2020). This example of fear and violence to assert control was juxtaposed with the strategy of another IAG that showed up on the scene a few hours later, providing care for the wounded and assisting in transporting the injured to receive medical care (Cárdenas 2019; Navarrete 2020).

Another display of authority comes from the establishment of rules by IAGs (Southwick 2013). These rules infringe upon the daily activities of the people and limit their ability to work in the fields, hunt, or fish, oftentimes limiting their access to basic necessities like food and water (Human Rights Watch 2017). One example is the implementation of curfew from 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM by an IAG called Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) across several municipalities within Chocó under the pretext of protecting the community (Human Rights Watch 2017). These limitations disrupt the traditional work and social interactions within the community, but the fear of punishment, which is made clear in mandatory meetings detailing the IAG's response, acts as a deterrent to non-compliance (Human Rights Watch 2017; Southwick 2013). In addition to the meetings, instances of killings and torture add credibility to the threat of enforcement, which is used for a wide array of actions. For example, in some municipalities, IAGs implement restrictions on social behavior (Southwick 2013). Brawling, for instance, is punishable by community service (Human Rights Watch 2017). The nuanced protocols, like establishing a permissible length for boys' hair and banning ear piercing, help to socialize the community into the *de facto* legal system led by the dominant IAG in the area (Human Rights Watch 2017). Furthermore, the fear of retribution stops many Chocó citizens from requesting governmental assistance or even speaking out about violations that have occurred (Human Rights Watch 2017). Therefore, the reported cases of violence represent only a partial number of all the incidents.

This is made more apparent with recruitment of child soldiers into IAGs. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported recruitment of more than 3,900 minors in 2019 (Alsema 2019b). If a family reports the loss of a child, the family risks becoming the target of more recruitment, facing retaliatory violence from the IAG, or having their child labeled as an enemy sympathizer by other IAGs, making the child a target (Restrepo 2019). The susceptibility to child recruitment has led many families to stop sending their children to school, fearing that the long journey exposes them to too much risk.

The concern is well-warranted given the conversion of many schools into IAG base camps (Human Rights Watch 2017). The forcible re-designation of schools into IAG encampments symbolizes the power of these groups as the local authority and indicates weak state stability within Chocó.

The decision to keep children home is one manifestation of the desire to avoid the violent circumstances. This is also witnessed in the form of displacement when locals decide that it is better to leave than stay in the situation. OCHA estimated that 6,900 people were displaced from Chocó in 2016 (N. Ávila and Clavel 2017). Within the first ten months of 2019, from January to October, it is estimated that over 36% of the population were victims of armed conflict in which OCHA registered more than 15,000 humanitarian emergencies, 1,800 displaced people, and 13,000 people confined to violence (Alsema 2019b). Often this displacement comes in waves, like the displacement of 52 residents after an ELN attack that killed 5 farmers or the event in February 2019 where an estimated 2,800 people were held hostage in Bojayá (Villalba 2019). The violence and displacement show the ineffectiveness of the state to carry out its functions to protect its citizens.

Furthermore, the reluctance of many Chocó citizens to request government support indicates either a low public perception of voice and accountability in the government or a belief that the government is ineffective. In the first case, the people lack a sense of efficacy and believe that their needs and desires cannot be effectively communicated to the government, which is either unwilling or unable to listen. The second case describes a perception of state weakness where the people are unwilling to risk retaliation by the IAGs for appealing to a government that is unable to intervene and protect them. In Chocó, both aspects of state stability are called into question.

First, in the case of government effectiveness, unfinished projects and inadequate provisions reflect an inability to carry out the tasks charged to the government. One recurrent example in Chocó is flooding. Chocó is geographically predisposed to flooding but is often met with insufficient aid from the government. The citizens are often reliant on foreign aid for recovery purposes. The most recent flood occurred in February of 2019. While the government announced nationally that it had provided aid to 1,500 people, over 15,000 people were impacted by the flooding, and much of the support was provided by the Red Cross (Floodlist News 2019; Zambrano 2019). Thus, the government claimed success while delivering aid to less than 10 percent of the victims, demonstrating a relatively low level of government effectiveness. Compared to emergency response, infrastructure offers a clearer understanding of government effectiveness because the completion of the project as set out by the state can be used as the criteria for its success. Consider an infrastructure project in Chocó that planned to create the first fully paved road connecting Quibdó, the capital of Chocó, to Medellín, the closest large city to Quibdó (Eustance 2016). After more than three decades of construction the project

is still underway (Eustance 2016). Similarly, in Quibdó, which has a population of approximately 400,000 people, there is only one hospital, which is purportedly on the brink of bankruptcy (Eustance 2016). The inability to complete the project or maintain facilities poins to low levels of state stability in the department.

Aside from poverty, the geography of Chocó makes it a uniquely profitable region. It is the ninth largest producer of coca and has two rivers, the Bojayá River and the Atrato River, that run across the region forming the foundation of two major drug trafficking routes (Friedmann 2018). These are particularly valuable for efficiently moving large quantities of cocaine to the coast (N. Ávila and Clavel 2017; Villalba 2019). Chocó's access to the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea make it especially lucrative because transportation via sea routes remains a prominent mode of trafficking. Go-fast boats, which were popular for trafficking in the 1980s, are being replaced by low-profile vessels that encompass a variety of models (Woody 2018). One variation of these low-profile vessels includes "narco-submarines," which are becoming more common since the first one was reported in 2006 (Sutton 2020; Woody 2018). It is approximated that the vessels cost about one to two million dollars to build and equip, but they allow for massive quantities of product, valuing hundreds of millions of dollars, to be transported with little detection, according to the former chief of international operations for the US Drug Enforcement Administration, Mike Vigil (Woody 2018). The uptick in usage was noticed in 2018 when 35 narco-submarine incidents were reported, and slightly increased in 2019 with 36 recorded incidents (Sutton 2020). It is estimated by the DEA that at least 30-40% of drugs that enter into the United States arrived by narco-submarine, but this estimate is uncertain (Woody 2018). This reliance on submarines suggests that even as strategies of drug trafficking continue to develop, Chocó will remain strategically significant.

The growth, production, and trafficking of cocaine is essential to understand what is happening in Chocó because of cocaine's current profitability. Should another illegal product become more profitable, it is likely that IAGs will continue to operate and dominate the region. IAGs actions contribute to the decrease in state stability more than the presence of cocaine. The simultaneous involvement in illegal mineral production makes this point more evident (Insight Crime 2019; Otis 2014). Chocó is the largest producer of platinum and silver and the second largest producer of gold (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2017). Much of this production involves IAGs; for example, FARC established a tax on illegal gold mines(Insight Crime 2019; Otis 2014). Currently, cocaine and mineral production are interrelated, as many believe that over-reporting of mineral production is used as a way to launder cocaine profits (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2017). Therefore, the IAGs have been able to diversify the products that they traffic. If

cocaine suddenly lost its value, IAGs would likely concentrate their efforts on other illegal products.

Frustration with the government is evidenced by a department-wide strike held in Chocó in 2016 where the people demanded a government response to address poverty, lack of adequate healthcare, and limited access to clean water (Eustance 2016). In 2017, another strike was held, and participation was estimated to include 70,000 people (Johnson 2017). Symbolic displays also demonstrate the marginalized sentiment of individuals living in Chocó. On Colombian Independence Day in 2016, the inhabitants of Chocó refused to raise the Colombian flag and flew their department flag instead (Eustance 2016).

Vichada

Vichada is another Colombian department characterized by high levels of rural poverty. The lack of infrastructure illustrates the extent to which poverty pervades the department. The department does not have roads connecting cities, and what roads are available cannot be used during rain; there are no health posts, and where electricity is available, it can only be used from 7:00 to 10:00 at night (Romero 2017). In the context of this poverty, FARC came to dominate the region in the 1980s (Romero 2017). FARC and other local IAGs, like Liberators of Vichada, inserted themselves in land disputes and worked against new agricultural companies (Oxfam 2013). The IAGs purchased land below market value or took it by force, which often resulted in forced displacement, a number that grew from 321 people in 2003 to over 8,600 in 2008 (Oxfam 2013). Given its location on the border of Venezuela and its lush jungle cover, Vichada was prime land for growing coca, concealing cocaine production, and trafficking drugs across the border by plane (Oxfam 2013). Despite some areal eradication efforts, the protection provided by the jungle and the importation of arms, food, and supplies from across the border made the cocaine relatively profitable (Oxfam 2013).

There was minimal evidence of *de facto* governmental power until 2012 when the government responded by launching a campaign aimed at reducing cocaine trafficking (Romero 2017). Concurrently, Vichada was selected as one of fourteen departments to take part in an agricultural substitution program run by the government that committed the Colombian Air Force to help transport the cocoa harvest if farmers would switch from coca to cocoa crops (Loaiza and Dalby 2019; Romero 2017). After the 2016 Peace Agreement, a new plan called the Integral Development for Alto Vichada was set to offer a monthly wage to farmers transiting their crops to help cover costs and to provide expert advice on new crop cultivation (Romero 2017). After these measures, there was a purported decrease of coca production from estimates of over 4,900 hectares to less than an estimated 700 hectares in 2017 (Romero 2017). So, the areal anti-trafficking campaign in combination with the promise of policies to help reduce rural poverty decreased the relative profitability of cocaine

trafficking. This suggests that by increasing the costs of trafficking cocaine in the department, therefore decreasing its profitability in the department, the prominence of IAGs was reduced, resulting in increased state stability in Vichada. However, these outcomes occurred in conjunction with policies that aimed to reduce rural poverty, which also strengthened state stability in the department by reducing the public's deference to IAGs.

Unfortunately, by 2019 replacement rates of coca production were estimated to be around 50 percent, as many of the programs were not adequately implemented (Jaramillo 2019). Across the participating departments, including Vichada, it is estimated that less than 10% of eligible citizens received the promised benefits like technical assistance (Palau 2019). In addition to the failure to receive promised payments, people who signed up for crop substitution faced retribution by IAGs for their willingness to participate in the government programs (Loaiza and Dalby 2019; Palau 2019). Despite government agreement to these programs, laws were never passed to implement them, and thus action was left to the will of the government at the time (Palau 2019). Out of the 578 stipulations in the 2016 Peace Accord, about 61% have some level of implementation activity, but they concentrate almost exclusively on the ceasefire and transition of FARC into a political party, leaving the conditions of poverty unaddressed (kroc.nd.edu 2018).

Thus, while intervention to make cocaine trafficking costlier and the promise of poverty relief demonstrated temporary improvements in state stability within Vichada, the failure to carry out the policies aimed at poverty reduction led to the resurgence of IAGs. Once the areal anti-trafficking campaign and the promise of subsidies to the farmers were removed, coca replanting rates increased (Jaramillo 2019). Even without significant material changes, the perception of changing circumstances resulted in changed behavior. However, when the promises were unsubstantiated, the behavioral changes could not endure. In other words, the recognition of the Hidden Colombia's existence prompted a positive change in policy approach, but the incompletion of these policies let the Hidden Colombia slide back into the shadows.

Vaupés

Vaupés is a department in the southeastern part of Colombia that is primarily jungle and only accessible by plane (Zambrano 2019). It is an ideal location for IAGs because the Vaupés River that runs through the region to Brazil is used to transport coca base (L. Ávila 2017). Excluding the head municipality, unsatisfied basic needs for the department is 88.18% (Zambrano 2019). Inadequate resources are especially apparent in the schools. For example, the boarding school in Bocas de Yi has no water, electricity, or toilets, and children must sleep in hammocks or on the floor (Valdivieso 2010). These conditions of poverty led IAGs to control and transform the region into a profitable cocaine production and trafficking center.

Amid desperate circumstances, and with no legal alternative, much of the population is forced to support themselves by coca cultivation and coca paste production (L. Ávila 2017). Despite their compliance and involvement, people and municipalities are still subject to both extortion and protection fees imposed by IAGs (L. Ávila 2017). The normalization of this type of exchange has spread throughout the region, and coca base is commonly used as currency to purchase items like food and clothing (L. Ávila 2017). Poverty has radically linked Vaupés to coca, and the connection will continue as long as IAGs maintain *de facto* power and coca remains valuable to them.

As in the other departments, the threat of minor recruitment by IAGs is common. Many children sleep at inadequate schools rather than risk abduction by IAGs during the commute to and from school (Valdivieso 2010). The number of children recruited is unknown, and teachers, often the first to notice a child's absence, fear retaliation for reporting (L. Ávila 2017). The inability to report for fear of retribution demonstrates the lack of government effectiveness, an indicator of low state stability in the department, as the government cannot enforce its own policies requiring school attendance. Elections reveal a similar lack of state stability in Vaupés. As a constitutional democracy, the government of Colombia has a responsibility to carry out free and fair elections, but in 2002 the threats and violence by FARC were sufficiently severe that two municipalities in the department were unable to participate in elections (United States Department of State 2004).

One of the most dramatic stories within the department is that of the municipal head, Mitú. In 1998, it was a highly-impoverished municipality with access points to the Vaupés River (L. Ávila 2017). The locals anticipated an IAG attack, but they were unable to leave or prepare, so the threat went unaddressed until around 2,000 FARC members attacked on November 1, 1998, resulting in over 70 police and civilian casualties (Borrero 2018; CNN Español 2018; Pachico 2011). In response to the attack, the government used the military to drive back FARC forces (Pachico 2011). After the initial government response, Mitú underwent significant socioeconomic changes and did not face additional IAG attacks. Due to its historically isolated and impoverished state, little data are available regarding poverty statistics or accounts of infrastructure in Mitú, but reflections by locals on the twentieth anniversary of the 1998 FARC attack indicate stark change. In their comments to the Colombian newspaper, *El Tiempo,* citizens of the municipality noted that now 80% of the streets are paved, 25 indigenous zones have access to education and health services, and the number of inhabitants has more than doubled (Borrero 2018; CNN Español 2018). It appears that poverty has improved, or at least that locals perceive they are less poor now than they were previously. Mitú still reports an unmet need of 40.26%, which is better than the departmental average of 54.7% but still worse than the national average of 29% (Zambrano 2019). While there is room for improvement, substantial shifts toward poverty reduction were made in the municipality. Mitú has become a relatively peaceful and quiet municipality with no current formal reports of IAGs (Borrero 2018). The decrease in relative rural poverty led to a decrease in the IAGs' authority and resulted in an increase in state stability in the region.

DISCUSSION

Across Chocó, Vichada, and Vaupés, it is evident that high levels of poverty leave the population susceptible to rule by IAGs. This *de facto* rule directly contests state stability within the departments, as the sense of voice and accountability is cut off and the government is made ineffective. Once this process has started, it often escalates to high levels of violence and displacement. Chocó exemplifies this and has experienced more violence since the 2016 Peace Agreement because unaddressed poverty reduced government effectiveness. When FARC, the *de facto* power, left, it resulted in a power vacuum that led to violent competition for control. However, the cycle can be broken. Reductions in poverty, like the case of Mitú in the department of Vaupés, can restore state stability in the region and keep out IAGs. Vichada showed similar progress toward the restoration of state stability in the department when promises to alleviate poverty were made, but the prioritization of disarmament and neglect of poverty policies opened the department up to renewed conflict between IAGs fighting to assert control, thereby compromising state stability.

While pursuing profit, IAGs translate poverty into a decrease in state stability in the region. As long as cocaine remains a profitable product it will play a contributing role in IAG trafficking. If it loses value, it will likely be replaced by something else. The emergence of illegal metal mining in Chocó supports these predictions. Thus, the system of IAG trafficking will continue undisturbed, regardless of what is trafficked unless sustained efforts targeting the process of trafficking are implemented.

Moreover, the Visible Colombia conceals downward stability trends in the Hidden Colombia because of the improvements in high-density, urban areas. The sheer number of people in urban locations overwhelms the aggregate data and therefore cannot represent the nuance within the numbers or account for the challenges unique to rural populations. Closer examination shows that in the Hidden Colombia, decreases in state stability within departments have gone unnoticed.

Study Limitations

Bringing to light the Hidden Colombia is an important first step, but there is more to be done. Other factors such as ethnic, racial, and religious affiliation warrant greater study. Understanding the intersection of these other variables with factors like rural poverty will help bring to focus the image of the Hidden Colombia in its complexity. Access to personal interviews to provide primary source accounts of these

departments and insight into how they have changed would allow patterns to be analyzed across time and to confirm what happens in the Hidden Colombia.

Since corruption is motivated by coercion or incentivization that occurs when the state does not hold a monopoly on violence, it appears that corruption is a symptom of state instability. However, detailed research examining the role of corruption could help to verify this reasoning. Similarly, it would be beneficial to consider the ways in which policies at the national level could proscribe some government actions within departments, as this would alter the scope of responsibility for the state. Regardless of state-level policy variation, evidence suggests that there is still an expectation of the government to provide services to fulfill needs that are currently unmet. While additional insight would clarify the strength or weakness of the government's ability to force compliance, the perception of unmet needs for which the government is responsible suggests a reduction in state stability.

Policy Considerations

Because of the adaptability of trafficking by IAGs, policies targeting cocaine cultivation and production are unlikely to improve durable state stability within departments. At best, it will create a temporary improvement while the groups transition to other trafficking forms. Therefore, policy directed toward decreasing rural poverty should be prioritized. The provision of necessities like access to water and sanitation are critical to breaking local dependence on IAGs. Similarly, making public services, like education and the infrastructure to support it, accessible will help decrease the vulnerability of the local populations. The proposed government policies supporting the reduction of rural poverty and assistance with crop substitution after the 2016 Peace Agreement generated a positive response. Thus, the full and sustained implementation of these policies have a high chance of success toward creating a more stable Colombian state. To be effective, however, the policies need to be substantiated by laws that secure their implementation.

In addition to these legislative tasks, the government must inform the rural populations of the legal changes that will uphold the policies. In an effort to minimize retaliation from IAGs to the local populations, government information campaigns about the changes should coincide with the distribution of benefits. If the people are required to commit before receiving benefits, it is likely to spark localized violent conflict. By acknowledging and communicating with populations that have lived most of their lives in the Hidden Colombia, the government can help meet local expectations and garner support. This is especially important to help restore credibility after the terms of the 2016 Peace Agreement were not carried to completion. A sense of broken trust and the need to recover from IAG backlash makes the challenge of implementation more difficult now, but, with deliberate government action to meet the terms of the agreement and to inform the citizens, the policies can still take hold.

CONCLUSION

In departments that fall within the Hidden Colombia, state stability decreases due to high levels of rural poverty and profitable trafficking by IAGs. IAGs are concerned only with the profitability of the product they traffic. Since cocaine remains profitable, they continue to rely on it as a source of revenue. However, IAGs simultaneously continue to diversify the products they traffic, notably expanding into precious metals. Ultimately, it appears that rural poverty is the precondition that enables IAGs to become the *de facto* power in a region and rural poverty is a significant factor for determining the level of state stability within a department. ∎

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