Exposing the Clandestine: Silence and Voice in America's Drone War

By

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Abstract

The increasing reliance of the American military on weaponized drones in counter terrorism efforts has produced a contentious debate regarding the use of drones. This debate is characterized by two competing social discourses. First, a dominant discourse, articulated by the political elite in the United States, that advocates the use of drones as an issue of national security, while maintaining the clandestine nature of the drone program. Second, a subversive discourse, primarily articulated by legal scholars and human rights organizations, that criticize the civilian casualties resulting from the United States' use of drones and attempts to expose the human experience of drone strikes by exposing the clandestine. This project utilizes interpretative content analysis to establish the major themes present in the dominant discourse by evaluating seminal policy speeches given by members of the Obama Administration regarding drone warfare. To establish the primary themes of the subversive discourse, this project uses a multi-methodological approach, employing interpretative content analysis of two Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) reports and visual analysis of the post-drone strike photography of Pakistani journalist, Noor Behram. These discourses are organized by three frames (Security, Insecurity, and Story) that attempt to garner or maintain public support and generate or suppress collective action. Examination of these frames reveals that the subversive discourse has been unable to prompt a sustained policy-changing movement within the United States but has prompted the release of documents by the Obama Administration that incompletely account for drone strike and their guiding policies.

Acknowledgments

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin the clings to closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us."
Hebrews 12:1 (NRSV)

My graduate school experience, culminating in the production of this dissertation project has been a twelve year marathon. It has included moments of achievement that are evidenced in my CV and moments of difficulty that I have overcome only through the support of "a great cloud of witnesses." There have been so many on Team Terilyn Johnston Huntington that it will be impossible to thank each of them here, but I do want to highlight some who have been especially influential and supportive in propelling me forward in my academic pursuits.

My graduate academic career would have never gotten off the ground without the vested interests of the faculty, notably in the Political Science and History departments, during my undergraduate studies at Bethel University (St. Paul, MN). This dissertation is uniquely dedicated to the memories of Dr. Stacey Hunter Hecht and Dr. G. William Carlson, both of whom passed away while I was writing this dissertation. They both encouraged me and prayed for me when I encountered especially difficult challenges in my graduate career. Each was a dedicated scholar, teacher, and mentor to me and generations of Bethel students. I strive to be as excellent at "this business" (as Stacey would have said) as they were. I think that they would be proud of this dissertation as evidence of their teaching legacies. Though, I am certain that G.W. would have some comments for its improvement.

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Thank you also to my dear friends from the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies, all of whom are now public servants working on security issues and keep me "relevant" by alerting me to the real-life issues facing policy makers and the security/intelligence communities: Rebecca Chimahusky, Lauren Halton, and Carolyn Burke. I will continue to be a character reference for your security clearances—and, I promise, I've never told the FBI a *thing*.

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pets, not only for the stress relief associated with caring for them, but also because they truly believe that you are the best, even when academia tells you that you're not.

And, finally, to my best friend and partner in life, Paul Daniel Huntington: this has been a long twelve years. Thank you for giving me the freedom to pursue my academic dreams and career aspiration and for standing by me (sometimes literally) as I completed four graduate degrees. Thank you for working with me as I pulled all-nighters, for proof-reading my papers (including this dissertation), and for never giving up on me. You provided me with perspective when I had failure and rejection-induced tunnel vision and celebrated with me during my achievements—because they are *our* achievements. I would not have completed this academic journey without your constant encouragement and longsuffering patience. I love you…always and always!

"*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory…for ever and ever.*"
Ephesians 3:20-21 (NRSV)

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Chapter One: *Introduction*

The eye in the sky waits for the putty people to get closer together.
Just a little closer…closer…closer…there.
I press the button. I watch the screen.
A moment. A moment.
And, boom. A silent grey boom.
George Brant[1]

Instead of first experiencing America through a school or a hospital, most people in Wessab [Yemen] first experienced America through the terror of a drone strike.
Farea Al-Muslimi[2]

On April 23, 2013, the United States Senate held a hearing to discuss the security, legal, and ethical implications of drone-focused counterterrorism policies. The hearing, *Drone Wars: The Constitutional and Counterterrorism Implications of Targeted Killing*, brought together retired military officers, legal scholars, security experts, and a Yemeni reporter, each giving testimony on the advantages and disadvantages of drone warfare. The speakers' testimonies represented three frames, or ways that information is presented in order to prompt action, regarding drone warfare: Security, Insecurity, and Story.

Articulating the Security frame, retired General James E. Cartwright explained that the use of drones is necessary because members and affiliates of the al Qaeda terrorist network "find sanctuary in sympathetic populations, ungoverned spaces, and have the potential to move quietly, often undetected across the globe."[3] Drone expert Peter Bergen argued that "the drone attacks in Pakistan have undoubtedly hindered some of the Taliban's operations and have killed hundreds of their lower-lever fighters and a number of their top commanders."[4] The reliance on the tactical use

[1] George Brant, *Grounded* (New York: Samuel French, 2014), 32.
[2] Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights, *Drone Wars: The Constitutional and Counterterrorism Implications of Targeted Killing*, 113th Congress, First Session, 23 April 2013, 14.
[3] Ibid., 3.
[4] Ibid., 27.

of drones, however, has been wrought with criticism and concerns about the targets of strikes and the potential for civilian casualties.

These concerns have been articulated by the second represented frame at the hearing: Insecurity. It is logical that the delivery of strikes from an unmanned plane, generally undetectable, would spark fear and anxiety—insecurity—on the part of civilians who reside within the areas generally targeted by drone strikes. Legal scholar, Rosa Brooks, suggested to the Senate Subcommittee that feelings of insecurity are rooted in a seeming indiscrimination of drone strikes. "The trouble is," Brooks explained, "no one outside a very small group within the US executive branch has any ability to evaluate who is and isn't a combatant."[5] Ilya Somin, also a legal scholar, explained that clear discrimination of combatants from noncombatants in drone warfare is vital for American drone tactics to be viewed as legal within the auspices of international law. She said, "Serious constitutional and other problems arise if the US government fails to take proper care to ensure that the use of drones is strictly limited to legitimate terrorist targets."[6]

This legal jargon, however, may cause noncombatants to seem uni-dimensional, lacking a sense of humanity; making them *real*. Yemeni citizen Farea Al-Muslimi attempted to humanize the noncombatants who live in areas targeted by drone warfare through the frame of Story. By recounting his experiences with drone strikes in his home town of Wessab, he paints of picture of anger, fear, and hatred harbored by the residents of Wessab and Yemeni villages like it, directed not towards the targeted terrorists, but at the United States. Al-Muslimi recounted his conversations with Yemenis, "I have met with dozens of civilians who were injured during drone strikes and other air attacks. I have met with relatives of people who were killed by drone strikes

[5] Ibid., 56.
[6] Ibid., 74.

as well as numerous eye witnesses. They have told me how these air strikes have changed their lives for the worse."[7]

Evident in this hearing are two competing social discourses. First, a dominant discourse, articulated by the political elite in the United States, that advocates the use of drones as an issue of national security, while maintaining the clandestine nature of the drone program. Second, a subversive discourse, primarily articulated by legal scholars and human rights organizations, that criticize the civilian casualties resulting from the United States' use of drones and attempts to expose the human experience of drone strikes by exposing the clandestine. This project utilizes interpretative content analysis to establish the major themes present in the dominant discourse by evaluating seminal policy speeches given by members of the Obama Administration regarding drone warfare. To establish the primary themes of the subversive discourse, this project uses a multi-methodological approach, employing interpretative content analysis of two Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) reports[8] and visual analysis of the post-drone strike photography of Pakistani journalist, Noor Behram. These discourses are organized by three frames (Security, Insecurity, and Story) that attempt to garner or maintain public support and generate or suppress collective action. Examination of these frames reveals that the subversive discourse has been unable to prompt a sustained policy-changing movement within the United States but has prompted the release of documents by the Obama Administration that incompletely account for drone strike and their guiding policies.

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[7] Ibid., 14.

[8] Amnesty International, *"Will I Be Next?" US Drone Strikes in Pakistan* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 2013) and Stanford International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic and the Global Justice Clinic at NYU School of Law, *Living Under Drones*, Internet; http:///www.livingunderdrones.org; Accessed 20 October 2015.

This chapter provides some guidance for reading this project. First, it will briefly explain the relevancy of discourses within society and the impact of framing that discourse for social mobilization. Second, it will explain the context of borderless counterterrorism that underpins drone warfare, identifying *what* is being framed. Third, it will briefly sketch out the three frames that organize the analysis in this project. Finally, it will outline the chapters that flesh out this project.

Why Discourse? Why Framing?

This project seeks to identify and critically analyze the normalized discourse created by elite narratives and the oppositional discourse created through NGO reports and photography surrounding the use of weaponized drones in counterterrorism combat missions. While identifying and clarifying a discourse is interesting, it doesn't *do* anything. The utilization of framing theory assists by providing an analytical mechanism that can account for how the discourses interact with society and is useful in assessing their success and/or failure.

A discourse, simply defined, is a "sense making story."[9] These stories are socially constructed narrative structures that give deeper meaning to mere words.[10] Primarily underpinned by the discursive philosophies of Foucault and Derrida, the analysis of discourses seeks to "reveal connections between language, power and ideology that are hidden from people."[11] These power structures are established "particularly through the ideological workings of language."[12] The process of identifying and critically evaluating linguistically-produced power structures is important for the constructivist IR scholar because it establishes relationships between states and

[9] Terry Locke, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Continuum, 2004), 5.
[10] Ibid., 7.
[11] David Machin and Andrea Mayr, *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2012), 5.
[12] Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 2nd edition (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001), 2.

individuals and understands the binary nature (in the tradition of Derrida) of defining one's identity in opposition to another's (self vs. other).[13] Thus, discourses serve as a way of communicating ideas by determining who *we* are, who *they* are, and explaining the relationship between the two.

The analysis of discourses are characterized by the goals of "demystifying ideologies and power through the systematic investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)."[14] Discourses are socially constructed. They "are *structures* that are actualized in their regular use by people."[15] Thus, they are unstable in the sense that they are continuously being created and recreated. Consequently, discourses are reliant upon the researcher's interpretation and explanation in order for their impact to be elucidated. Chapter Four explains the methodology by which the dominant and subversive discourses surrounding drone warfare are created.

One of the ways that a discourse's efficacy can be judged is through the application of sociology's framing theory to understand how discourses are expressed and how that expression is received by society. Frames "assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherent and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists."[16] Snow and Benford explain that frames have three primary tasks. First, they define a problem that requires a solution. Second, they propose a solution. Third, they call society to action to fix the problem.[17] Ultimately, the use of discourses and framing in this dissertation is utilized in order to isolate the major ideas and themes present in the public

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[13] See: Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods," *European Journal of International Relations,* Vol. 5(2), 229 and Hansen, 19.

[14] Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, "Critical Discourse Analysis : History, Agenda, Theory, and Methodology," *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis,* 2nd ed. Eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 3.

[15] Milliken, 231.

[16] David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, " Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Research* Vol. 1, 198.

[17] Ibid., 199.

conversations that surround drone warfare. Identified frames help us to more clearly understand how the ideas and themes impact society and the security policies that surround drone warfare.

What is Being Framed: The Borderless Drone War

On April 23, 2015 a sober President Obama delivered a statement from the Whitehouse. During his remarks, the President publically offered his condolences to the family of American citizen and Al Qaeda hostage, Warren Weinstein. Weinstein, a humanitarian worker affiliated with the US Agency for International Development, was killed in a "signature" drone strike conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) against a known al Qaeda compound in Pakistan where he had been held captive.[18] Notably omitting explicit confirmation of the role of drones in the strike, President Obama explained the circumstances surrounding Weinstein's death:

> Since 9/11, our counterterrorism efforts have prevented terrorist attacks and saved innocent lives both here in America, and around the world…Our initial assessment indicates that this operation was fully consistent with the guidelines under which we conduct counterterrorism efforts in the region…And based on the intelligence that we had obtained at the time, including hundreds of hours of surveillance, we believed that this was an al Qaeda compound; that no civilians were present; and that capturing these terrorists was not possible. And we do believe that the operation did take out dangerous members of al Qaeda.[19]

This drone strike, as well as the strikes detailed by the NGO reports analyzed by this project, occurred in Pakistan, a country that is not part of the formally delineated theatres in the Global War on Terror: Afghanistan and Iraq. The strike that killed Warren Weinstein is evidence of a clandestine drone war that is waged against terrorists throughout the world, notably in

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[18] Michael D. Shear, "Warren Weinstein's Devotion to Pakistan Was Part of a Lifetime of Service," 23 April 2015, Internet; http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/world/asia/warren-weinsteins-devotion-to-pakistan-was-part-of-a-lifetime-of-service.html?_r=0; Accessed 6 October 2015.

[19] Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto," 23 April 2015, Internet; https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/04/23/statement-president-deaths-warren-weinstein-and-giovanni-lo-porto; Accessed 6 October 2015.

Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia.[20] General Cartwright's above quotation indicates the tactical difficulty of waging a war against al Qaeda and affiliates. Because drones can infiltrate areas that are almost inaccessible to ground troops and because terrorists operate in, especially, states with weak security forces throughout the world.[21]

The rhetorical change in the scope of this conflict from the Bush Administration's "Global War on Terror" to the Obama Administration's "War Against al-Qaeda" is significant because it allows combat to follow individual terrorists conceivably wherever they might go. Pugliese notes that drones emerge as the perfect weapons system for such a war, perhaps better described as a manhunt,[22] because they are able to "transgress the very things that the US government is so preoccupied in protecting on its own homeland: national sovereignty and security."[23] Additionally, the change in the conflict's focus causes its end game to be unclear. Wilcox warns that "the use of drones continues the extension of the space of the battlefield, as well as the time of war, indefinitely."[24]

The use of drones as a counterterrorism tactic is carried out by two separate agencies within the United States' extensive security and defense institutions. Strikes are divided between the military's Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) and the civilian Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Because they are conducted by a military body, JSOC strikes "can be acknowledged" by the Obama Administration, though "little detail on specific operations is generally provided to the

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[20] Avery Plaw, Matthew S. Fricker, and Carlos R. Colon, *The Drone Debate* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 42

[21] Christopher Swift, "The Boundaries of War? Assessing the Impact of Drone Strikes in Yemen," *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, Eds. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 72.

[22] Gregoire Chamayou, *A Theory of the Drone*, transl. Janet Lloyd (New York: The New Press, 2015), 30-35.

[23] Joseph Pugliese, *State Violence and the Execution of Law: Biopolitical Caesurae of Torture, Black Sites, Drones* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 16.

[24] Lauren Wilcox, *Bodies of Violence: Theorizing Embodied Subjects in International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 154.

public."[25] Under the clandestine shield produced by the CIA's orchestration of part of the United States' drone war, strikes and their casualty counts are generally hidden from public scrutiny. Thus, strikes are conducted outside of the purview of public debate, with little transparency from the Obama Administration on the subject. A report published by the Columbia Law School's Human Rights Clinic and the Center for Civilians in Conflict suggest, however, that it is difficult to know which agency is acting in any given strike and "there are some reports of JSOC and CIA operations being conducted under CIA authority because it provides foreign governments a 'fig leaf of deniability.'"[26]

The ability to deny knowledge of a drone strike is important in the interaction between the dominant and subversive discourses explored in this project. It is through deniability of classified documents and strikes that the clandestine is elevated above the visible. A political commitment to opaqueness (despite claims of transparency) pits the Obama Administration against the narratives and photographs published in NGO reports. This discursive competition provides motivation for the subversive narrative to expose the actions of the political elite. The converse is also true as the political elite attempt to disprove and discredit the assertions of the subversive discourse through the wizard's curtain of the intelligence community.

Frames: Security, Insecurity, and Story

The first frame identified through this study, **security**, is utilized by the dominant discourse. The attacks leveled against the United States by al Qaeda on September 11, 2001 caused American national security to be devoted to actively combatting terrorists who are perceived to pose a threat to the United States. This overturned the "illusion of invulnerability" that seemed

[25] Swift, 41.

[26] Human Rights Clinic at Columbia Law School and Center for Civilians in Conflict, *The Civilian Impact of Drones: Unexamined Costs, Unanswered Questions* (New York: Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2012), 14.

foundational to American security culture.[27] The result of this perceptual rupture has been a keen desire to elevate national security as *the* priority of American politics. Paul Viotti defines national security as "providing safety from threats to the nation by taking steps toward this end both at home and abroad."[28]

At root, the goal of security is self-preservation. Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde explain that in cases of armed conflict, the state evaluates an existential threat and concludes that it must survive, and thus, makes the decision to engage in actions that will preserve itself.[29] This suggests that security should be understood as a relational enterprise, as the state's security is defined within the context of a threat.[30] In the United States' current security environment, security is, thus, understood within as in relationship to the *other*—in this case, the terrorist and his/her affiliate organizations. Pitted against each other, the United States is committed to maintaining its security through the defeat of terrorism.[31]

This view of security understands relationality to be discursively constructed. As, primarily, elite political actors "speak security" into existence, the discourse becomes a construct

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[27] Jack Holland, "From September 11th, 2001 to 9-11: From Void to Crisis," *International Political Sociology* Vol. 3, 281.

[28] Paul R. Viotti, "Toward a Comprehensive Strategy for Terrorism and Homeland Security," *Terrorism and Homeland Security: Thinking Strategically About Policy*, Eds. Paul R. Viotti, Michael A. Opheim, and Nicholas Bowen (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2008), 5.

[29] Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2008), 36.

[30] David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Revised Edition (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 9-11.

[31] Ole Waever contends that security as it is understood in the Western context, and as is referenced in this project has been "highly militarized in the West, while in the East it was broadened to incorporate economic security and various types of interference in domestic affairs" ("Securitization and desecuritization," *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 59.)

of power.[32] Thus, in the context relevant for this project, "security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites."[33]

The second frame identified through this study, **insecurity**, is utilized by the subversive discourse to indicate how individuals are ontologically destabilized as they are unable to feel secure in their immediate surroundings.[34] While the physical aspects of insecurity as they pertain to noncombatants' experiences of drone warfare are obvious—they are afraid of dying. A less obvious part of this insecurity is produced by the systematic dehumanization of warfare, threatening the person's being and self-understanding.[35] The subversive discourse uses this frame in order to show how noncombatants' lives are negatively affected by drone warfare in an attempt to secure recognition that drone warfare kills people.

German philosopher Axel Honneth, suggests that "the presupposition of all communicative action," or discourse, "is to be seen in the acquisition of social recognition."[36] Thus, Honneth's theory of recognition and justice seeks to confront previous trends in political philosophy to *either* concede the pursuit of global justice as unattainable, thus forcing the theorist to "muddle through" tough examples of injustice, often tacitly excusing them, *or* to link justice to citizenship (local and/or global), which alienates those disenfranchised by the global community.[37]

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[32] Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 85. See also: Michael C. Williams, "Words Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 47: 511-531.

[33] Waever, 57.

[34] The insecurity frame differs from the security frame in its level of application. In this project, the security frame is applied at the national level, whereas the insecurity frame is applied at the individual level. This shows a difference in strategy on the part of the two drone discourses. The security frame desires for the individual American to view themselves as part of national security. The insecurity frame seeks to differentiate individuals who have been lumped into the dehumanized wartime distinctions of "combatant" and "noncombatant."

[35] Paul Roe defines this sort of ontological security as being concerned with threats to identity ("The 'Value' of Positive Security," *Review of International Studies* Vol. 34, 784).

[36] Axel Honneth, *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2007), 71.

[37] Axel Honneth, "Recognition and Justice: Outline of a Plural Theory of Justice," *Acta Sociological* (47), 352.

Honneth, heavily influenced by the phenomenological work of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, understands recognition to be a mutually-constitutive process through which individuals share existential validation. Honneth characterizes Hegel's view of recognition as being fundamental to the actualization of the self. "A subject can only arrive at a 'consciousness' of its own 'self' if it enters into a relationship of 'recognition' with another subject."[38] Once recognition is achieved, it is protected through intentional praxis of social order and law.[39]

It is through participation in community that an individual is able to realize the full extent of his/her humanity "by being gradually assured of the specific abilities and needs constituting his or her personality through the approving patterns of reaction by generalized interaction partners." This experience is global in the reality that "every human being is dependent in an elementary way, on a context of social forms of interaction that are regulated by normative principles of mutual recognition." Lack of mutual recognition generates patterns of "disrespect or humiliation that cannot be without damaging consequences for the single individual's identity formation."[40] Thus, injustice occurs when "human subjects are denied the recognition they feel they deserve," experiencing "feelings of social disrespect."[41]

Honneth's theory develops three principles of recognition (love, equality, and merit)[42] which correspond with practical "spheres" that can measure personal security: "responsiveness to need, legal equality or justice to achievements."[43] Experiences of the noncombatant in warfare restricts access to these modes of security, and can significantly and permanently disrupt lives.

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[38] Axel Honneth, *The I in We: Studies in the Theory of Recognition* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2012), 2-3.
[39] Ibid., 21.
[40] Nancy Fraser, "Abnormal Justice," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 34(3), 354.
[41] Honneth, *Disrespect*, 71.
[42] Nancy Fraser, "Abnormal Justice," 355.
[43] Ibid., 361.

Similarly, American critical theorist, Judith Butler suggests that it is through human interaction that one's humanity is socially understood. This causes one's life to be *precarious,* which suggests the vulnerability of one's life in relation to others. "One's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other…Grievability is a presupposition for the life that matters."[44] Humans, especially within the context of war are situated within physical and psychological spaces of insecurity, causing them to experience fundamental levels of vulnerability. "Loss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing those attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure."[45] Thus, for Butler, the fully realized life is the life that we mourn individually and corporately.

In the face of warfare, this is difficult, however, as public narratives are constructed to dehumanize and delegitimize the lives of combatants and noncombatants alike. According to Butler "such populations are 'lose-able,' or can be forfeited, precisely because they are framed as being already lost or forfeited; they are cast as threats to human life as we know it rather than as living populations in need of protection from illegitimate state violence."[46] Butler also seems to understand this within the language of risk transfer warfare, concluding that through the incorporation of otherizing frames that present the stories of those within war-contexts to be fundamentally different than one's own,[47] "the loss of such populations is deemed necessary to protect the lives of 'the living.'"[48]

The third frame isolated is also utilized by the subversive discourse. It uses **story** to humanize and give voice to the noncombatants affected by drone warfare. It also is vital in

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[44] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (New York: Verso, 2010), 14.
[45] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004), 20.
[46] Butler, *Frames of War*, 31.
[47] Butler, *Precarious Life*, 38.
[48] Butler, *Frames of War*, 31.

exposing the clandestine details of drone warfare that are obscured through government secrecy. The photography analyzed in this project is also included under this frame as it provides visual confirmation to the stories told.

The story frame seeks to identify and analyze the voices of the "Other" through the stories and testimonies of drone attack survivors in order to reveal the impact of drone warfare on real, grievable people. Poignantly, Butler notes, "There are no obituaries for the war casualties that the United States inflicts, and there cannot be. If there were to be an obituary, there would have had to have been a life, a life worth noting, a life worth valuing and preserving, a life that qualifies for recognition."[49] Butler further explains: "Such a death vanishes, not into explicit discourse, but in the ellipses by which public discourse proceeds."[50] The elucidation and analysis of drone victims' stories is an opportunity to extend recognition to those lives lost and damaged that have been dismissed within the fog of war as collateral damage.

Stories are a unique form of discourse because they facilitate the human experience in such a fundamental sense. Telling stories "provide hopes, enhance or mitigate disappointments, challenge or support moral order, and test out theories of the world at both personal and communal levels."[51] Stories can serve as a vehicle for establishing and entrenching cultural norms.[52] They also have the potential "to make meaning out of raw experiences; to transcend suffering; to offer

[49] Butler, *Precarious Life*, 34.
[50] Ibid., 35.
[51] Deborah Schiffrin and Anna De Fina, "Introduction," *Telling Stories: Language, Narrative, and Social Life*, eds. Deborah Schiffrin, Anna De Fina, and Anastasia Nylund (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 1.
[52] Jerome Bruner, "Narrative, Culture, and Mind," *Telling Stories: Language, Narrative, and Social Life*, eds. Deborah Schiffrin, Anna De Fina, and Anastasia Nylund (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 45.

warnings, advice, and other guidance; to provide a means for traveling beyond the personal; and to provide inspiration, entertainment, and new frames of reference to both tellers and listeners."[53]

In addition to conveying information from the teller to the listener, stories also open up relational space between the teller and listener. It provides an opportunity for the listener to move beyond "tolerance" of teller to offering an atmosphere of hospitality. In the face of violence, Derrida notes that hospitality "opens or is in advance open to someone who is neither expected nor invited, to whomever arrives…in short, wholly other."[54] An authentic atmosphere of hospitality also makes it possible to access the process of grieving for human lives lost in war that Butler calls for: "To grieve, and to make grief itself into a resource for politics, is not to be resigned to inaction, but it may be understood as the slow process by which we develop a point of identification with suffering itself."[55] This is highlighted by the responding to the question: "'What is it in the Other that I have lost?'"[56]

Handling others' stories is a difficult task characterized by a held tension between the promise of being "a crucial and important means for creating empathy and inducing action" and the peril of "misinterpretation and misappropriation."[57] Additionally, Fiona Robinson argues that an ethic of care is necessary when encountering vulnerable populations. She suggests that this includes "questioning why and understanding how it is that different forms of 'power' come to exist, and how they are distributed in society. It also involves understanding which relations of

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[53] Amy Shuman, *Other People's Stories: Entitlement Claims and the Critique of Empathy* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 1.

[54] Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 128-129.

[55] Butler, *Precarious Life*, 30.

[56] Ibid., 30.

[57] Shuman, 120.

dependence are built on mutual trust and support, and which are built on manipulation and paternalism and why."[58]

The second part of the story frame is represented in this project by the analysis of photography as provider of information and visualization of an area of the world that most Americans have never seen. Photography is a ubiquitous form of visual communication and artistic expression. In a culture that is permeated by the visual, there is an expectation that the verbal will be accompanied by an illustrative or entertaining visual in almost all contexts. In *Regarding the Pain of Others* Susan Sontag explains the poignancy of the photograph: "Narratives can make us understand. Photographs do something else: they haunt us."[59]

Since the capability was invented in 1839, the role of wartime photography has been one of documentation and, as a result, photography has "kept company with death."[60] The goal of this accompaniment has been the keeping of "visual records or evidence"[61] of the human atrocities associated with warfare. This is an important conceptual practice within the context of war because photographs capture the realities of warfare (as they are produced, edited, and distributed, at least) and demands recognition. "To not look at pictures of atrocity," Prosser argues "is to deny its existence, not only when atrocity happens at a distance but also when it's there on our doorsteps, in front of us."[62] Additionally, photography, as conceived by Sontag, possesses the potential to be socially transformative. "Photographs of an atrocity may give rise to opposing forces. A call for

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[58] Fiona Robinson, "Stop Talking and Listen: Discourse Ethics and Feminist Care Ethics in International Political Theory," *Millennium* Vol. 39(3), 853.

[59] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 89.

[60] Ibid., 24.

[61] David Phillips, "Actuality and Affect in Documentary Photography," *Using Visual Evidence*, eds. Richard Howells and Robert W. Matson (New York: Open University Press, 2009), 55.

[62] Jay Prosser, "Introduction," *Picturing Atrocity: Photography in Crisis*, eds. Geoffrey Batchen, Mick Gidley, Nancy K. Miller, and Jay Prosser (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 7.

peace. A cry for revenge. Or simply bemused awareness, continuously restocked by photographic information, that terrible things happen."[63]

Thus, within the context of warfare, photographs present a certain truth claim of a reality that is encompassed through the composition of the picture and is ultimately informed by both its original context and the context of the interpreter. Nickel is clear in his assertion that photographs require interaction with an external interpreter in order for meaning and significance to be imparted upon them. "The photograph cannot claim authority; as an inanimate object, it literally cannot claim anything at all. But we can confer authority upon it."[64] How we confer authority upon the visual matters. The method of visual analysis, or how I am "conferring authority" on the selected photographs is described in Chapter Four.

Exposing the Clandestine: Chapter Summaries

This project is tasked with judging the formation and efficacy of drone warfare discourses as they are socially presented through frames. While attempting to provide voice to the subversive discourse, I ultimately conclude that that dominant discourse is successful in silencing its adversary. This project proceeds from this introduction (Chapter One) in four chapters.

In Chapter Two I examine the drone, discourse, and framing literatures, explaining how they intersect with the constructivist international relations literature. Chapter Three provides a historic overview of the military and cultural climates that underpin the United States' reliance on drones as a preferred counterterrorism tactic, ultimately producing the dominant discourse. It also explains the origins of the subversive discourse and its attempts to unsettle the dominant discourse.

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[63] Sontag, 13.

[64] Douglas R. Nickel, "'Impressed by Nature's Hand': Photography and Authorship," *Using Visual Evidence*, eds. Richard Howells and Robert W. Matson (New York: Open University Press, 2009), 47.

In Chapter Four I evaluate the dominant discourse, composed of speeches from Eric Holder, John Brennan, and President Obama, using interpretative content analysis. I find that the dominant discourse supports three primary themes: national security, legality, and hiddenness in order to protect and advance its advocacy of drone counterterrorism efforts. The subversive discourse is evaluated using a multi-methodology approach. First, it utilizes interpretive content analysis of drone reports from Amnesty International and Stanford/NYU, finding that the subversive discourse is composed of three themes: human security, illegality, and exposure. Second, this chapter analyzes Noor Behram's photographs of post-drone strike areas using visual analysis. I find that my interpretation of the photographs favors aesthetic themes.

In order to judge the efficacy of these discourses first, in conveying their ideas to their audiences and, second in prompting mobilization, Chapter Five uses the frames developed in this chapter (Security, Insecurity, and Story) and explains why the subversive discourse has failed to promote mobilization and policy changes. Finally, Chapter Six, concludes this project by looking at the "triumph" of the dominant discourse over the subversive discourse, but suggests that some transparency on the part of the Obama Administration has resulted from its awareness of the subversive discourse.

Chapter Two: *Drones, Discourse, and Framing: A Review of the Literature*

This project is reliant upon literature from a number of disciplines. Thus, the literature reviewed is rather expansive. While a daunting endeavor, the integration of these literatures is a great opportunity for framing theory to formally engage the discourses surrounding drone warfare. This review is divided into two major sections. First, it details the drone literature and second, it explores the connection between constructivist International Relations theory, approaches to discourse, and framing theory.

The Drone Literature

As public and academic interest in drone warfare increases, so too does the drone literature. This literature is voluminous, interdisciplinary, and constantly growing. While the literature addresses diverse aspects of drone warfare, it consistently elucidates the complexity of the tactical use of drones in contemporary conflict. The drone literature can be divided into four major areas: journalistic, military/tactical, legal, and ethical.

The Drone Literature: Journalistic Sources

The first area of drone literature emerges from journalistic sources. Readily accessible to the public, these magazine and newspaper articles and books provide the public with a glimpse into the Obama Administration's use of drones as a counter terrorism tactic and offers explanation and analysis of the Obama Administration's policies informing drone strikes. While, in general, informative, these journalistic sources are clear to express the potential ethical and legal challenges surrounding the use of drones in warfare.

From the onset, the journalistic literature has been concerned both with the impact that drone-based tactics have on the nature of warfare and upon the legal and ethical expectations for warfare. P.W. Singer's 2009 book, *Wired for War*, was one of the first public forays into the use

of drones and robotics in warfare. Like many drone scholars Singer notes that he published the book "because robots are frakin' cool."[65] He explains, however, that the introduction of drones into contemporary warfare is not merely about the "coolness" of technological military advancement, but that "it transforms the very agent of war"[66] and marks the emergence of "a new warrior class" that is dependent upon war waged at a distance.[67] While a distance-based "push-button" war may seem attractive and might be efficacious, also writing in 2009, Jane Mayer cautions that it is not without consequences. In her *New Yorker Article* "The Predator War," Mayer raises questions regarding the ethical nature of drone warfare and its legal viability, drawing attention to the potential for noncombatant casualties resulting from operator error and bad human intelligence.[68]

A pair of exposes, by journalists David Sanger and Daniel Klaidman, published in 2012 seek to provide an explanation for the transition from Barack Obama the idealistic presidential candidate to Barack Obama, President of the United States and avid utilizer of drone strikes. Both authors pay significant attention to the use of weaponized drones both in combat (Afghanistan and Iraq) and extra-combat areas such as Pakistan and Yemen. Both accounts also discuss the tension between transparency and secrecy that was created by the Obama Administration's reliance on drone warfare. David Sanger defines President Obama's drone use as "a strategy of confrontation and concealment, a precise, directed economy of force."[69] This is a strategy informed by a desire for a "light footprint," and "it was relatively cheap and low-casualty—at least, low in American casualties."[70] And, as Daniel Klaidman notes, fundamentally, the use of drones seemed to work

[65] P.W. Singer, *Wired For War* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 1.
[66] Ibid., 194.
[67] Ibid., 280.
[68] Jane Mayer, "The Predator War," *The New Yorker*, 26 October 2009: 36-45.
[69] David E. Sanger, *Confront and Conceal* (New York: Random House, 2012), xvii.
[70] Ibid., 420.

for the Obama Administration. "There was little doubt that the program was effective as a tactic; drone strikes routinely killed high-value targets on the CIA hit parade…Drones may not have been a panacea, but they were an awfully seductive tool."[71]

While Sanger and Klaidman's books attempt to produce a sort of comfort level with the use of drones, more recent journalistic sources seek to problematize drone strikes in three main ways. These sources express concern about first, the impact that drone strikes have on both the victims of drone strikes, second on the intelligence-gap that emerges from combatant death, rather than capture, and third, on the tenuous relationship between Pakistan and the United States.

A key consideration later in this project, recent journalistic publications on drone warfare have focused on the experiences of noncombatants living in areas targeted by drone strikes. It is not surprising that the conditions of people living in these areas are difficult. Conor Friedersdorf, a writer for *The Atlantic*, has focused on the psychological impact that drone strikes have on civilians targeted by drones, noting that "they are trapped. Terrified. Powerless."[72] Steve Coll describes a meeting with Pakistani photo-journalist, Noor Behram, in which he was shown hundreds of post-drone-strike photographs. These included dozens of pictures of dead and injured children.[73] Additionally, drone strikes have reportedly become such an entrenched part of life in these areas that *NPR* reporter, Kelly McEvers relates that mothers in Yemen "used to tell their kids, 'Go to sleep or I will call your father.' Now they say, 'Go to sleep or I will call the plane.'"[74] While these pieces suggest that drone strikes may not be as precise and combatant-focused as the

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[71] Daniel Klaidman, *Kill or Capture* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012), 118.

[72] Conor Friedersdorf, "'Every Person Is Afraid of the Drones': The Strikes' Effect on Life in Pakistan," *The Atlantic*, 25 Sept. 2012, Internet http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/09/every-person-is-afraid-of-the-drones-the-strikes-effect-on-life-in-pakistan/262814/ Accessed 28 September 2015.

[73] Steve Coll, "The Unblinking Stare," *The New Yorker*, 24 November 2014, Internet http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/11/24/unblinking-stare Accessed 28 September 2015.

[74] Kelly McEvers,"The Hidden Cost of the Drone Program," *National Public Radio*. 5 May, 2013 Internet; http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=181403067; Accessed 23 May 2013.

dominant American narrative has suggested, Coll clearly notes that civilian casualties have been reduced as a result of improved strike procedures by the CIA. Instead of targeting homes, the CIA has shifted to strikes on vehicles where the presence of women and children is less likely.[75]

Second, recent journalistic analyses have problematized American drone warfare by identifying the lack of intelligence gathered as a result of a "'kill 'em and sort it out later'" approach to counterterrorism.[76] Bergen and Tiedemann consider this to be a challenge for continued efforts in the region because "dead militants, of course, can offer no insights into planned operations."[77] McEvers also notes that this policy is able to avoid the continued legal and logistic concerns associated with capturing combatants and housing them at Guantanamo Bay.[78] But, as is discussed below, from this policy emerges different potential legal challenges.

Third, recent journalistic sources reveal the difficulties in American relations with the Pakistani government resulting from drone strikes. McEvers' *NPR* report states that cooperation with Pakistani officials is difficult because leaks in the Pakistani government often cause "the information [to get] out to the target."[79] In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, often targeted by American drone strikes, citizens must choose between two evils: American drone strikes and the Taliban insurgency. The choice that the citizens make is up to interpretation by analysts. An oft-cited opinion piece by Kilcullen and Exum argues that "violent extremists may be unpopular" in the FATA region, but "for a frightened population they seem less ominous than a

[75] Coll, "The Unblinking Stare."
[76] Klaidman, 43.
[77] Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, "Washington's Phantom War: The Effects of the U.S. Drone Program in Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90(4).
[78] McEvers, "The Hidden Cost of the Drone Program."
[79] Ibid.

faceless enemy that wages war from afar."[80] On the other hand, Coll concludes that many "welcome—or, at least, accept—the CIA's drone strikes as a necessary, temporary compromise."[81]

While a tacit acceptance of drone strikes in Pakistan may be the status quo, Bergen and Tiedemann suggest that the relationship between Pakistan and the United States could be stronger on this issue. They propose greater cooperation with the Pakistani government on drones and believe that this would result in more transparency from both governments. "A more transparent drone-strike program, with greater overt cooperation from Pakistan, would increase accountability, in particular regarding civilian casualties."[82]

The Drone Literature: Military/Tactical

The second subject area discussed by the drone literature is interested in the military, historical development, and tactical understandings of drone warfare. This literature can be divided into three groups: the history and future of drone use, military tactics, and the impact of drones on the soldier.

While the bulk of the drone literature is interested in the sticky ethical and legal issues imbedded within the use of emergent military technology, some of the literature, however, considers their historical development and the promise for and consequences of future use.

Aside from cursory statements asserting that "drones are not a new technology," few sources are interested in exploring the historical development of military and civilian uses of drones. John Blom provides us with the most extensive study of drones' historical development and military implementation with his book *Unmanned Aerial Systems: A Historical Perspective*.[83]

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[80] David Kilcullen and Andrew McDonald Exum, "Death From Above, Outrage Down Below," *The New York Times*, 16 May 2009, 13.

[81] Coll, "The Unblinking Stare."

[82] Bergen and Tiedemann, "Washington's Phantom War: The Effects of the U.S. Drone Program in Pakistan."

[83] John David Blom, *Unmanned Aerial Systems: a Historical Perspective*, Occasional Paper 37 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010).

Other book chapters by Konstantin Kakaes' and Plaw, Fricker, and Colon provide sufficient, but brief historical overviews.[84]

Both Blom and Kakaes contend that the rich history of drone use in warfare for surveillance purposes (dating back to Orville Wright and Charles Kettering's development of "The Bug" for use in World War I)[85] and the success of weaponized drones in contemporary warfare suggest a continued future for drones in warfare. While carefully describing the impressive development of UAVs from weather balloons to aerial robots equipped with precision-weaponry, Blom is guarded about the military's continued support of drones in future conflicts. He suggests that budgetary considerations and increased logical strain (due to different operating systems) may cause drones' development to slow down.[86] Similarly, Kakaes suggests that drones' limitations, vulnerability and the onslaught of information that they provide, may cause strategists to employ alternative technologies in future conflicts.[87] Plaw, Ficker, and Colon suggest that the workforce required to maintain drone flights may decrease their use in conflicts[88] and that the ethical and legal challenges associated with targeted killings (discussed below) must be sorted out before they believe that drones will be a permanent fixture in American military operations.[89]

For the foreseeable future, it seems that the tactical use of drones, especially in counterterrorism efforts, will persist. Micah Zenko suggests that this is the result of a political preference for Discrete Military Operations. Zenko defines DMOs as "a single or serial physical

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[84] Konstantin Kakaes, "From Orville Wright to September 11: What the History of Drone Technology Says About Its Future," *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*. Eds. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Avery Plaw, Matthew S. Fricker, and Carlos R. Colon, *The Drone Debate* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 13-51.

[85] Blom, 46; Kakaes, 362.

[86] Blom, 127-131.

[87] Kakaes, 381.

[88] The authors quote retired US Air Force colonel, Martha McSally: 'It takes over 200 operations and intelligence personnel to sustain an RPA [i.e., Remotely Piloted Aircraft] like the Predator or Reaper in an orbit for 24 hours" (Plaw, Fricker, and Colon, 25).

[89] Plaw, Fricker, and Colon, 334.

use of kinetic military force to achieve a defined military and political goal by inflicting casualties or causing destruction, without seeking to conquer an opposing army or control territory."[90] Zenko explains that DMOs have specific "political objectives [that] can be summarized as any one or a combination of the following goals: punishment…deterrence…coercion…"[91] What differentiates DMOs from other exhibitions of force "is that [they are] usually undertaken without a theory of victory."[92] CNN.com's May 12, 2016 report seems to confirm the persistence of DMOs in American military strategy as "President Barack Obama is increasingly calling upon Special Operations forces to carry out so-called 'small wars' across the Middle East and Africa to challenge both ISIS and al Qaeda."[93]

The use of drones in DMOs not only maintains a small combat footprint in these "small wars," but provides necessary surveillance and air power for the troops on the ground and allows for "the United States to project force when it and the national government have few other options."[94] The added value, according to the Department of Defense, is the reduction of the number of dull, dirty, and dangerous missions undertaken by soldiers and flown by pilots.

> The attributes that make the use of unmanned preferable to manned aircraft in the above three roles are, in the case of the dull, the better sustained alertness of machines over that of humans and, for the dirty and the dangerous, the lower political and human cost if the mission is lost and greater probability that the mission will be successful.[95]

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[90] Micah Zenko, *Between Threats and War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 2.
[91] Ibid., 3.
[92] Ibid., 5.
[93] Barbara Starr, "U.S. Special Forces Wage Secretive 'Small Wars' Against Terrorists," *CNN.com*, 12 May 2016, Internet; http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/11/politics/special-ops-small-wars-isis-al-qaeda/; Accessed 12 May 2016.
[94] James Igoe Walsh, *The Effectiveness of Drone Strikes in Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism Campaigns* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College Press, 2013), 50.
[95] Department of Defense, *Unmanned Aircraft systems Roadmap 2005-2030* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2005), 2.

Importantly, in contrast to Jenna Jordan's 2014 article,[96] Johnston and Sarbahi's 2016 study indicates that done strikes work. They conclude that drone strikes are effective in reducing terrorist attacks in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen as they have been proven "capable of disrupting and degrading militant organizations" and "such technologies limit both the frequency and the lethality of militant attacks."[97] The efficacy of drone strikes and surveillance has resulted in further research and development of new, more advanced drone technologies "that can go places too dangerous for soldiers or spies" and will continue to increase their tactical value.[98]

The final military/tactical drone literature addresses the impact that distance-based warfare has on the pilots who are waging war in absentia. Successful militaries have always worked to develop technologies that reduce risk to soldiers by removing them from harm's way. Singer observes that "each new technology has pushed soldiers farther and farther away from their foes."[99] This means that Western militaries must utilize more airpower and more soldier-less technologies to present war as "clean" to the public on the home front.[100] Ignatieff adds that the object of war is to "destroy [the enemy combatant] at long range, accelerating a long-standing trend: the battlefield has been emptying for centuries."[101]

For many soldiers in contemporary wars, the battleground is no longer a holistic sensory experience. The traditional soldier can relate to his/her surroundings by what he/she can hear, see,

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[96] Jenna Jordan, "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark: Why Terrorist Groups Survive Decapitation Strikes," *International Security* Vol. 38(4): 7-38. Jordan's article suggests that targeted killings may be effective in the short term, but that they do not disrupt terrorist organizations, such as al-Qaeda, long enough to prevent reformation with new leadership. This is essentially the "Hydra" philosophy from Marvel's *Captain America* comic books: "Cut off one head, two more will take its place."

[97] Patrick B. Johnston and Anoop K. Sarbahi, "The Impact of US Drone Strikes on Terrorism in Pakistan," *International Studies Quarterly* (2016), 14.

[98] Megan Braun, "Predator Effect: A Phenomenon Unique to the War on Terror," *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, eds. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 278.

[99] Singer, *Wired For War*, 331.

[100] Shaw, 81 and 132.

[101] Michael Ignatieff, 2000, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York: Metropolitan Books), 169.

taste, touch and/or smell. For the UAV pilot stationed in the United States, the battleground is what he/she can see and hear by extension of technology.[102] "Inside the trailers, crews don't get even the sensation of flying that one gets in a flight simulator."[103] The pilots of Predator drones are limited to what their cameras see and the sounds that are transmitted by them. Even with intelligence reports from the ground, the pilot cannot act unless the visual footage confirms the intelligence.[104] "The best technology cannot bridge the divide of being in two different locales. Being there virtually only allows so much communication."[105]

Royakkers and van Est argue that the "digitization of warfare exhibits the danger of emotionally detaching moral action from moral awareness and reasoning…"[106] However, a twice-deployed pilot, now flying Predators, states, "'For us, it's combat…Physically, we may be in Vegas, but mentally, we're flying over Iraq. It feels real'"[107] The pilot's assertion that his UAV missions "feel real" provides some insight into the alienation that results from drone warfare.[108] This is the true plight of the drone pilots. He/she is mentally engaging the enemy through the processing of surveillance footage and pushing the button to deploy hellfire missiles when

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[102] Columba Peoples focuses on the peril of relying upon the symbolic representation and interpretation of targets for soldiers. This analysis discusses this interpretative challenge in terms of technology used in the United State's Ballistic Missile Defense system, but it seems especially relevant to the case of UAV pilots. In both cases the operators of the technology are limited by the information revealed to them by the technology. Peoples notes, "The promised clarity of vision associated with new tracking technologies can, it seems, become its own source of obscuration" (Columba Peoples, 2008, "Decoding Ballistic Missile Defense: Semiotics and the Power of the Image in American Ballistic Missile Defense," *Social Semiotics*, Vol. 18, no. 1, 29). This contributes to the below question of how "real" combat experienced through a monitor can be.

[103] Robert D. Kaplan, 2006, "Hunting the Taliban in Las Vegas," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2006, Internet; http://www.theatlantic.com; Accessed 12 May 2011.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Singer, *Wired For War*, 336.

[106] Lamber Royakkers and Rinie van Est, 2010, "The Cubicle Warrior: the Marionette of Digitalized Warfare," *The Journal of Ethics in Information and Technology*, Vol. 12, 289.

[107] Sally B. Donnelly, 2005, "Long-Distance Warriors," *Time*, 04 December 2005, Internet; http://www.time.com, Accessed 15 May 2011.

[108] At the risk of putting too much emphasis on one pilot's comment and attributing it as "normal" to the collective UAV pilot experience, the selected pilot's comment commands attention for the expressed reason that he has served in both realms of war. Thus, he possesses the ability to judge the "realness" of war on the ground versus the "artificial" nature of conducting missions in Afghanistan and Iraq from the United States.

commanded. He/she is mentally responsible for the death of combatants and civilians and for the destruction of buildings, vehicles, and other elements of infrastructure. But, he/she is not physically present on the battlefield.

Additionally, the UAV pilot does not experience the threat of war that produces sensations of fear. The distance between the cubicle warrior and the danger is so great that the consequences of mistakes for traditional soldiers are essentially irrelevant. "This means that they are safe in a physical sense; they cannot be wounded. As a consequence, cubicle warriors do not feel any fear."[109] Singer further explains the implications of fearlessness for the soldier. "Your experience of war is not merely distanced from risk…but now fully disconnected from it. And thus these new warriors are disconnected from the old meanings of courage as well."[110]

The UAV pilot feels the disconnection from the holistic sensory experience, including feelings of fear, of being in the action and is compelled to justify his position as an active soldier by arguing that his actions "feel real." In his memoir, former drone pilot, Matt Martin, suggests that one of the challenges of drone warfare is the lack of battlefield horror experienced during combat.[111] For those whose boots are on the ground, there is no "feeling" about their task, they know it's real and they experience war's horror. Christopher Coker explains that one of the limitations of contemporary warfare is that soldiers have "become displaced into their own weapons system and transformed into technicians."[112]

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[109] Royakkers and van Est, 291.

[110] Singer, *Wired For War*, 332.

[111] Matt J. Martin and Charles W. Sasser, *Predator: The Remote-Control Air War Over Iraq and Afghanistan: A Pilot's Story* (Minneapolis, MN: Zenith Press, 2010), 31.

[112] Christopher Coker, *Waging War Without Warriors? The Changing Culture of Military Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 161.

The Drone Literature: Legal

The third major area of drone literature is concerned with the legality and compatibility of drone strikes with international law. When casualty averse tactics and strategies of warfare are executed on the battlefield, they become a part of the global discourse regarding justice and warfare. Characterized by the canonization of international law, the expectations for legal warfare become what philosopher Jürgen Habermas refers to as the "constitutionalization of international law,"[113] which allows for the "taming of brute political power."[114] This cosmopolitan view of the international system underpins the legal drone literature and assumes the obligation of global powers to submit to a "continually expanding [international] federation that prevents war [and] can curb the inclination to hostility and defiance of the law."[115] Adherence to the precepts of international law also suggests an acknowledgment and acceptance of international underpinning norms that "tie [the international community] together because we share them as humans."[116]

The proximity of noncombatants to the battlefield has become a key consideration when looking at the legality of UAV-centric warfare. While my intent is not to determine the legality of American use of UAVs in warfare (especially in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen), the perspectives that have been articulated by international lawyers can be helpful in establishing a benchmark for understanding the administration of global justice to noncombatants within the international community. As Habermas contends, problems that are as complex as eradicating

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[113] Jurgen Habermas, "Plea for a Constitutionalization of International Law," *Philosophy Social Criticism*, Vol. 40(1), 5.

[114] Ibid., 6.

[115] Immanuel Kant, "Toward Perpetual Peace," "*Toward Perpetual Peace" and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, transl. David L. Colclasure (New Haven, CT: Yale University Books, 2006), 81.

[116] Adeno Addis, "Imagining the International Community: The Constitutive Dimension of Universal Justice," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 31 (1), 144.

terrorism (especially al Qaeda and its affiliates) "can be solved only through joint political action"[117] with international law as its basis for action.

The importance of international law to wartime conduct is vital to the protection of all parties within the legal practice of war. International law produces the expectations that exist for justice within warfare. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has detailed six principles that make up the Law of Armed Conflict and set international expectations for the execution of warfare: Distinction, Proportionality, Military Necessity, Limitation, Good Faith, and Humane Treatment and Non-Discrimination.[118]

The two areas of the Law of Armed Combat that scholars are most interested in when determining the legality of weaponized drone use in military engagement are the *jus in bello* (or justice in war) principles: proportionality and distinction.

First, proportionality seeks to determine the balance between the military advantage achieved by attacking a target and the amount of potential and/or realized collateral damage associated with it. The ICRC states: "When military objectives are attacked, civilians and civilian objects must be spared from incidental or collateral damage to the maximum extent possible."[119] This principle, however, should not be viewed as an empirical calculus of weighing numbers of civilian to combatant casualties.[120] Judge Advocate General for the Army, Chris Jenks, suggests that determining proportionality can be difficult because it is a "subjective determination the military commander makes…As a general rule, proportionality does not limit the amount or type

[117] Habermas, 7.

[118] International Committee of the Red Cross, *The Law of Armed Conflict: Basic Knowledge* (Geneva, Switzerland: ICRC, 2002), 12-14.

[119] Ibid., 12.

[120] This legal interpretive nuance may contribute to the difficulty encountered when attempting to interpret the above casualty numbers from Kilcullen & Exum, The New America Foundation, and analysis from the Amnesty International and *Living Under Drones* reports.

of force used; it considers the expected results."[121] Sarah Kreps and John Kaag further problematize this, arguing that in the case of the current conflict, proportionality is nearly limitless when the adversary is "terror."[122] Under this line of reasoning, any strike on a potential terrorist, anywhere, could be argued as legal making the battlefield "almost boundless."[123]

The difficulty with proportionality in the case of drone strikes articulated by Vogel, is the case-by-case nature of each strike. "Thus, the number of civilians killed, or of terrorists killed, is only the first part of the analysis—whether the target was of sufficient value and whether the strike offered a real military advantage and was conducted with all due caution and concern for civilians establishes the operation's proportionality."[124] Supporting the Obama Administration's line of reasoning, Brunstetter and Braun suggest that the use of UAVs may actually increase adherence to the principle of proportionality because of a UAVs precision-guided missiles. "The localized application of drone strikes limits the destruction because it targets the actual individual threat, thus minimizing the force necessary to remove it."[125]

This, however, leads to the second principle of *Jus in Bello* in international law, distinction. The Law of Armed Conflict requires that militaries "distinguish between combatants and civilians or the civilian population as such."[126] This principle applies to both people and property. Understanding the legality of drone strikes is difficult within the principle of distinction because the definition of those who are defined as combatants and noncombatants can be fluid. Under the

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[121] Chris Jenks, "Law From Above: Unmanned Aerial Systems, Use of Force, and the Law of Armed Conflict," *North Dakota Law Review*, Vol. 85, 667.

[122] Sarah Kreps and John Kaag, "The Use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in Contemporary Conflict: A Legal and Ethical Analysis," *Polity*, Vol. 44(2), 261.

[123] Ibid., 261.

[124] Ryan J. Vogel, "Drone Warfare and the Law of Armed Conflict," *Denver Journal of Law and International Policy*, Vol. 39(1), 127.

[125] Daniel Brunstetter and Megan Braun, "The Implications of Drones on the Just War Tradition," *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (2011), 348.

[126] ICRC, 12.

Jus in Bello expectation of distinction, international law is clear that noncombatants cannot be deliberately targeted in warfare. International law divides the people involved in armed conflict into two distinct categories: combatants and civilians.[127] Committed to protecting civilians present in conflict, international law permits "only members of a state's armed forces during armed conflict or persons taking a direct part in hostilities"[128] to be targeted. Because drone warfare is waged from a great distance and through a video camera, a person's role in the conflict may not be immediately clear to a UAV pilot who is surveying the scene from above. Making matters of distinction even more difficult is the fact that "suspected militant leaders wear civilian clothes. Even the sophisticated cameras of a drone cannot be certain that a suspect being targeted is not a civilian."[129] Though Vogel adds that this is not a problem unique to drone warfare, and that the ability to conduct careful, lengthy surveillance increases the potential for discrimination between combatants and noncombatants.[130]

While the Obama Administration reportedly uses a "kill list" of known, targeted affiliates with the Taliban and al-Qaeda to guide attacks,[131] an added complication affecting matters of distinction addressed in the literature is the Obama Administration's utilization of a target-selection procedure known as *signature strikes*. Such attacks are leveled against targeted individuals whose identities are unknown, but whose monitored activities "match a pre-identified 'signature' of behavior that the US links to militant activity, rather than targeting a specific

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[127] James DeShaw Rae, *Analyzing the Drone Debates: Targeted Killing, Remote Warfare, and Military Technology* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 63.

[128] Mary Ellen O'Connell, "Unlawful Killing with Combat Drones: A Study of Pakistan, 2004-2009," *Notre Dame Law School Legal Studies Research Paper*, No. 09-43, 21.

[129] Ibid., 23.

[130] Vogel, 123.

[131] See: Jo Becker and Scott Shane, "Secret 'Kill List' Proves a Test of Obama's Principles and Will," *The New York Times*, 29 May 2012, Internet; http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html?_r=1; Accessed 29 June 2016; and Mark Bowden, "The Killing Machines: How to Think About Drones," *The Atlantic*, September 2013, Internet; http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/09/the-killing-machines-how-to-think-about-drones/309434/; Accessed 29 June 2016.

person."[132] Klaidman reports that President Obama was initially uncomfortable with the practice of signature strikes because he worried that mistakes could be more easily be made, but conceded when the CIA convinced him that "you could take out a lot more bad guys when you targeted groups instead of individuals."[133] Unfortunately, distinction remains difficult when the intentions behind individuals' signature behaviors are unknown.[134] Becker and Shane sardonically report a joke within the State Department: "When the CIA see 'three guys doing jumping jacks,' the agency thinks it is a terrorist training camp."[135]

In his 2013 article, Kevin Heller tackles the question of the legality of signature strikes. While he does not contend that all signature strikes result in a violation of in international law, through his analysis he levels tough criticism on the Obama Administration's reliance on signature strikes: "The United States considers any military-age male in the area of known terrorist activity and any individual who 'consorts' with 'known militants' to be a lawful target—a standard that bears little resemblance to long-standing principles of IHL."[136] Heller does, however, provide a list of "adequate signatures" that he believes are necessary for signature strikes to align more closely with international law. He suggests that individuals that can be proven to be "planning attacks," "transporting vehicles," and/or "handling explosives" would be displaying adequate signatures of combat.[137] Additionally, known "Al-Qaeda compounds" and "Al-Qaeda training

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[132] Dayna Greenfield, "The Case Against Drone Strikes on People Who Only 'Act' Like Terrorists," *The Atlantic*, 19 August 2013, Internet; http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/08/the-case-against-drone-strikes-on-people-who-only-act-like-terrorists/278744/; Accessed October 18, 2015.

[133] Klaidman, 41.

[134] Joseph Pugliese recounts an instance in which two dozen individuals in a three-vehicle convoy, including "'shopkeepers going for supplies, students returning to school, people seeking medical treatment and families with children off to visit relatives'" were targeted by drone surveillance in the southern Daikundi province in Afghanistan because they were "displaying suspicious behavior" (197). The convoy was attacked by the surveilling drone and at least twenty-three were killed and twelve wounded, including women and children.

[135] Becker and Shane, "Secret 'Kill List' Proves a Test of Obama's Principles and Will."

[136] Kevin Jon Heller, "'One Hell of A Killing Machine': Signature Strikes and International Law," *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, Vol. 11, 105.

[137] Ibid., 94-96.

camps" that are consistently used for combative purposes are also well-within the bounds of international humanitarian law.[138] However, Heller concludes that the task of determining the legality of signature strikes is difficult due to the Obama Administration's lack of transparency on the issue. "Because the United States refuses to publicly identify the signatures on which drone strikes rely, it is extremely difficult to assess the legality of its signature strike program."[139]

The turn toward casualty averse and technologically-driven modes of Western warfare characterized by the utilization of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles suggests that contemporary wartime strategy is primarily concerned with precision[140] and speed,[141] coupled with an aversion to casualties that causes concern with International Law. Instead, the practice of risk transfer warfare becomes attractive because it protects the lives of American soldiers, through their spatial separation from the battlefield, at the expense of the ontological and physical security of noncombatants in the midst of the war.[142]

The Drone Literature: Ethics

The fourth area of drone literature discusses the ethical issues surrounding drone warfare. These sources utilize normative and philosophical approaches to analyze and explain the ethical ramifications that drone warfare might have for humanity. International relations ethicist, Mervyn Frost reminds us that ethical considerations and judgments are an innate product of interaction with the world. "In day-to-day world politics, a domain in which we all participate to some degree, we all hold and are guided by certain beliefs about what, from an ethical point of view, we think

[138] Ibid., 96-97.
[139] Ibid., 119.
[140] Martin Shaw, *The New Western Way of War* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005), 87-88.
[141] James der Derian, "The Space of International Relations: Simulation, Surveillance and Speed," *International Studies Quarterly* 34 (1990): 295-310.
[142] Shaw, 77-82.

ought to be done."[143] Drone ethicists seek not only to discuss what ought to be done during war, but also challenge the discipline to consider the overall impact of war, seeking to re-humanize noncombatants who are dehumanized by drone warfare. This literature can be divided into two groups: literature that addresses drone ethics from the perspective of Just War Theory and literature that addresses drone ethics from the perspective of biopolitics.

The first ethical considerations regarding drone warfare are made from the philosophic posture of Just War Theory.[144] Emerging from Augustine's writings in the fifth century CE, the premises of Just War Theory have guided ethical understanding regarding the justice of war waging.[145] Its viability in technologically changing war environments persists as "a moral framework with evolving normative categories that helps us talk about the ethics of war."[146] Theoretically, this permits Just War Theory an elastic quality that allows for its reinterpretation as it is applied to new scenarios and historical contexts. "So while it displays a potential for renovation and change, the theory also reflects a strong element of continuity…We can be relatively confident that when we tap into the language of just war, we are participating in a trans-historical dialogue with the great and the good of previous generations."[147] So, Just War theorists

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[143] Mervyn Frost, "A Turn not Taken: Ethics in IR at the Millennium," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24(5), 119. Emphasis mine.

[144] This is different from the legal approaches to drone warfare listed above because it considers the ethical nature of warfare from a philosophic position rather than from a structural position of law-following. Ethical considerations of drone warfare are interested in how drone strikes affect the nature of humanity and its intrinsic value, regardless of the legality of an action.

[145] In a 2015 article, Cian O'Driscoll argues that scholars should not begin with Augustine, but should acknowledge an understanding that the Just War tradition is "built upon classical sources" ("Rewriting the Just War Tradition: Just War in Classical Greek Political Thought and Practice," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 59(1), 1). While I agree that Cian is *technically* correct, I would argue that prior to Augustine there is no systematic, widely acknowledged and accepted understanding of the components of a just war, especially for *jus ad bellum*. Augustine produces these arguments in *City of God* and they are continually reproduced and built upon by scholars to date. However, I do agree that pushing Just War Theory outside of the Judeo-Christian theological tradition does grant Just War Theory more viability when applying it to non-Western cultures of war such as jihad.

[146] Brunstetter and Braun, 338.

[147] Ciran O'Driscoll, "Learning the Language of Just War Theory: The Value of Engagement," *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2007), 113.

who study drone warfare are attempting to root new, technologically advanced, tactics of warfare into pre-modern ethical categories. While some theorists find this line of ethical reasoning fruitful, others recognize the shortcomings of this theoretical posture.

For those who support the continued engagement with and application of Just War Theory, the principles associated with Just War Theory present a framework by which we might better understand and thus talk about war's ethical conduct.[148] These principles also translate from the philosophical to the pragmatic, suggesting a standard of justice that is expected before, during and after war and providing a vocabulary necessary to explain how occurrences of civilian casualties might be expected even in the course of a justly fought war.

For the purposes of drone warfare, theorists are concerned primarily with issues germane to *jus in bello*, or justice during war. As is discussed above, *jus in bello* has traditionally been divided into two major areas of consideration that are mirrored in international law: Proportionality and Discrimination. "Proportionality attempts to balance the harm inflicted with the anticipated military advantage of an action, while discrimination entails making all efforts to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants, and avoid harm to the latter while still fulfilling the military mission."[149] Walzer is clear about the importance of considering the plight of noncombatants who are caught up in the crossfire of war. He notes that noncombatants "do not forfeit their rights when their states wrongly go to war." Instead, they are to be considered "men and women with rights [who] cannot be used for some military purpose."[150]

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[148] These are commonly delineated as *Jus ad Bello* categories of Just Cause, Legitimate Authority, Right Intention, Likelihood of Success, Proportionality, and Last Resort and *Jus in Bello* categories of Proportionality and Discrimination. While *Jus post Bellum* is gaining recognition within JWT, it lacks a standardized set of principles (see Brian Orend, *The Morality of War* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2006) chapters six and seven).

[149] Brunstetter and Braun, 347.

[150] Michael Walzer, *Just and UnJust Wars*, 4th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 137.

Walzer argues that within the Just War paradigm "noncombatants cannot be attacked at any time."[151] Schulzke is clear to note, however, that occasionally civilian deaths do occur that are not intended by the soldier, but result from the structural concerns of uncertainty and the subjectivity of self-defense.[152] This is known as the principle of double effect,[153] which "gets its start from the realization that actions often have more than one consequence."[154] Under the principle of double effect, both the positive and negative consequences of a particular act of war, such as a drone strike, should be considered before that act is undertaken. For example, "Actions performed by a soldier can lead not only to the death of enemy soldiers but also to the death of by-standers, trauma to other enemy soldiers and by-standers, the destruction of buildings, damage to the environment, and so on."[155]

It is clear that civilians have been casualties of drone warfare and this creates a key point of emphasis among drone scholars who utilize Just War Theory. Himes notes that civilian casualties result from one of two human errors that have been attributed to drone warfare above: "The unobserved nearness of civilians to the locale of an airstrike, or ground troops calling for a strike when mistakenly thinking civilians were enemy combatants."[156] Bellamy, however, argues that more could be done to prevent double-effect casualties associated with drone warfare. He believes that the "reliance on air power [is] designed to lower risks to coalition forces by removing them from harm's way. The result is that we must accept higher noncombatant casualties."[157]

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[151] Ibid., 151.

[152] Marcus Schulzke, "The Unintended Consequences of War: Self-Defense and Violence of Against Civilians," *International Studies Perspectives* (January, 2016), 2-3.

[153] See: Uwe Steinhoff, *On the Ethics of War and Terrorism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), especially pages 34-36, for a detailed evaluation of ethics and "double effect."

[154] Guy Van Damme and Nicholas Fotion, "Proportionality," *Moral Constraints on War*, ed. Bruno Coppieters and Nicholas Fotion (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 137.

[155] Ibid., 137.

[156] Kenneth R. Himes, *Drones and the Ethics of Targeted Killing* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 137.

[157] Alex Bellamy, "Is the War on Terror Just?" *International Relations* Vol. 19(3), 292.

While these explanations may not be entirely palatable, they do provide a framework whereby we might understand the tragedy of war's casualties.

Scholars who critique application of Just War Theory to the Global War on Terror do so because they have difficulty reconciling a counter-insurgency, fought with asymmetric weaponry with the Just War tradition. Of significant concern is the nature of the adversary. Can a just war be fought against terrorists?

Generally, noncombatants are the focus of ethical debates regarding drone warfare. However, Just War Theory is designed to protect the adversary from injustice as well. Walzer explains: "Even the pawns of war have rights and obligations."[158] Thus, as a result of its inherent asymmetry, drone warfare strains the premises and application of just war theory. Suzy Killmister argues that this forces targeted adversaries into a situation "in which the targeted state has all moral options for retaliation closed off, forcing it to either surrender or transgress civilian immunity."[159] This would make a *just* war difficult to wage from the perspective of both the perpetrator and the adversary.

Are combatants who are defined as terrorists the sort of "pawns of war" discussed by Walzer? Kenneth Himes pointedly argues that terrorists are not legal combatants and that principles of Just War Theory may not be applicable to terrorist targets at all because they do not "observe the crucial distinction between civilian and combatant targets. For the terrorist, the death of noncombatants is not unwanted 'collateral damage,' for civilian deaths are the intended aim of a terrorist attack. Thus, terrorists may be combatants, but they are illegal combatants."[160] Bellamy, however, suggests that it is unfair to lump all Western-defined terrorist organizations into a single

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[158] Walzer, 40.

[159] Suzy Killmister, "Remote Weaponry: the Ethical Implications," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* Vol. 25(2), 122.

[160] Himes, 124.

category, much less a category that defines them as unjust. This is primarily because "the term is most often used as a political label to de-legitimize one's opponents."[161] Thus, Bellamy suggests that terrorist organizations must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in order to determine whether or not they fit under the broader umbrella of enemy combatant.[162] Neta Crawford argues that in order for terrorists to be considered combatants in a war, conceptions of war must be changed in order for terrorism to be considered "war." This makes it difficult for counterterrorism efforts to fit within the rubric of Just War Theory.[163]

Little in this debate has been satisfyingly settled. Killmister suggests that perhaps just war theory has become a "relic of another age, ill-suited to the 21st century."[164] But Bellamy counters this with an apology for Just War Theory: "The Just War tradition provides a useful way of assessing the morality of the war against terror."[165] In the end, difficulty in employing Just War Theory should be expected, according to Crawford, because "ethical traditions are not checklists or simple codes of conduct—they are tools for evaluating options and assessing behavior. As such, the questions that an ethical tradition raises may not have clear and simple answers."[166]

The second approach to drone warfare taken by international relations ethicists is a reliance on postmodern, biopolitical philosophies to bring attention to the humanization of the targets of drone warfare who have been dehumanized by war and seek to evoke "equal concern for bodies of flesh and bodies of steel."[167] Thus, this literature is interested in attributing value to individuals believed to have had value stripped from them as a result of warfare. This is uniquely the case with

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[161] Bellamy, 283.
[162] Ibid., 285.
[163] Neta Crawford, "Just War Theory and the US Counterterror War," *Perspectives on Politics* Vol. 1(1), 16.
[164] Killmister, 131.
[165] Bellamy, 291.
[166] Crawford, "Just War Theory and the US Counterterror War," 21.
[167] Caroline Holmqvist, "Undoing War: War Ontologies and the Materiality of Drone Warfare," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Vol. 41(3), 535.

drone warfare as it is perceived to digitize people, demoting them to a two-dimensional figure on a screen.

Much of this literature is dependent on the philosophies of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Georgio Agamben. These theorists seek to understand the value of humanity as an exchange between those with, and those without, power. Butler notes that life is a mutually constitutive relationship between at least two people. Because one has the freedom to accept or reject one's life-status, this relationality is precarious. "Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other…Reciprocally, it implies being impinged upon by the exposure and dependency of others."[168] In this way, the life of one person is solely dependent upon recognition by the other. When life is acknowledged, it is recognized as something valuable and, thus, grievable, and not merely biologically functioning. "Without grievability, there is no life, or, rather, there is something living that is other than life."[169]

This precarious nature of acknowledged life is also spoken about by philosopher Giorgio Agamben in his treatise *Homo Sacer*.[170] In order to understand the classical roots of biopolitics, Agamben reaches back to the Greek, Aristotelian tradition, discussing life as divided in *bios* or political life, and *zoe* or bare life.[171] He notes that the relationship between political and bare life is fundamental to understanding political, thus power-based, relationships: "In the 'politicization' of bare life—the metaphysical task *par excellence*—the humanity of living man is decided."[172]

While we can see that the mutually constitutive relationship of one to another functions in social relationships, and that there is classical conflict between political and bare life. How, then,

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[168] Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*, 14.
[169] Ibid., 15.
[170] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).
[171] Ibid., 9.
[172] Ibid., 8.

can we interpret this within the political realm? Michel Foucault, in his lecture series *The Birth of Biopolitics,* suggests that in liberal political systems the definition of life becomes the mandate of the state.[173] This is an argument built upon previous assertions in *Society Must Be Defended*, "In terms of his relationship with the sovereign," Foucault says, "the subject is, by rights, neither dead nor alive…It is thanks to the sovereign that the subject has the right to be alive or, possibly, the right to be dead."[174] This is an especially helpful definition when considering the role of the state as the war-wager. It is the state that orchestrates, funds, develops, and necessitates war. And, in so doing, the state serves a role in redefining which lives will be acknowledged as valuable and those that won't.

This literature deals with two major issues in biopolitics as it relates to drone warfare: governmentality, or the power that states wield over people, and the humanization of those targeted by drone warfare.

First, the biopolitical drone literature is interested in the power that the state or, to use Foucault's terminology, the sovereign, uses when governing in times of war. Foucault explains: "The sovereign has a right of life and death." This "means that he can, basically, either have people put to death or let them live."[175] As has been detailed, the utilization of drone warfare is a tactic that utilizes stealthy surveillance and unannounced strikes to target adversaries. Thus, the drone represents the ever present political opportunity to preserve or take life. Lauren Wilcox acknowledges that this positions the drone's watchful eye as a panopticon with a "global reach."[176] This also changes the nature of warfare from conventional battle lines to that of a surveillance-

[173] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France 1978-1979* (New York: Picador, 2008), 22.

[174] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France* (New York: Picador, 2003), 240.

[175] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 240.

[176] Wilcox, 154.

based manhunt.[177] This represents an immense amount of governmental power as the "technologies of precision warfare produce potentially every human in the world as watchable, and killable."[178]

These scholars argue that the presence of drones extends that battlefield beyond its traditional boundaries. Joseph Pugliese observes that drones, as a "prosthetics of US empire," extends "the imperial power of the state through prosthetic weaponry predicated on violent asymmetries of power."[179] This view depicts drones as mechanized appendages of the state's surveillance, projecting state power through a robotic visage.

Second, the biopolitical drone literature undertakes a project to humanize the targets of drone warfare. Caroline Holmqvist argues that "an ontological assumption about what it means to be human" is essential for any "ethics" to take place.[180] Interestingly, the literature is interested in general humanization, taking into consideration the combatant as well as the noncombatant. Individuals captured by the drones' cameras and interpreted on screens continents away are referred to in a number of dehumanized ways: squirters,[181] bug splats,[182] lumps.[183] Pugliese focuses his attention on the term "lump," stating that it is "at once human, animal, vegetable and mineral. In its collapsing and obliteration of difference it situates the resultant (human) object-things under the sign of death: lumps are what remain after a living field has been incinerated by Hellfire missiles."[184] This literature is dedicated to stepping beyond these simplistic, dehumanizing terms.

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[177] Chamayou, 33-35.
[178] Wilcox, 156.
[179] Pugliese, 185.
[180] Holmqvist, 548.
[181] Mayer, "The Predator War"
[182] Michael Hastings, "The Drone Wars," *Rolling Stone*, No. 1155.
[183] Pugliese, 198.
[184] Ibid., 198.

Unexpectedly, the biopolitical drone literature is deliberately interested in the humanization of combatants targeted by drone warfare. The moment that the combatant becomes identified as a surveillable target by a drone is the moment that the value of the target's life shifts, using Agamben's terminology, from *bios* life to *zoe* life.[185] For the UAV pilot, the target emerges from anonymity to known, but only as a potential terrorist. Zulaika criticizes this process, stating that the targeting of humans by drones, especially when the target is informed by "pattern of life" or "signature" behaviors, is often characterized by a "lack of basic knowledge regarding the languages or cultures of the peoples they are engaged with, let alone disinterest in their political goals or subjective motivation."[186] Despite the intent of the subject, this is the moment of dehumanization through digitalization. The target's life is precarious, because it can be taken at any moment by the unseen UAV operator. It is valuable to the pilot as long as it serves the pilot's purposes of data collection. Thus, the target's life is no longer grievable and "without grievability, there is no life, or, rather, there is something living that is other than life."[187]

Through its surveillance, the target's life becomes *bare* through digitalization. By watching the target's most intimate and vulnerable moments, the operator may connect emotionally with their target in the same way an audience connects to a character in a film. When this happens, the target, itself, is still not grievable, since the pilot continues to see them as something living, but not alive; a target awaiting execution. Wilcox explains that this process includes "the production of certain bodies as killable yet ungrievable, whose guilt or innocence is irrelevant."[188] The maintenance of the subject's life is relegated to the interpretation of the target as it is observed on

[185] Agamben, 9-10.
[186] Joseba Zulaika, "Drones, Witches and other Flying Objects: The Force of Fantasy in US Counterterrorism," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* Vol. 5(1), 54.
[187] Butler, *Frames of War*, 15.
[188] Wilcox, 162.

a digital feed. Chamayou states that targets of drone warfare "are presumed guilty until they are proven innocent—which, can only be done posthumously."[189]

More expectedly, the biopolitical drone literature is interested in elucidating the humanity of the noncombatants targeted by drone warfare. The noncombatant victims of drone warfare are rhetorically brushed away as "collateral damage." Those who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, or were a part of a calculus that determined that the civilian's life was worth forfeit when considering the value of the combatant target. The goal of the biopolitical ethicist, according to Thomas Gregory, is to highlight "the lived experiences of those affected by drones have been pushed to the margins of the debate or excluded altogether, limiting the discursive space that is available to talk about the pain and suffering that is caused."[190] Thus, it is through discourse that humanization occurs and through which a "target" of a drone strike can become a survivor, a student, a parent. Holmqvist explains that the impact of war occurs on a number of levels for the noncombatant. "For instance, the bombardment of a town or village is never simply the physical destruction inflicted: the impact on human lives, on individual psyches, thoughts, and emotions, on hopes for the future on the part of those whose homes or livelihoods have been destroyed."[191] While "doing ethics" does little to alleviate the pain of suffering humans, it does create an intellectual and discursive space whereby we might trouble the status quo and work toward making the unseen viewed and considered.

International Relations, Discourse, and Framing

While the drone literature focuses on a number of intriguing and compelling areas of research, missing from this conversation is a discussion about the role that public discourses play

[189] Chamayou, 146.
[190] Thomas Gregory, "Drones, Targeted Killings, and the Limitations of International Law" *International Political Sociology* Vol.9, 206.
[191] Holmqvist, 537.

in impacting public opinion about drone warfare and maintaining or changing those held beliefs. This project is an effort to fill that gap in the existing literature. The impact of discourses, both dominant and subversive, upon public beliefs is significant and this project serves as an inaugural examination of the failure of the subversive discourse to transform the public's views of drone warfare.

A concentration on the discourses that shape public debate in the United States aligns with International Relations' constructivist theoretical approach and provides an opportunity to identify the primary themes that compose the discourse. This project not only contributes to the drone literature, but also continues an interest in the power of discourses to construct public understanding of reality through speech, rhetoric, and art in IR's constructivist literature.

International Relations Theory and Discourse

Spoken, written, and visualized ideas are the ways by which meaning is conveyed from the idea's sender to the recipient. Epstein defines a discourse as a "cohesive ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations about a specific object."[192] Hodges provides additional insight into what a discourse *does*. He notes that the practice of "discourse infuses events with meaning, establishes widespread social understandings, and constitutes social reality."[193] Discourses become powerful when they make a difference.[194] The more persuasive they are, the more entrenched they become in society, become a power structure that isn't noticed. Fairclough refers to this as "a hidden effect of power."[195]

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[192] Charlotte Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008), 2.

[193] Adam Hodges, *The "War on Terror" Narrative: Discourse and Intertextuality in the Construction and Contestation of Sociopolitical Reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5.

[194] Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations*, 2.

[195] Fairclough, 55.

One of the core goals of the constructivist approach to International Relations seeks to understand how societal norms are established and sustained, while simultaneously establishing and sustaining the identities of individuals and collectives. Wendt explains that "particular identities vary, but each identity is an inherently social definition of the actor grounded in the theories which actors collectively hold about themselves and one another and that constitute the structure of the social world."[196] Thus, when identity formation and sustenance is a key theoretical consideration, understanding the creation of relational meaning becomes important. Klotz characterizes shared meanings and norms as intersubjective. "Particular meanings become stable over time, creating social orders that constructivists call structures or institutions. Rules and norms set expectations about how the world works, what types of behavior are legitimate, and which interests or identities are possible."[197]

The formation of the social and political identities of individuals and states is important because it explains the purpose behind the social processes that humans continuously engage in in a constructed world. Identities are not to be regarded as static realities, rather, they are "continuously restated, negotiated, and reshaped"[198] in relationship to and with society. Aristotle famously categorized humans as political animals and linked their human identity to their engagement with and in the Greek *polis*. "Anyone who cannot form a community with others, or who does not need to because he is self-sufficient, is no part of a city-state—he is either a beast or a god."[199] Thus, even from the beginnings of political philosophy, the importance of evaluating and understanding the relationship of an individual's identification within society (polis

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[196] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* Vol. 46, No. 2, 398.

[197] Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch, *Strategies for Research in Constructivist International Relations* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 8.

[198] Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (New York: Routledge, 2006), xvi.

[199] Aristotle, *Politics*, transl. C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998), 5.

participant, beast, or god) and society's constitutive reliance on the individual is apparent. Understanding of identity is especially important for this project because our ethical responses to the casualties of drone strikes are shaped by their identification as terrorist, combatant, target, noncombatant, grandmother, child.

International relationships, thus, are fundamentally driven by meaning-laden communication or speech acts. Utterances, like presidential speeches, are performative actions, wrought with meaning, that evoke response, after interpretation, from the receiver of the speech.[200] Risse notes the "triviality" of this assertion, noting that "communicative behavior is all-pervasive in international relations as in any other social setting."[201] But, he continues, there is a difference between instrumental "cheap talk" and deliberative argumentation or "rhetorical action."[202] The difference is rooted in the purposes underpinning the communication. Epstein suggests that one of the purposes of communication, in alignment with constructivism, is to establish and re-produce identity. "This 'talking' is central both to what [states] do and who they are—to the dynamics of identity. States, like individuals, position themselves in relation to other states by adopting certain discourses and not others."[203] This contributes to the state's self-understanding of what actions and beliefs are acceptable and consistent with values and policies held and those that aren't.[204]

Because the constructivist agenda is interested in the ways that human interactions produce ideas and contribute to the constitution of ideas, power structures, and norms, it should not be surprising that most of the discursive analysis in the International Relations literature has emerged

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[200] J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 8-9.

[201] Thomas Risse, "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics," *International Organization*, Vol. 54(1), 8.

[202] Ibid., 8.

[203] Charlotte Epstein, "Who Speaks? Discourse, the Subject and the Study of Identity in International Relations" *European Journal of International Relations*, 17(2), 341.

[204] Maja Zehfuss, "Constructivism and Identity: A Dangerous Liaison," *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 7, 317-319. See also: David Campbell, *Writing Security*; Xavier Guillaume, *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

from the constructivist camp. In fact, Charlotte Epstein contends that a focus on discourse and language within constructivist IR is "necessary to deepening the understanding of the constructed-ness of IR's world" that goes beyond empirical studies.[205]

Going back to the Aristotelian concept of *homo politicus,* Neta Crawford looks at discourse as an instrumental tool within international politics that is important because it is the process through which citizens and leaders are persuaded to act in particular ways. She notes that "the method of persuasion, political argumentation to promote belief and behavior change" is common in international politics.[206]

Words are powerful, and through their skillful utilization, the practice of discourse is a process through which norms and identities can be established, challenged, and altered. This occurs on the international level both through formal discourse such as diplomatic negotiation and through less formal public discourse such as elite speeches. Elite-level discourses in the international sphere "influence the interests, and thus policies, of targeted nation-states through 'reflexive discourse,'" which requires states to consider how public statements and actions affect their international appearances and reputations.[207]

Additionally, elite-level discourses allow for the creation and situation of security crises within certain classifications, changing global perception of the crisis. Both Lene Hansen and Eric Heinze show how the discursive classification of a security event as "genocide" evoked a change in how the international community regarded the crisis. Evaluating the Bosnian War, Hansen's discourse analysis concludes that "the Western debate on Bosnia showed that adopting a

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[205] Charlotte Epstein, "Constructivism or the Eternal Return of Universals in International Relations. Why Returning to Language is Vital to Prolonging the Owl's Flight," *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 19(3), 502.

[206] Neta C. Crawford, "*Homo Politicus* and Argument (Nearly) All the Way Down: Persuasion in Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* Vol. 7(1), 104.

[207] Brent J. Steele, "Making Words Matter: The Asian Tsunami, Darfur, and 'Reflexive Discourse' in International Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* (2007), 902.

representation of 'genocide was a powerful discursive move which radically changed the construction of ethical, spatial, and temporal identities within the Balkan discourse."[208] Heinze's study looks at how the Bush Administration was able to delineate the mid-2000s conflict in Darfur as "genocide," even if the United States had no intention of intervening in the conflict. The utilization of this term sought to generate action from the international community. "The word 'genocide'…is more inflammatory, more reproachful, and entails at a least a moral (if not legal) obligation to stop such acts."[209] Thus, we see how discourse can impact the established norms, identities, and political actions within the international community.

Discourse at the international level also provides an intentional check upon the actions of political agents and allows for deliberation regarding actions and policies and carves out room for critical evaluation of those actions and policies. As Risse explains, "the existence of a public sphere ensures that actors have to regularly and routinely explain and justify their behavior."[210] For International Relations scholars who utilize a Habermasian approach to discourse (known as discourse ethics), it is understood that discourse is the primary mode of social transformation. Andrew Linklater produces a compelling case for the use of Habermasian discourse ethics within International Relations. Acknowledging the potential for an international dialogical community, he concedes that powerful states engaging in dialogue with less powerful states must be cognizant and tolerant of cultural and moral differences. He asserts, however, that "only through dialogue with other cultures can progress be made in separating merely local truth from those with wider acclaim."[211] He goes on to argue that Habermas' project is ultimately one that provides

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[208] Hansen, 111-112.

[209] Eric A. Heinze, "The Rhetoric of Genocide in U.S. Foreign Policy: Rwanda and Darfur Compared," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 122(3), 383.

[210] Risse, 21.

[211] Andrew Linklater, *The Transforming of Political Community* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 79.

emancipation for those engaged in discourse.[212] Linklater goes on to defend the use of Habermas in International Relations literature stating that, "it opposes totalizing projects that ride roughshod over cultural differences and expose individuals and groups to forms subjection and humiliation."[213]

The most dominant voices in international politics, as is illustrated in the above examples, are the political elite on behalf of their respective states. This, however, provides an incomplete picture of the discourse, leaving out the subaltern voices. Attempts to bring these voices to the forefront are the International Relations feminist theorists. Critiquing the Habermasian approaches to ethical discourse, Fiona Robison argues that the equity proposed by Habermas strips away the agency of the less powerful, forcing them into a position of waiting for the powerful to include them at the table. Robinson explains that in order for the subaltern to be fully engaged in dialogical processes, "dialogue must be supplemented by prior or concurrent attention to the structuring and composition of institutions, and the ways in which gender essentialisms and the public-private dichotomy are constitutive elements of the liberal social and political order."[214] Kimberly Hutchings contends that a key problem with structural approaches to discourse, like Habermas,' is that one must presuppose the superiority of a liberal world order, which Hutchings rejects as being neocolonial and inherently exclusionary.[215] A general rejection by the constructivist International Relations literature of the Habermas' discourse ethics has led the discipline towards post-modern discursive approaches informed by Derrida and Foucault.[216]

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[212] Ibid., 90.

[213] Andrew Linklater, "Dialogic Politics and the Civilizing Process," *Review of International Studies* Vol. 31, No. 1, 144.

[214] Fiona Robinson, 859.

[215] Kimberly Hutchings, "Speaking and Hearing: Habermasian Discourse Ethics, Feminism, and IR," *Review of International Studies* Vol. 31 (1), 162.

[216] See: Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations*; Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*; Brent J. Steele, *Defacing Power: The Aesthetics of Insecurity in Global Politics* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2010).

The relevance of a discursive approach to International Relations theory seems apparent. Even the (essentialized) realist International Relations theorist who argues that it is exclusively the acquisition and execution of material power that establishes activity within the international system,[217] might find some promise in discursive theoretical traditions as the actions and words that states undertake are symbolic of power-laden discourse. Considering, for example, the quintessentially realist Melian dialogue transcribed by Thucydides,[218] it is apparent that Athenian power ultimately triumphed over Melian desire for neutrality.[219] The anecdote itself is encased in discourse, action, and reaction.[220]

Discourse and the Global War on Terror

Underpinning the discourse surrounding drone warfare is a discourse that articulates the political and security goals of the Global War on Terror (GWOT). This discourse was born out the crisis of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and its principles, despite the Obama Administration's choice not to use the term "Global War on Terror," have transcend the Bush and Obama Administrations. Fairclough and Fairclough suggest that the creation of a dominant discourse, or meta-narrative, in a time of crisis provides the public with "a *reason* for favoring or accepting certain lines of action and policies rather than others."[221] Holland argues that President Bush was able to effectively frame the terrorist attacks as a crisis that required a holistic, national

[217] For example, E.H. Carr (*The Twenty Years' Crisis* (New York: Palgrave 1981/2001)) states, concerning material coercion, "Economic power is impotent if the military weapon is not held in readiness to support it. Power is indivisible; and the military and economic weapons are merely different instruments of power" (109).

[218] For an intriguing, alternative interpretation of Thucydides identifying the importance of speech acts to the Athenian narrative, see Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the Constructivist," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 3: 547-560.

[219] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, transl. Martin Hammond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 301-307.

[220] Lebow, 554-557.

[221] Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 4.

response. This infused "the events with meaning and [articulated] the solution to the underlying morbid condition they represented."[222]

Shortly after September 11, philosopher Jacques Derrida explained his impression of the "morbid condition" (as articulated by Holland) produced through the terrorist attack: "A weapon wounds and leaves forever open an unconscious scar."[223] It is the scar of 9/11 and the continued public insecurity prompted by the threat of terrorism that propels the GWOT discourse. "Out of the tragedy of 9/11 arose the rhetoric of 'the war on terror'…The 'war on terror' discourse constrains and shapes public discussion and debate within the US and around the world…[as] its language" is used to "explain, react to, justify or understand a broad range of political, economic and social phenomena."[224] The American public was especially receptive to this sort of organizing discourse after 9/11 because it required a schema through which to process the insecurity prompted by the terrorist attack.[225] As Holland explains, "US security culture was dominated by an illusion of invulnerability that has flourished during the 'interwar years' following the Cold War."[226] On 9-11 this illusion was shattered and the GWOT discourse naturally took its place.

The texts and speeches composing the GWOT discourse are voluminous and discussing them in detail is beyond the scope of this project,[227] but studies by Richard Jackson, Lee Jarvis, and Adam Hodges utilize critical discourse analysis to isolate the major trends and components

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[222] Holland, 276.

[223] Borradori, 97.

[224] Adam Hodges and Chad Nilep, "Introduction: Discourse, War and Terrorism," *Discourse, War and Terrorism* eds. Adam Hodges and Chad Nilep (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), 3.

[225] Hank Johnston, "A Methodology for Frame Analysis: From Discourse to Cognitive Schemata," *Social Movements and Culture*, eds. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 217.

[226] Holland, 281.

[227] Jarvis' analysis of the discourse required him to address more than "600 texts produced by key representatives of the Bush administration in relation to this unfolding conflict" (*Times of Terror: Discourse, Temporality and the War on Terror* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 19).

present in the GWOT discourse. Jackson finds that the meta-GWOT-discourse and its sub-discourses utilize common discursive practices, which include:

> The creation of a sense of exceptional grievance and victim-hood; the demonization and dehumanization of an enemy 'other'; the manufacture of a catastrophic threat and danger which demands immediate and forceful action; and the justification and legitimization of pre-emptive (or preventative) counter-violence.[228]

These ideas become "normalized" as an American cultural narrative as they are repeated and reproduced by politicians and the media.[229] Importantly, this discourse "serves as the truth in the sense that it produces real effects in the world."[230] While not addressed in these studies, one of the "real effects" experienced as a result of this discourse and the continuance of boundary-less targeting of terrorists is a tactical reliance on drone warfare.

Framing, Social Mobilization, and Discourse

Discourses produce a vocabulary through which societies can make sense of cultural narratives. These discourses only have power to transform society, affecting public opinion and thought if they are organized in a persuasive fashion that will prompt mobilization.[231] Within the sociological literature, these organizational mechanisms are called *frames*. Sociologist Erving Goffman explains that "social frameworks…provide background understanding for events that incorporate the will, aim, and controlled effort of…the human being."[232] Building off of Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (also referred to as "frame theory"), Snow, et. al. refine this definition,

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[228] Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2005), 181.

[229] Hodges, *The "War on Terror" Narrative*, 4.

[230] Ibid., 5.

[231] Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, "Introduction: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Framing Processes—Toward a Synthetic, Comparative Perspective on Social Movements," *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, eds. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 5.

[232] Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1974), 22.

explaining that frames "function to organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective."[233]

The process of frame creation is referred to by Snow, et, al. as "frame alignment." The authors note that the process of frame alignment is "the linkage of individual and [Social Movement Organizations] interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary."[234] Benford and Snow note that the process of frame creation is discursive and occurs in two steps: frame articulation and frame amplification. They explain that frame articulation "involves the connection and alignment of events and experiences that they hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion."[235] The creation of the dominant and subversive discourses surrounding drone warfare, and germane to this project, is discussed in Chapter Two.

The emergence of collective action frames are a social construction. Melucci describes this process stating that frames "are produced by internal negotiations and conflicts: individuals and groups within a movement construct them."[236] Finnemore and Sikkink, writing from the constructivist theoretical lens, argue that this is similar to the process of norm creation within the international system.[237] Aligning with Melucci's explanation of the creation of frames, in the IR

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[233] David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* Vol. 51(4), 464.

[234] Ibid., 464.

[235] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," 623.

[236] Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 355.

[237] Unintentionally, through Finnemore and Sikkink, International Relations literature makes a robust link between the differentiated concepts of ideological construction and framing, which is a critique leveled by Pamela Oliver and Hank Johnston concerning sociology's use of frame theory. Addressing the additional critique of conceptually collapsing "frame" and "ideology," it seems to be understood within constructivist IR theory that norms (comparable to frames) are discursively constructed. Frames are a strategy through which ideology can be conveyed and perpetuated (Pamela Oliver and Hank Johnston, "What a Good Idea! Ideologies and Frames in Social Movement Research," *Mobilization: An International Journal* Vol. 4(1), 38).

literature, "norms…constitute a community's shared understandings and intentions."[238] This is accomplished through the ideational efforts of "norm entrepreneurs" who "are critical for norm emergence because they call attention to issues or even 'create' issues by using language that names, interprets, and dramatizes them."[239] It is through the process of framing that discontent groups can articulate grievances in a systematic way and can use the created frames to convey those grievances to others, attempting to mobilize a response to their concerns.[240] Though, McCarthy notes, that the selection of frames and their strategic presentation is extremely important for the success of the mobilizing structure: "Activists must successfully frame them as usable and appropriate to the social change tasks to which they will be put."[241] This is an important consideration when analyzing the success or failure of a discursive movement.

The term "framing" is used with little formal interaction with the sociological literature in the International Relations literature. There is, however, continuity between the two disciplines' use of the term and precedence for utilizing "framing" in constructivist, discursive IR analysis beyond Finnemore and Sikkink's 1998 article. In the previous IR discourse literature cited, we see a number of examples in which framing is utilizes in order to explain the political goals of the discourse's formation. For example, Holland and Abulot explain elite discourse as taking on a frame of "crisis" or "security" (respectively) in order for the rhetorical and policy goals to be

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[238] Rodger A. Payne, "Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction," *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 7(1), 38.

[239] Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* Vol. 52(4), 897.

[240] Snow, et.al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 465.

[241] John D. McCarthy, "Constraints and Opportunities in Adopting, Adapting, and Inventing," *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, eds. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 149.

realized. Gregory's 2015 article discusses the role that power plays in frames' success, especially in cases of frame competition.[242]

[242] Ignoring the that power places in the framing literature (at least in Communication Studies' utilization of frame theory) is detailed in Carragee and Roefs' 2004 article (Kevin M. Carragee and Wim Roefs, "The Neglect of Power in Recent Framing Research," *Journal of Communication* Vol. 52(2): 214-233). This may be an additional area in which the International Relations literature and the integration of discursive analysis and framing theory can respond to some of the criticisms leveled against applications of frame theory.

Chapter Three: *Creating Drone Discourses: Background and Context*

Discourses, both dominant and subversive, do not emerge *ex nihilo*. They are the product of a historical context and are socially constructed. Ruggie refers to the creation of social narratives as being part of a holistic "human project"[243] that consists of "civilizational constructs, cultural factors, state identities" and come together to "shape states' interests."[244] It is through the conglomeration of concepts, ideas, social expectations, and events that state's interests are articulated to create discourse. Consideration of the origins and social constructs that compose the discourse allows for investigation of the processes impacting the creation of particular discourses.[245]

This chapter seeks to trace the suppositions that underpin the discourses surrounding the use of weaponized drones by the United States, especially in its counterterrorism missions. First, it investigates the creation of the dominant or US government-perpetuated discourse, which I suggest is propelled by a post-Vietnam Revolution in Military Affairs and is informed by an emphasis placed on casualty aversion in conflict. Second, this chapter investigates the origins of the subversive narrative, which attempts to expose the dominant narrative's shortcomings. I suggest that the subversive narrative emerges from the streets of Pakistan's cities in the form of protest and given notoriety in the United States through online activism and NGO reports. Exploring the historic and contextual underpinnings of these discourses will assist in

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[243] John Gerald Ruggie, *Construction of the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalism* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 95.

[244] John Gerald Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together?" *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (Autumn 1998), 867.

[245] George and Bennett (*Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social* Sciences (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005) note that the process tracing is beneficial because it "forces the investigator to take equifinality into account, that is, to consider the alternative paths through which the outcome could have occurred" (207).

understanding the interactions of these discourses and the impact that they have in the public sphere.

Precision and Casualty Averse Warfare: Establishing the Dominant Discourse

> [We must] challenge the status quo as we design a new architecture for the defense of America…On land, our heavy forces will be lighter, our light forces will be more lethal. All will be easier to deploy and to sustain. In the air, we will be able to strike across the world with pinpoint accuracy, using both aircraft and unmanned systems. On the oceans we will connect information and weapons in new ways, maximizing our ability to project power over land. In space, we'll protect our network of satellites essential to the flow of our commerce and the defense of our comment interests.
>
> President George W. Bush
> February 13, 2001[246]

American military engagement in the Post-Cold War world has taken on a markedly different tone. Lacking a monolithic adversary,[247] American forces engage in smaller-scale, shorter-term missions dominated by the use of strategic air-based strikes.[248] This transition from modern, total warfare (evidenced in World Wars I and II) to a limited-engagement, precision and speed-focused model of warfare, has been widely regarded as a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA).[249] Latham acknowledges that this RMA "has been 'triggered' by technological changes" and is characterized by "a transformation of most (if not all) dimensions of the mode of warfare."[250]

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[246] George W. Bush, "Remarks by the President to the Troops and Personnel," *The White House: President George W. Bush*, 13 February 2001, accessed 15 July 2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/20010213-1.html.

[247] *The Economist* comments that "Defense-industry folk sometimes get nostalgic about the cold war…[they miss] the sheer simplicity of life in those days. There was a clearly defined enemy" ("Survey: Military Revolutions," *The Economist*, 20 July, 2002, 7).

[248] See Stephen Brudiansky, *Air Power* (New York: Viking, 2004), chapter 14; Sebastian Cox and Peter Gray, *Air Power History: Turning Points from Kitty Hawk to Kosovo* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2002), Parts III and IV; John Andreas Olsen, *A History of Air Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2010), Part III.

[249] Shimko notes that it is difficult to determine the beginning/end of this RMA because it is "the first to be so extensively analyzed as it is supposedly unfolding" (Keith L. Shimko, *The Iraq Wars and America's Military Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 21).

[250] Andrew Latham, "Re-imagining Warfare: The 'Revolution in Military Affairs," *Contemporary Security and Strategy*, ed. Craig A. Snyder (New York: Routledge, 1999), 211-212.

Prior to 9/11 and the Global War on Terror, Latham sagely suggested that threat had been redefined in the Western world. Instead of "the Soviet Other" providing the primary security threat, it is now characterized "by a range of actually or potentially hostile Third World states."[251] The change in security threat not only signals a change in the type of war to be prepared for and waged, but also indicates a change in adversary from a country's military to individual terrorists, terrorist cells, and nongovernmental actors.

Revolutions in Military Affairs are certainly not a new or unique development to the contemporary military world. Volumes by Parker,[252] Keegan,[253] and Boot[254] chronicle the emergence of technological innovations that so significantly altered the battlefield that they required radical changes in military strategy and training. Focused on the mechanization of the battlefield, Martin van Creveld suggests that the trajectory of the most recent RMA finds its roots in the ashes of World War II. "The most significant post-1945 technological developments took place in the field of electronics and space."[255] The consequent arms races of the Cold War produced expensive, virtually unusable stockpiles of nuclear weapons.[256] As new challenges and conflicts developed, "big bomb" strategies were no longer viable. New technologies, applications of technological developments, and warfare strategies integrating precision were desirable.

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[251] Ibid., 222.

[252] Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[253] John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

[254] Max Boot, *War Made New: Weapons, Warriors, and the Making of the Modern World* (Ne w York: Gotham Books, 2007).

[255] Martin van Creveld, "Strategic View: World War II's Stifling Paradigm," *The Quarterly Journal of Military History*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Spring 2001), 51.

[256] Whether or not the proliferation of nuclear weapons create a more or less stable world is the subject of Sagan and Waltz's book, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, but both scholar agree that the use of nuclear weaponry in warfare would be so horrible that containment and monitoring regimes to control these weapons are more likely than the utilization of these weapons (Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*, (New York: Norton, 2003).

In his study, *War Made New*, Max Boot is clear that changes on the battlefield are reflective of factors inclusive of and beyond the military (social, economic, political, etc.). He notes that at a fundamental level the focus of RMA analysis should rest on "the soldier struggling to kill or avoid being killed, and [on] his commander struggling to master the remorseless logic of carnage."[257] The deliberate inclusion of the human into the RMA equation is also endorsed by military historian, Adrian Lewis. Critiquing the wholesale acceptance of a defense development and deployment strategy characterized as technology-first, Lewis states: "Technology, operational doctrine, and new adaptive organization were to come together in ways that created synergies that made possible the RMA. The problem with this thinking was that it left out the human beings."[258]

At the heart of this RMA has been the development of casualty-averse technology such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. According to P.W. Singer, the present RMA is unique as "the introduction of unmanned systems to the battlefield doesn't change simply how we fight, but for the first time changes *who* fights…It transforms the very agent of war, rather than just its capabilities."[259] This change in agent has additional implications for the role of the soldier and the Western understanding of war because, as Singer quips, "Drones don't die."[260] Weapons like UAVs are designed to feed a casualty averse American public, "destroy[ing] [the enemy combatant] at long range, [and] accelerating a long-standing trend: the battlefield has been emptying for centuries."[261]

Half a year before the tragic 9/11 terrorist attacks and the United States' incursion into Afghanistan, the nascent Bush Administration committed itself to the development of a

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[257] Ibid., 11.
[258] Adrian Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 380.
[259] P. W. Singer, *Wired For War*, 194. Emphasis is mine.
[260] P. W. Singer, "Drones Don't Die," *Military History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (July 2011), 66.
[261] Ignatieff, 169.

technologically-driven military that would reduce risk to soldiers through technological advancements. In an address given to troops and personnel at Norfolk Naval Air Station on February 13, 2001, President George W. Bush noted: "We're witnessing a revolution in the technology of war, powers increasingly defined not by size, but by mobility and swiftness…Safety is gained in stealth and forces projected on the long arc of precision-guided weapons. The best way to keep the peace is to redefine war on our terms."[262] It is this sentiment that cements the continuation of the RMA and the American-preferred "Casualty Averse" philosophy of military engagement.

In order to properly understand what is meant by "casualty averse warfare," it must be defined. Conceptually, casualty aversion is not complex. Robert Mandel describes casualty averse warfare as: "During warfare one has a low tolerance for losing many lives or suffering many injuries."[263] The very definition of casualty aversion is, however, laden with ambiguity as the nature of "many lives lost" is perceptual.[264] Mandel notes that "the quest for bloodless war represents as aspiration embodying a set of sometimes unspoken or confusingly stated motivations, intentions, and values, rather than a pattern of unambiguous empirically observable behavior."[265] This defines the *ideal* of precise death in warfare of precise combatant targets without risk to soldiers or noncombatants not identified as targets, thus establishing a righteous justification for conflict. If assailants can attack enemy combatants with pinpoint accuracy, then the risk of collateral damage is decreased significantly.

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[262] Bush, "Remarks by the President to the Troops and Personnel."

[263] Robert Mandel, *Security, Strategy, and the Quest for Bloodless War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004), 8.

[264] Coker suggests a deeply ingrained Western cultural norm that considers "a life lost [to be] a waste." He links this cultural phenomenon to a collective inability to accept the risk and sacrifice associated with war and conflict. "One of the principle reasons we cannot justify casualties any longer is that we can no longer make sense of the waste of life in the complex situations that demand the use of force" (65). Essentially the Western culture is characterized by an impossible demand for peace without conflict.

[265] Mandel, 8.

Casualty averse military strategies are attractive in a world of twenty-four hour news cycles and competition between cable news stations to break the latest news. The relationship between media and public support can clearly be observed through the media's "ability to dramatize the costs of war."[266] What would become known as "the CNN Effect," accounts for the ability of CNN (and all news media outlets) "to focus an audience's attention," thus "increas[ing] public pressure on political leaders."[267] The classic case for the CNN effect is the Vietnam War. It is largely believed that "the reason Vietnam casualties are still remembered today is because of their unprecedented visibility during the conflict."[268] The visualization of loss causes a conflict and the strategy by which it is being fought to face delegitimization in eyes of the public.

In today's conflicts, American public support of military actions is often directly tied to what is shown on their television screens.[269] This is why Michael Ignatieff describes the highly-televised Kosovo Conflict as "a spectacle" and notes that "it aroused emotions in the intense but shallow way that sports do."[270] American citizens become "armchair soldiers," watching exploding bombs as spectators.[271] Consequently, Americans require images of victory to develop and perpetuate support for military conflict. Fewer American casualties translate to greater support by the American public for the military and its overseas deployments. This feeds an American public

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[266] Ibid., 18.

[267] Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "CNN: Selling NATO's War Globally," *Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*, eds. Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 111.

[268] Mandel, 18.

[269] For an overview of the literature and its debates, see: Eytan Gilboa, "Global Television News and Foreign Policy: Debating the CNN Effect," *International Studies Perspectives* Vol. 6(3): 325-341. See also: Steven Livingston, "Beyond the 'CNN Effect': The Media-Foreign Policy Dynamic," *Politics and the Press: The News Media and their Influences*, ed. Pippa Norris (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1997): 291-318; Piers Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention* (New York: Routledge, 2002), especially chapter four. For a critical approach to the CNN Effect that contends that media does not independently influence foreign policy, see: Warren P. Strobel, *Late Breaking Foreign Policy: The New Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997).

[270] Ignatieff, 3.

[271] See: Francois Debrix, *Tabloid Terror: War Culture and Geopolitics* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

with expectations for images of easy victories and few flag-draped coffins.[272] Mandel explains, "So casualty aversion seems to be a virtually inevitable consequence because people would be upset if many of their fellow citizens were being slaughtered in battle."[273]

Directly influencing change in American military strategy, the media's portrayal of the United States' Battle of Mogadishu in October of 1993 caused not only the swift abandonment of a ten month United Nations mission in Somalia, but also impacted the strategies utilized by NATO forces in the 1999 Kosovo conflict. After two Black Hawk transport helicopters were shot down by Somali militants, with initial reports of five dead American soldiers[274] and bringing the combat death toll in Somalia to sixteen.[275] While the soldiers' deaths were tragic in their own right, the reports and images of the Somali's grisly treatment of the soldiers' corpses and soldiers taken hostage caused the loss to be intolerable by the American people.

> News reports from Mogadishu…said the bodies of dead American soldiers littered the scene of the fighting, with the bloodied corpse of one U.S. serviceman being dragged through the streets by ropes tied to his feet, and another dead serviceman stripped naked and surrounded by a gleeful Somali mob chanting "Victory!"…In another case, the corpse of an American soldier was said to have been tied up and trundled through the streets on a wheelbarrow by about 200 cheering Somalis.[276]

The unwillingness of the American people to accept the deaths and desecrations of American service personnel abroad was reflected by the United States Congress, who were quick

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[272] Shaw, 79-80.

[273] Mandel, 13.

[274] John H. Cushman Jr., "5 G.I.'s are Killed As Solis Down 2 U.S. Helicopters," *The New York Times*, 4 October 1993, sec. 1A, p. 1. This figure was later increased to 18 American soldiers killed.

[275] Tom Kenworthy and John Lancaster, "At Least 5 Americans Killed in Somali Attack; Two Army Helicopters Shot Down During U.N. Operation Against Warlord Aideed," *The Washington Post*, 4 October 1993, sec. 1, p. A1.

[276] Keith B. Richburg, "Somalia Battle Killed 12 Americans, Wounded 78," *The Washing ton Post*, 5 October 1993, Sec. 1, pg. A1.

to link the operation in Somalia to controversial loss of soldiers in Vietnam.[277] The sentiments of the American people were further evidenced in a public opinion poll, which revealed that "43% [of those polled] say that they're less willing to commit U.S. troops after the escalating violence in Somalia" and the same percentage believed that the United States should remove troops immediately. 59% of those polled had seen "news photos of the corpse of a U.S. solider being dragged through the streets by Aidid followers."[278] This incident marked the beginning of the end of the American military's mission in Somalia, with formal withdrawal completed on March 25, 1994.[279]

The October 1993 battle in Mogadishu served as a backdrop for the spring 1999 United States-led, NATO air war against Yugoslavia. The impetus for the strikes was "an effort to halt and reverse the human rights abuses that were being committed against the citizens of its Kosovo province by Yugoslavia's president, Slobodan Milosevic."[280] Using the recent history of ethnic cleansing and genocide in the Balkans and measurable success with targeted air strikes during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War,[281] President Clinton stressed the aerial (casualty averse) nature of the campaign in Kosovo, while affirming its potential risks.

> Like any other military action—there are risks in it…There are risks every time our young people get up and fly jet airplanes at very high speeds…But the dangers of acting must be weighed against the dangers of inaction. If we don't do anything after all the to-and-fro that's been said here, it will be interpreted by Mr. Milosevic as a

[277] Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-SC) noted: "'It's Vietnam all over again'" and argued "for a quick withdrawal from Somalia," arguing, "'There's no education in a second kick of a mule'" (Clifford Krauss, "White House Tries to Calm Congress," *The New York Times*, 5 October 1993, Sec. A, pg. 16.)

[278] Richard Benedetto, "Poll: Most Now Say U.S. Troops Should Get Out," *USA Today*, 6 October 1993, Sec. NEWS, pg. 2A.

[279] Keith B. Richburg, "U.S. Completes Pullout from Somalia," *The Washington Post*, 25 March 1994, Sec. 1, pg. A1.

[280] Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), xiii.

[281] See Chapter 14 of R.J. Crampton, *The Balkans Since the Second World War* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002).

> license to continue to kill. There will be more massacres, more refugees, more victims, more people crying out for revenge.[282]

Commentators speculate that a contributing factor for Milosevic's eventual surrender was the threat of ground troop deployment,[283] but the images of the Somalia tragedy, stamped on the minds of the American public, would only permit a perceptually low-risk engagement for American troops in defense of Kosovo. Like other conflicts of the 1990s, the Kosovo Conflict was widely televised,[284] but the lack of US troops on the ground prevented "battlefield reports" from reporters. Thus, the US government was able to control the interpretation of the bombings, primarily through the portrayal of Milosevic's war crimes as the problem.[285]

A public resistant to the idea of combat deaths of their troops has aided in propelling the evolution of Western military strategy. Thus, this strategy is reliant upon air power in order to prevent heavy casualty conflict.[286] In the end, Kosovo "did indeed represent the first time in which air power coerced an enemy leader to yield with no friendly land combat action whatsoever."[287] The NATO victory in Kosovo set a precedent for technology and air-power-focused twenty-first century warfare.

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[282] William Jefferson Clinton, "Excerpt from Remarks by President Clinton, March 23, 1999," *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History Through Documents*, eds. Philip E. Auerswald and David P. Auerswald, (Cambridge: Kluwer Law International, 2000), 699.

[283] Lambeth, 72. In an interview with James der Derian, General Wesley Clark discussed plans for escalation to ground troops had the air strikes been ineffective. "Well, we had a basic strategy: discuss an air threat, make an air threat; discuss a ground threat, make a ground threat, then invade. Each one built up to a greater coercive pressure" (*Virtuous War*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 189-190).

[284] James der Derian explores the expansion of the Bosnian campaign's coverage to the internet. He notes that he "dipped in and out of the virtual Bosnia represented on the Web, moving through bulletin boards, booklists, home pages, electronic archives and even a 'Bosnian Virtual Fieldtrip' on the Internet" (*Virtuous War*, 52). The impact of the internet on warfare and information dissemination from the battlefield is a topic for another paper, but it should be acknowledged that media reporting extends beyond to what is read in print and seen on television screens into cyberspace.

[285] Mark Smith, *The Kosovo Conflict: U.S. Diplomacy and Western Public Opinion* (Los Angeles, CA: Figueroa Press, 2009), 17- 20.

[286] Boot, *War Made New*, 350.

[287] Lambeth, 224.

A progressively casualty-averse strategy of warfare is propelled by technological developments that allow for soldiers to step back from the danger of battlefield, with the goal of increasing the strength and precision of weaponry.[288] The ultimate intention is to "give the United States a battlefield edge against region powers, [and] will also bolster efforts to deal with such dangers as international crime, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and environmental damage."[289] In part, the edge that technology provides a military is speed of response.[290] A vital technological advancement in today's battlefield has been the development and use of UAVs for the purposes of surveillance and combat.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, such as the USAF's TQ-1A Predator and US Army's Hunter, were first used for intelligence collection during the Kosovo Conflict.[291] The tactical advantage of UAVs was quickly acknowledged as "UAVs offered commanders and planners the frequent advantage of real-time video imagery without any accompanying danger of aircrew losses."[292] General Wesley Clark confirmed the utility of UAVs in combat in an interview with James der Derian, and advocated for continued development of the technology.

> What you needed was integration, of the digitized images from the unmanned aerial vehicle flying overhead, your map coordinates, and the geolocations of the enemy from the GPS, and to project it all on the thermal viewer, to use it as a computer, so the driver and the gunner know when they get to the top of the hill, they'll know that the son-of-a-bitch is going to be right there.[293]

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[288] Latham, 223.

[289] Thomas G. Mahnken and James R. FizSimonds, "Revolutionary Ambivalence: Understanding Officer Attitudes towards Transformation," *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Fall 2003), 121-122.

[290] Bruce M. Sugden, "Speed Kills: Analyzing the Deployment of Conventional Ballistic Missiles," *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Summer 2009).

[291] See Singer's "Drones Don't Die" for an historical overview of UAV development from World War I to the Global War on Terror.

[292] Lambeth, 94.

[293] Der Derian, 188-189.

While not fool-proof, the USAF was able to use three Predators with 24 hours of flight time, to simultaneously to map and identify targets for attack.[294] Additionally, General Clark and his staff were able to locate two of Milosevic's Serbian colleagues (Mladic and Karadijic), though both eluded capture.[295]

Prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the remote, rough terrain of Tora Bora of Afghanistan and Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the United States Department of Defense articulated an intention to further develop UAV capabilities. The *2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report* expressed the efficacy of UAVs for "intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance" (ISR).[296] The value of UAVs for surveillance missions is undeniable. Unlike the Cold War surveillance standard, the U2 spy plane, the unmanned Global Hawk, slated to replace the U2 in 2015,[297] can monitor targets for about 35 hours at an altitude of 65,000 feet without endangering a pilot. To put this in perspective, the "Global Hawk can fly from San Francisco, spend a day hunting for any terrorists in the entire state of Maine, and then fly back to the West Coast." [298]

The surveillance provided by UAVs is remarkably crisp and, provided in real time, it eliminates the delay of photo and information transfer previously experienced through intelligence gathering methods such as human intelligence (HUMINT). In her seminal *New Yorker* article, journalist Jane Mayer described her experience watching as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) team surveyed and executed a strike on wanted Pakistani terrorist, Baituallah Mesud, through the assistance of a Predator Drone. "It was a hot summer night, and he [Mesud] was joined outside by his wife and his uncle, a medic; at one point, the remarkably crisp images showed the Mehsud,

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[294] Lambeth, 95-96.
[295] Ignatieff, 96.
[296] Department of Defense, 39.
[297] Dave Majumdar, "Global Hawk to Replace U-2 Spy Plane in 2015," *Air Force Times*, 10 August 2011, accessed 15 December 2013, http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20110810/NEWS/108100334/Global-Hawk-to-replace-U-2-spy-plane-in-2015.
[298] Singer, *Wired For War,* 36.

who suffered from diabetes and a kidney ailment, was receiving an intravenous drip."[299] Minutes later she reports the clarity with which she observed the rocket impact that killed Mesud and those in his compound.

While Predator Drones had been utilized to track the movements of al Qaeda terrorist, Osama bin Laden in October of 2000, prior to the 9/11 attacks, the drones had not been weaponized and the CIA was forced to watch, frustrated, as bin Laden went about his daily tasks unhindered. "Here was the clean shot they had been seeking for more than two years: positive identification of their target, no questionable human agents, no delay."[300] Funding to develop the weaponization of the drones, however, was not immediately forthcoming from Congress. While the capability was developed and tested prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, this event caused the weaponization of drones to become a top military priority.

For the purposes of warfare, the ability to equip UAVs with strike capabilities in order to access targets in remote or hidden areas has been an integral component of casualty averse strategies. The *2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report* expresses the necessity of weapons capabilities to be developed for UAVs in combat: "Emphasis must be placed on…unmanned long-range precision strike assets, related initiatives for new small munitions, and the ability to defeat hard and deeply buried targets."[301] Shortly after the Global War on Terror had begun, President Bush praised the efficacy of armed UAVs and the necessity to further pursue unmanned technology.

> This combination -- real-time intelligence, local allied forces, special forces, and precision air power -- has really never been used before. The conflict in Afghanistan has taught us more about the future of our military than a decade of blue ribbon panels and think-tank symposiums. The Predator is a good example. This unmanned

[299] Mayer, 36.
[300] Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 534.
[301] Department of Defense, 44.

> aerial vehicle is able to circle over enemy forces, gather intelligence, transmit information instantly back to commanders, then fire on targets with extreme accuracy. Before the war, the Predator had skeptics, because it did not fit the old ways. Now it is clear the military does not have enough unmanned vehicles. We're entering an era in which unmanned vehicles of all kinds will take on greater importance -- in space, on land, in the air, and at sea.[302]

US military concentration has clearly been upon casualty aversion for American service men and women, but how does this military strategy account for the deaths of and injuries to civilians?

Questioning Precision: Roots of the Subversive Discourse

From the first reports of US drone strikes in counterterrorism efforts outside of the formal theatre of war, the ethical veracity of drone utilization has been questioned. In 2009, Micah Zenko called for a public debate, but explained that the drone program's classification as a "covert action" (as defined by the National Security Act of 1947), has prevented the effective development of critical voices in the United States.[303] These voices have suggested that perhaps the Obama Administration's drone war has not been as precision-driven as advertised.

Because casualty numbers resulting from UAV attacks are classified, reports vary wildly. While some sources report that 50 noncombatants are killed for every one militant,[304] The New America Foundation claims that the rate between noncombatants and militants has never been that high[305] and currently claim a civilian death toll of single digits in 2013 and zero in 2014. These

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[302] George W. Bush, "President Speaks on War Effort to Citadel Cadets," *The White House: President George W. Bush*. 11 December, 2001, accessed 15 July 2013, http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011211-6.html.

[303] Micah Zenko, "Are US Missile Strikes in Pakistan a Dud Policy?" *The Christian Science Monitor*, 4 May 2009.

[304] Kilcullen and Exum, "Death From Above, Outrage Down Below."

[305] According to The New America Foundation's data, at the height of reported Drone strikes in 2010, a total of 849 people were killed (788 militants, 16 civilians, and 45 "unknown"). Information Available at: New America Foundation, "Drone Wars Pakistan: Analysis," *The National Security Program*, accessed 17 May 2014, http://natsec.newamerica.net/.

numbers have come under scrutiny because they are limited by the numbers that are reported in the media, not by the real numbers that are collected by the US military and/or the Central Intelligence Agency.[306] On Friday, July 1, 2016 the White House publically released the number of combatants and civilians killed as a result of drone strikes. Marking the first solid numbers released by the Obama Administration, the report states that in drone strikes conducted from 2009 to 2015 (in areas outside of Afghanistan and Iraq) between 64 and 116 civilians and that between 2,372 and 2,581 combatants have been killed.[307]

For example, it has been documented - at the time of writing - that 2,354 U.S. service members have died in Operation Enduring Freedom since 2001.[308] While the deaths of these US service men and women are an indisputably tragic loss to the United States, the loss of life has been potentially more substantial for Afghan civilians.[309] The United Nations reports that from January 01, 2007 to December 31, 2012, 14,728 Afghan civilians have lost their lives. 3,219 of these deaths are attributed to pro-government forces as "collateral damage."[310] However, the exact number may never be known.

The numbers of combatant and noncombatant casualties attributed to UAVs are also extremely lopsided (conceivably zero for UAV pilots). This is because the pilots of UAVs are not

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[306] Conor Friedersdor, "Flawed Analysis of Drone Strike Data is Misleading Americans" *The Atlantic*. 18 July 2012, accessed 17 May 2014, http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/07/flawed-analysis-of-drone-strike-data-is-misleading-americans/259836/.

[307] Kevin Liptak, "White House Reveals Number of Civilian Deaths From Drone Strike," *CNN.com*, 1 July 2016, Internet; http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/01/politics/white-house-drone-civilian-death-report/index.html; Accessed 1 July 2016.

[308] Magda Jean-Louis, Greg Linch, Whitney Fetterhoff and Mary Hadar, "Faces of the Fallen" *Washingtonpost.com* , Updated regularly, accessed 18 May, 2016, http://apps.washingtonpost.com/national/fallen/.

[309] Exact numbers of noncombatant deaths in Afghanistan is difficult to confirm, but the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) does provide official numbers in its annual reports. Reports are available online at http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=13941&language=en-US. The annual reports provide the figures for noncombatant deaths in Afghanistan from 2007-2012.

[310] United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, *Afghanistan: Annual Report 2012, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, February 2013, accessed 14 December 2013, http://unama.unmissions.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zYmVmJCwBe4%3d&tabid=12254&language=en-US.

located within the physical geography of the battlefield, and, thus, combatants and noncombatants almost entirely absorb the casualties sustained through UAV attacks. Martin Shaw refers to the preservation of soldier safety while sacrificing noncombatant safety as "risk-transfer war." This is "because it centers on minimizing life-risks to the military…at the expense not only of 'enemies' but also of those whom the West agrees are 'innocent'."[311] The ambiguity of casualty aversion is apparent: what is casualty averse for one group may not be casualty averse for another, but may, instead, be the transfer of risk from one group onto another. The consequence of risk transfer warfare is the prioritization of the soldier protection *over* the protection of noncombatants.

The endorsement of casualty aversion and consequent tactical use of drones has been a hallmark of President Barack Obama's counterterrorism efforts throughout the world. The material and thematic contributions of President Obama and his staff to the dominant drone discourse will be detailed in Chapters Three and Four, but it is clear that the combination of continued drone strikes and public statements made by the President and members of his Administration have directly influenced and prompted the development of a subversive discourse.

In response to the contested reports of noncombatant casualties, Pakistani photo journalist, Noor Behram, a resident of North Waziristan, Pakistan, sought to provide visual confirmation of the impact that drone strikes have upon the villages and citizens targeted. Specifically concerned by Pakistani media reports in 2009 and 2010 that the victims of drone strikes were exclusively described as "militants," Behram has sought to photographically document the destruction of drone warfare, both material and human, in the Federally Administered Tribal Area of Pakistan in order to verify these reports.[312] His photography is an attempt to visually problematize the "natural and

[311] Shaw, 1.

[312] Matt Delmont, "Drone Encounters: Noor Behram, Omer Fast, and Visual Critiques of Drone Warfare," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 65(1), 195.

commonsensical"[313] While "the world's media quickly reports on how many militants were killed in each strike," Behram goes to the sites of drone strikes in order "'to count how many children, women, innocent people, are killed.'"[314]

Hasnain Kazim of the German newspaper, *Der Spiegel*, reported that Between 2007 and 2011 Noor Behram visited the sites of about "70 drone attacks" and observed "more than 600 corpses."[315] Shah and Beaumont report that Noor Behram often arrives at the scene of a strike shortly "after the explosion," so "he first has to put his camera aside and start digging through the debris to see if there are any survivors." [316] He does this at great personal risk because "the drones frequently hit the same place again."[317]

The subversive narrative, as visually presented by Behram has been buttressed by two reports, whose data and conclusions are guided by interviews conducted in Pakistan. In September of 2012 the report *Living Under Drones*, a joint venture between scholars at Stanford and New York University was released. Its intent to provocatively challenge the dominant discourse of casualty aversion is presented in the first sentence of its executive summary. "In the United States, the dominant narrative about the use of drones in Pakistan is of a surgically precise and effective tool that makes the US safer by enabling 'targeted killing' of terrorists, with minimal downsides of collateral impacts. This narrative is false."[318] The report goes on to acknowledge the security threats apparent to American and Pakistani interests along the largely ungoverned

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[313] Machin and Mayr, 2-3.

[314] Saeed Shah and Peter Beaumont, "US Drone Strikes in Pakistan Claiming Many Civilian Victims, says Campaigner," *The Guardian*, 17 July 2011, Internet; http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jul/17/us-drone-strikes-pakistan-waziristan; Accessed 4 November 2015.

[315] Hasnain Kazim, "Drone War in Pakistan: Photos from the Ground Show Casualties," *Spiegel Online*, 18 July 2011, Internet; http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/drone-war-in-pakistan-photos-from-the-ground-show-civilian-casualties-a-775131.html; Accessed 1 November 2015.

[316] Shah and Beaumont.

[317] Ibid.

[318] *Living Under Drones*.

Afghanistan/Pakistan border, but "in light of significant evidence of harmful impacts to Pakistani civilians and to US interests, current policies to address terrorism through targeted killings and drone strikes must be carefully re-evaluated."[319]

The equally provocative Amnesty International report *"Will I Be Next?"* was published in October of 2013. It, too, seeks to engage the dominant discourse regarding American tactics of drone warfare, expressing the discrepancy of experiences by noncombatants and reported precision of UAV strikes.

> The USA, which refuses to release detailed information about individual strikes, claims that its drone operations are based on reliable intelligence, are extremely accurate, and that the vast majority of people killed in such strikes are members of armed groups such as the Taliban and al-Qa'ida. Critics claim that drone strikes are much less discriminating, have resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths…and foster animosity the increases recruitment into the very groups the USA seeks to eliminate.[320]

Utilizing more damning language, the Amnesty International report expresses concern that drone-based attacks "have resulted in unlawful killings that may constitute extrajudicial executions or war crimes…[and] may have also violated human rights."[321]

The root of the subversive discourse opposing drone warfare emerged from Pakistan at beginning of the Obama Administration when reported drone strikes were becoming uncomfortably common in Pakistan's western frontier, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. This discourse was both formed and disseminated through public protests and demonstrations, which were aimed both at the American and Pakistani governments.[322] This subversive discourse

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[319] Ibid.

[320] Amnesty International, 7.

[321] Ibid., 8.

[322] See: James Gordon Meek and Richard Sisk, "1st Pakistan Attack Under Obama Kills 15," *Daily News* (New York) 24 January 2009, 16; Trevor Royle, "Little Holiday Mood in Pakistan," *Sunday Herald*, 22 March 2009, 3.

was concerned both about the violation of Pakistani national sovereignty and about the number of casualties resulting from the drone strikes. Scott Shane reported that "Drones are hugely unpopular with many Pakistanis, who see them as a violation of their country's sovereignty."[323] Additionally, "there is a question of public perception particularly over the civilian casualties caused by the strikes, which infuriate politicians and the media here."[324]

In December of 2011 *Wired.com* posted thirteen of Noor Behram's photographs featuring the victims and physical destruction of drone warfare. At the time, no photographs documenting drone strikes had been released by an American news outlet.[325] Spencer Ackerman took the opportunity to show Americans what the aftermath of drone warfare looks like—at least through Noor Behram's camera lens.[326] Behram has a clear agenda in presenting his photography to the world: "'I want to show taxpayers in the Western world what their tax money is doing to people in another part of the world: killing civilians, innocent victims, children.'"[327]

Behram's photography embodies a central component of the subversive discourse: an intentional humanizing of populations targeted by drone warfare. Humanization through creative visualization is also what makes the Pakistani art installation, #NotABugSplat an impactful contribution to the subversive discourse. Influenced by the building-sized portraits envisioned and installed around the world by "semi-anonymous" artist, JR,[328] the #NotABugSplat art installation

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[323] Scott Shane, "US Gets More Comfortable with Drone Warfare; Despite Local Outrage, Obama Expands the Use of Aircraft in Pakistan." *International Herald Tribune*, 4 December 2009, 1.

[324] Jane Perlez, "Pakistan Protests, but Backs Drones," *International Herald Tribune*, April 16, 2009, 6.

[325] The British newspaper, *The Guardian*, and the German newspaper, *Der Spiegel*, posted stories about Noor Behran's photography in July of 2011. *The Guardian*'s article posted none of Behran's pictures, but described some of the gruesome details. The online article did link to the Beaconsfield art gallery in London, which displayed Behran's photography from 19 July – 1 September, 2011. *Der Spiegel* posted five photographs for public viewing, two of which featured Noor Behran, himself. Two of the additional photos were not included in the *Wired* article. Each of the news sites are clear that the photography posted (or not posted) is graphic and that they declined to include photos of human corpses that were especially graphic.

[326] Spencer Ackerman, "Rare Photographs Show Ground Zero of the Drone War," *Wired.com*, 12 December 2011, Internet; http://www.wired.com/2011/12/photos-pakistan-drone-war/; Accessed 1 November 2015.

[327] Ibid.

[328] See: http://www.jr-art.net/.

tries "to reach the people pulling the trigger in America's drone wars—the drone operators themselves."[329] While the aim of revealing the innocent, thoughtful face of a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa child to American drone pilots through their cameras, the installation has a wider audience. Meyer notes that the poster is "also designed to be captured by satellites in order to make it a permanent part of the landscape on online mapping sites" and that "it challenges *all* those who have access to images photographed from the sky to use their power to make a more just world."[330]

The artwork's title is a visual, discursive challenge to the military terminology popularized by a 2012 *Rolling Stone* article which uses the term bug splat. "The military slang for a man killed by a drone strike…since viewing the body through a grainy-green video image gives the sense of an insect being crushed."[331] It's presence within the digital public sphere has been pervasive as its title, which includes a hashtag (#) indicates an intention for aerial photographs of the artwork to be widely disseminated through social media like Twitter and Instragram, both of which use hashtags as an organizational device for searching and grouping tweets or photos with the same hashtags.

In addition to its proliferation on social media and presence in mainstream news, the #NotABugSplat art installation received additional publicity when artist J.R. was interviewed on the August 28, 2014 episode of Comedy Central's *The Colbert Report* giving the project and the subversive discourse popular culture exposure. Regarding #NotABugSplat, host Stephen Colbert sarcastically (and in all seriousness) quipped: "So what you're saying is that I have to consider every person as human. That I can't just think of people as part of a population or a

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[329] Robinson Meyer, "For Shame: The Giant Poster That Shows Drone Pilots the People They're Bombing," *The Atlantic*, 7 April 2014, Accessed 6 May 2014. http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/04/for-shame-the-giant-poster-that-shows-drone-pilots-the-people-theyre-bombing/360257/.

[330] Ibid.

[331] Hastings, "The Drone Wars."

statistic…Anybody who accidentally dies in a war that's otherwise justified, I have to grieve over?"[332]

Amnesty International's *Will I Be Next?* and the NYU/Stanford report *Living Under Drones* strive to disseminate the subversive drone discourse internationally and have shown some success in contributing to, perhaps even sparking, public debate on the impact of drone warfare on noncombatants. Each, as a response to the dominant discourse of casualty averse warfare, challenges the public sphere to consider the wider impact of casualty aversion upon noncombatants.

The dissemination of these reports and their updates are dependent upon the internet. For example, www.livingunderones.org, where the report NYU/Stanford report has been posted and maintained, is designed as a publically accessible multimedia experience. In addition to the provision of data about drone strikes and written victim stories, the website has linked video interviews (also posted on YouTube) in which interviewees explain their experiences while living in an active drone war zone. This provides visitors to the site with the ability to disseminate information through their social media presence, thus perpetuating the discourse. The Amnesty International *"Will I Be Next?"* report possesses a similar, though not as flashy, web presence and includes an interactive story map and a Tumblr page entitled #GameOfDrones detailing a traveling protest movement, elucidating physical in addition to cyber forms of discourse.

The emergence of the subversive discourse originated from the Pakistanis from the locations of the strikes, directly affected by drone surveillance and strikes. This discourse was bolstered through the printing of Noor Behram's photography in Western news sources and by the *Will I Be Next?* and *Living Under Drones* reports (analyzed in Chapter Three). It has been further

[332] Stephen Colbert, "JR," *The Colbert Report*, 28 August 2014. http://thecolbertreport.cc.com/video-playlists/37wfv0/the-colbert-report-10145-highlights/vmcz6o.

developed by social media efforts and the #NotABugSplat art installation in Pakistan's Waziristan providence. These discourses seek to expose the local and personal impacts that drone strikes inflict upon the populations they target and is characterized by a concentration on combatting the dehumanization of drone strike targets.

Chapter 4: *Examining Drone Warfare's Dominant and Subversive Discourses: Interpretative Content and Visual Analyses*

The careful thematic formation of political discourses is important for their ultimate efficacy. A consistent, persuasive message that connects with an audience "gives people *a reason* for favoring or accepting certain lines of action and policies rather than others."[333] This is relevant in the case of the discourses that surround drone warfare as they seek to either obscure or elucidate the humanitarian impact of drone strikes. This chapter establishes the primary themes present in the dominant and subversive discourses surrounding drone warfare. This is accomplished through the utilization of two complementary, interpretative methods of three qualitative data sets. First, I use interpretive content analysis to analyze Obama Administration drone policy speeches (dominant discourse) and drone NGO reports (subversive discourse). Second, I use visual analysis as outlined by Clarke[334] and Banks[335] to analyze post-drone strike photographs taken by Pakistani photo-journalist Noor Behram (subversive discourse). In addition to clarifying the underpinning values of each discourse, this analysis begins to reveal framing techniques employed by the creators of each discourse that are aimed at either perpetuating the policy status quo or are attempting to unsettle it.

Jarvis refers to this process as discursive *recovery*. The goal of this approach is "to offer a patient and faithful reconstruction of the purposes and objectives beneath the texts we are studying."[336] While simultaneously holding a position of faith and suspicion (or "demystification") when approaching the analyzed texts, "we adopt what may be considered to be a humanistic

[333] Fairclough and Fairclough, 4. Emphasis is the authors'.
[334] Adele Clarke, "Mapping Visual Discourses," *Sage Visual Analysis,* ed. Jason Hughes (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012): 231-282.
[335] Marcus Banks, *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).
[336] Jarvis, 20.

attitude and construe our task as trying to represent to ourselves and the readers of our work, clearly and accurately, the message [the texts] are trying to convey to us."[337] In the case of drone warfare, it is clear that interaction between the Obama Administration and the NGO reports exists. The photographs provide a visual element to the subversive discourse, permitting story to be embodied through "the *claims to realism* they usually convey and their consequences in particular situations."[338] Under this approach to the discourse, it is the job of the research to tease out the major themes of the texts, and, in this project, to understand how the message is being framed in order to mobilize action. Josselson is clear that because this is an interpretive intellectual posture, "there will always be gaps and partial truths as well as power dynamics" at work in the discourse.[339] However, the goal is to portray the discourses in as accurate and fair a light as is possible.

Methodology: Content Analysis

In order to identify and evaluate the primary themes present in the dominant and subversive discourses regarding the use of weaponized drones as a tactic in counterterrorism efforts, I employ the qualitative methodology of interpretive content analysis. Holsti defines content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages."[340] While Holsti's definition of content analysis guides this project's initial approach to the texts, I am also interested in understanding and interpreting the meaning of particular themes in relation to each other. The goal is to form an interpretation of the chosen texts,

[337] Ruthellen Josselson, "The Hermeneutics of Faith and the Hermeneutics of Suspicion," *Narrative Inquiry* Vol. 14(1), 5.

[338] Clarke, 235. Emphasis is the author's.

[339] Ibid., 5.

[340] Ole R. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969), 14.

"understanding better the perspective(s) of the producer of these words"[341] as well as the impact that these texts have on larger political discourses and policy formation.[342]

In conducting the content analysis for this project, I used two rounds of coding utilizing Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis iSoftware, namely ATLAS.ti version 7.5. Prior to the first round of coding I isolated seven *a priori* codes for the dominant discourse texts and nine *a priori* codes for the subversive discourse texts. These *a priori* codes are informed by the literature review, a brief reading of President Obama's May 23, 2013 speech, the NYU/Stanford study *Life Under Drones* and my research questions. Using these codes as a base, I open coded the texts by sentence,[343] allowing for emergent codes of the manifest content.[344]

Dominant Discourse: Content Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

In speeches given by former Attorney General Eric Holder, current Director of Intelligence John Brennan, and President Barack Obama in 2012 and 2013, the political elites of the Obama Administration sought to establish a public narrative regarding use of drones as counterterrorism tactic. This analysis investigates four addresses that have been denoted as seminal policy-establishing speeches. These speeches were selected first, through the recommendation of secondary sources, and second, after a thorough search of whitehouse.gov/the-press-office for drone-related addresses, statements, and press releases. The diversification of speech-giver is suggested by Jennifer Milliken: "If the analysis is to be about social signification, a discourse

[341] Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 7th ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2009), 343.

[342] Alesha E. Doan and Jean Calterone Williams, *The Politics of Virginity: Abstinence in Sex Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008). See especially Chapter Four.

[343] A sentence by sentence coding is recommended in: Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013), 100-101.

[344] This is the code creation strategy utilized by Britton and Dean in their content analysis project: "Policy Responses to Human Trafficking in Southern Africa: Domesticating International Norms," *Human Rights Review* 15(3): 305-328.

analysis should be based upon a set of texts by different people presumed (according to the research focus) to be authorized speakers/writers of a dominant discourse…"[345]

The following speeches were analyzed in chronological order:

- March 5, 2012, Attorney General Eric Holder, Northwestern University School of Law
- April 30, 2012, John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy," Wilson Center
- May 23, 2013, President Barack Obama, National Defense University
- April 23, 2015, President Barack Obama, The White House

Each of the major speeches has a clear objective in shaping the drone discourse and their venues reflect the purpose of the speech. Eric Holder's speech, given at Northwestern University School of Law, focuses on the legal aspects of the Obama Administration's drone and counterterrorism policies. John Bennan's speech focuses on the ethical justifications of drone warfare and was given at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. President Obama's speech outlines drone and counterterrorism policy and was delivered at the National Defense University at Fort McNair. In each of these cases, the audiences were, presumably, interested in (if not experts in) the speeches' topics, granting the speeches' content additional weight.

Before conducting the first round of content analysis coding, I constructed five hypotheses based in the above-cited literature that I chose to test. Evaluation of these hypotheses after the content analysis provides us with the primary themes that construct a dominant discourse established by the analyzed speeches given by members of the Obama Administration, regarding the tactical use of weaponized drones in counterterrorism efforts.[346]

H1: Terminology used in the selected speeches will prioritize **national security**.

H2: Terminology used in the selected speeches will seek to justify the tactical use of drones through **legal language**.

[345] Milliken, 233.
[346] Saldana, 147-150.

H3: Terminology used in the selected speeches will seek to justify the tactical use of drones by prioritizing **soldier safety** and/or the **avoidance of casualties**

H4: Terminology used in the selected speeches will concede **civilian casualties** as collateral damage or as a natural byproduct of conflict.

H5: Terminology used in the selected speeches will **not specify dates or locations** of drone strikes.

Prior to the first round of coding, I established seven *a priori* codes. The codes are as follows: **Civilian Casualties**, **Civilian Safety**, **Dates/Locations of Strikes**, **Dates/Location of Strikes—Vague**, **Legal Language**, **National Security**, and **Solider Safety/Casualty Avoidance**.[347] In addition to the seven *a priori* codes, the first round of coding produced twenty-eight emergent codes. The second round of coding paid special attention to the presence of emergent codes in the texts to ensure that their presence (or lack thereof) in the other texts was observed and recorded. At the completion of the first two rounds of coding, three overarching themes emerged under which the a priori and emergent codes could be organized: National Security, Legality, and Hiddenness. These three themes establish the key components of the Obama Administration's dominant narrative regarding the tactical use of drones in counterterrorism efforts. Percentages of thematic codes within the speeches were calculated and will be discussed in turn below. The total percentage of the thematic areas are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Total Percentage of Theme Areas in Speeches

Themes	**Holder Speech**	**Brennan Speech**	**Obama Speech**	**Obama Statement**
Legality	34%	20%	20%	**36%**
Hiddenness	2%	19%	21%	**28%**
National Security	**64%**	54%	59%	36%

[347] Please see Appendix A for the code book, which features Codes, Definitions, and a list of the A Priori and Emergent codes listed in alphabetical order.

Of interest in the calculated totals for each speech in Table 1 is the overwhelming focus on National Security despite the cited purpose of the speech. This seems to support Hypothesis 1: *Terminology used in the selected speeches will prioritize national security*. While this assertion might seem rather obvious given the speeches' concentration on drone warfare and counterterrorism, an interesting finding is the prominence of the national security theme in Holder's speech. This content analysis found that 64% of Attorney General, Eric Holder's speech, while billed as covering the legal aspects of counterterrorism policies, is coded with national security-inclusive codes. Holder's speech does, however, include more legal language than the other speeches (with the exception of the Obama statement regarding the death of Warren Weinstein). Brennan and Obama's speeches speak more directly (19%, 21%, 28% respectively) about the importance of maintaining the clandestine aspects of the drone program.

In order to investigate the components of the Obama Administration's dominant discourse on drone warfare, each of the major themes, their inclusive codes, and their associated hypotheses will be discussed below.

Dominant Discourse: National Security

The most principal theme informing the drone discourse is National Security, composing 64% of Holder's speech, 54% of Brennan's speech, 59% of President Obama's speech, and 36% of President Obama's Weinstein Speech. This theme is composed of thirteen codes that are primarily emergent that include direct references to defense of the United States' interests and citizens through military actions. This theme is primarily shaped by the code "Responses to Terrorism" and the code "National Security" in all of the speeches. For the Obama Administration, it is of vital importance for discussions regarding drones to be understood in relationship to terrorism.

Surprisingly, all of the speeches discuss counterterrorism efforts within the context of the "September 11, 2001 Attacks." I found this surprising because of the almost eleven year gap between Eric Holder's speech and the actual events on September 11, 2001. However, providing the conceptual link between the continuing counterterrorism efforts abroad and 9/11 accomplishes two tasks. First, it reminds the audience of the continued threat of terrorism on American soil, expressing a need for counterterrorism efforts. Second, the references to 9/11 reiterate counterterrorism efforts (especially as they pertain to al-Qaeda and the Taliban) as still being in self-defense. This provides the counterterrorism tactics, notably drone strikes, with legal and ethical support.

Table 2
National Security
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	Holder Speech	Brennan Speech	Obama Speech	Obama Statement
Allies/Cooperation	1%	5%	3%	**8%**
American Leadership	0%	**1%**	**1%**	0%
Drone Strikes—Positive Language	0%	**3%**	2%	0%
Drone Strikes—Precision	2%	**10%**	3%	0%
Drone Strikes—Signature Strikes	3%	1%	0%	15%
Drone Strikes—Terrorist Casualties	4%	**10%**	4%	0%
National Security	**28%**	17%	15%	15%
Public Debate—United States	**1%**	**1%**	0%	0%
Response to Terrorism	39%	36%	39%	**54%**
September 11, 2001 Attacks	4%	3%	**9%**	8%
Soldier Casualty	0%	0%	**1%**	0%
Soldier Safety/Casualty Avoidance	1%	5%	**7%**	0%
Warfare	**15%**	8%	14%	0%

Primarily present in President Obama's 2013 drone and counterterrorism policy speech, references to soldier safety and casualties lend support to Hypothesis 3: *Terminology used in the*

selected speeches will seek to justify the tactical use of drones by prioritizing soldier safety and/or the avoidance of casualties. Holder and Brennan's speeches do reference soldier safety as well. John Brennan argues that the use of drones as a tactic is "a wise choice because they dramatically reduce the danger to US personnel, even eliminating the danger altogether." It is important to note, however, that in many circumstances, the safety allotted to soldiers is coupled with a commitment to keeping civilians safe as well. Brennan continues: "Yet they are also a wise choice because they dramatically reduce the danger to innocent civilians, especially considered against massive ordinance that can cause injury and death far beyond their intended target."[348] The discourse's argument that drones make civilians and noncombatants safer is a surprising finding, though for an Administration attempting to discredit allegations of mass civilian casualties, this is certainly an effective, strategic move.

Dominant Discourse: Legality

The second theme composing the Obama Administration's drone discourse includes terminology and language rooted in legal justification and explanation of drone strikes. References to legality make up 34% of Holder's speech, 20% of Brennan's speech, 20% of President Obama's speech, and 36% of President Obama's Weinstein statement. Likely a deficiency in the code terms, most of the speeches' legal references are couched within the a priori, catch-all code "legal language." This includes terminology and/or sections of text that highlight the legality (or illegality) of weaponized drone counterterrorism tactics and justification for that position. Eric Holder articulates the importance of legality to the Obama Administration's counterterrorism efforts:

[348] John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy," 30 April 2012, Internet; https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/the-efficacy-and-ethics-us-counterterrorism-strategy; Accessed 20 January 2016.

> But just as surely as we are a nation at war, we also are a nation of laws and values. Even when under attack, our actions must always be grounded on the bedrock of the Constitution – and must always be consistent with statutes, court precedent, the rule of law and our founding ideals. Not only is this the right thing to do—history has shown that it is also the most effective approach we can take in combating those who seek to do us harm.[349]

Table 3
Legality
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	Holder Speech	Brennan Speech	Obama Speech	Obama Statement
Civilian Casualties	4%	6%	15%	**46%**
Civilian Safety	4%	**19%**	15%	15%
Drone Strikes—Ethics	0%	**26%**	0%	0%
Freedom	**15%**	6%	12%	0%
Human Rights	0%	0%	3%	**31%**
Justice	2%	1%	3%	**8%**
Legal Language	**72%**	37%	39%	0%
Militant/Civilian Distinction	2%	**6%**	0%	0%

This analysis does seem to support Hypothesis 2: *Terminology used in the selected speeches will seek to justify the tactical use of drones through legal language*. Each of the speeches devote space to the discussion of legality not only in terms of domestic law, but also in regard to international law. Interestingly, very little reference is made to human rights in the speeches, but about a third of the codes in President Obama's statement regarding the death of Warren Weinstein cover human rights and a commitment to promoting human rights in the face of drone warfare.

In his 2013 drone policy speech, President Obama talked about the tragedy of civilian casualties resulting from drone strikes:

> As Commander-in-Chief, I must weigh these heartbreaking tragedies against the alternatives…It is false to assert that putting boots on the ground is less likely to result in civilian deaths or less likely to create enemies in the Muslim world. The results would be more U.S. deaths, more Black Hawks down, more confrontations

[349] Eric Holder, "Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at Northwestern University School of Law," 5 March 2012, Internet; http://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-eric-holder-speaks-northwestern-university-school-law; Accessed 20 January 2016.

> with local populations, and an inevitable mission creep in support of such raids that could easily escalate into new wars.[350]

This quotation, taken in isolation, led me to believe that Hypothesis 4 would also be supported: *terminology used in the selected speeches will concede civilian casualties as collateral damage or as a natural byproduct of conflict*. President Obama's reference to civilian casualties as "tragedies" suggested to me that I would see more of this terminology throughout the drone speeches. While each of the speeches do reference civilian casualties, they devote as much or more space to discussions of civilian safety. Never are the civilian casualties dismissed as permissible or a natural byproduct of war. The exception to this is President Obama's 2015 statement, which is a lengthy eulogy to two al Qaeda hostages erroneously killed in a signature drone strike. Thus, I would feel comfortable considering this hypothesis as partially supported.

It is clear that the legality of counterterrorism policies are important to the Obama Administration, however, Micah Zenko cautions that while the Obama Administration has crafted policies forming a "legal basis for lethal counterterrorism," but that "there is no evidence that most reforms were ever implemented." Additionally, Zenko notes that these legal frameworks and justifications "[do] not apply to CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, where roughly 40 percent of all nonbattlefield drone strike have since occurred."[351]

Dominant Discourse: Hiddenness

The Obama Administration has been committed to waging drone warfare clandestinely under the auspices of the Central Intelligence Agency.[352] Despite evidence under this thematic

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[350] Barack Obama, "Obama's Speech on Drone Policy," *The New York Times.com*, 23 May 2013, Internet; http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/24/us/politics/transcript-of-obamas-speech-on-drone-policy.html; Accessed 24 May 2013.

[351] Micah Zenko, "Obama's Embrace of Drone Strikes Will Be a Lasting Legacy," *The New York Times*, 12 January, 2016, Internet; http://www.nytimes.com; Accessed 14 March 2016.

[352] Mayer, "The Predator War."

code grouping that affirm arguments by the Brennan and Obama speeches that the Administration seeks out transparency, the analysis indicates overwhelming vagueness when discussing the dates and locations of drone strikes around the world. A number of geographic regions that include areas of alleged strikes (Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen) are mentioned throughout the speeches, but few specifics are given. Even the details of the strike that killed Warren Weinstein are sanitized. Thus, the data lends support to Hypothesis 5: *Terminology used in the selected speeches will not specify dates or locations of drone strikes*.

The consequence of this commitment to the clandestine has left what David Sanger refers to "a hole in the middle of the Obama Doctrine" that has caused the Obama Administration to lose "an opportunity to explain why America acts the way it does around the globe."[353] This provides a space for speculation that can trouble the policy initiatives of the Obama Administration and leaves room for a subversive discourse, such as those provided by the Amnesty International and NYU/Stanford NGO reports.

Table 4
Hiddenness
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	Holder Speech	Brennan Speech	Obama Speech	Obama Statement
Dates/Locations of Strikes	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dates/Locations of Strikes—Vague	0%	**42%**	17%	10%
Drone Strikes—CIA	**75%**	10%	0%	0%
Geography—Afghanistan	**25%**	4%	20%	10%
Geography—Iraq	0%	2%	**14%**	0%
Geography—Pakistan	0%	14%	9%	**50%**
Geography—Remote	0%	**8%**	6%	0%
Geography—Somalia	0%	2%	**6%**	0%
Geography—Yemen	0%	2%	**11%**	0%

[353] Sanger, 245.

Transparency	0%	10%	11%	**20%**
Transparency—Lack of	0%	6%	6%	**10%**

Subversive Discourse: Content Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

In order to isolate the major components of the subversive discourses surrounding contemporary drone warfare, I have selected the two NGO reports (*Living Under Drones* and *Will I be Next?*) that utilize qualitative interviewing methodologies in order to gather information from those affected by drone warfare. Prior to conducting this content analysis, I formulated four hypotheses based in the above-cited literature that I chose to test through the content analysis.

H1: Terminology used in the NGO reports will seek to delegitimize the United States' tactical use of drones in counterterrorism efforts through **legal** language.
H2: Terminology used in the NGO reports will prioritize **human security**.
H3: Terminology used in the NGO reports that distinguishes **civilian safety** from that of combatants or members of terrorist organizations.
H4: Terminology used in NGO reports will specify the **dates** or **locations** of drone strikes.

Evaluation of these hypotheses after the content analysis provides us with the primary themes that construct a subversive discourse regarding the tactical use of weaponized drones in counterterrorism efforts established by the NGO reports.

In the first round of coding I isolated nine *a priori* codes that are informed by the literature review. The codes are as follows: **Civilian Casualties**, **Civilian Safety**, N**arrative—Family Member/Casualty**, **Narrative—Survivor**, **Dates/Locations of Strikes**, **Dates/Location of Strikes—Vague**, **Legal Language**, **National Security**, and **Solider Safety/Casualty Avoidance**.[354] Using these codes as a base, I open coded the texts by paragraph, allowing for

[354] These *a priori* codes are slightly different from those established for the dominant discourse. The difference is informed by a theoretical emphasis observed in a prior knowledge of the reports' content prior to coding and the story-telling literature explored in Chapter One. Please see Appendix A for the code book, which features Codes, Definitions, and a list of the A Priori and Emergent codes listed in alphabetical order.

emergent codes from the manifest content.[355] Twenty-six codes (noted and defined in the below code book) were recorded. The second round of coding paid special attention to the presence of emergent codes in the texts to ensure that their presence (or lack thereof) in the other texts was observed and recorded.

At the completion of the first two rounds of coding, three overarching themes emerged under which the a priori and emergent codes could be organized: Human Security, Legality, and Exposure. These three themes establish the key components of the reports' subversive narrative regarding the tactical use of drones in counterterrorism efforts. Percentages of thematic codes within the speeches were calculated and will be discussed in turn below. The total percentage of the thematic areas are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Total Percentage of Codes by Theme

Themes	**Living Under Drones**	**Will I Be Next?**
Human Security	**48%**	28%
Legality	26%	**46%**
Exposure	**26%**	**26%**

There are two major takeaways from this global look at the content analysis. First, the *Living Under Drones* report prioritizes the codes associated with the human security theme. This report focuses on the everyday life experiences of noncombatants living in areas with frequent drone strikes and articulates these experiences through narratives given by survivors and the families of those who have been killed by drone strikes. Second, the *Will I Be Next?* report from Amnesty International focuses primarily on potential violations of international laws (indicated by the theme "legality") and goes as far as to suggest that some of these violations may constitute war crimes on the part of the Obama Administration.[356] These results seem to support Hypothesis One

[355] Britton and Dean.
[356] Amnesty International, *Will I Be Next*?, 8.

(*Terminology used in the NGO reports will seek to delegitimize the United States' tactical use of drones in counterterrorism efforts through **legal** language*) and Hypothesis Two (*Terminology used in the NGO reports will prioritize **human security***) as the reports do seek to delegitimize the United States' tactical use of drones in counterterrorism efforts through legal language and prioritize issues of human security. What is interesting about this finding is the clear thematic focus evident in each of the reports with 48% of the *Living Under Drones* report containing codes categorized under theme Human Security and 46% of the *Will I Be Next?* report containing codes categorized under the theme Legality.

In order to investigate the components of the subversive discourse on drone warfare as presented through the NGO reports, each of the major themes, their inclusive codes, and their associated hypotheses will be discussed below.

Subversive Discourse: Human Security

Based on the seven categories of human security described in the United Nations' 1994 Development Report,[357] the theme Human Security provides "an understanding of security that is focused explicitly on the well-being and welfare of individuals rather than on the protection of states exclusively."[358] This concern for human well-being and welfare is included in the codes listed in Table 6.

[357] United Nations, "New Dimensions of Human Security," *United Nations Development Report* (1994), 24-25. The seven main categories pertinent to the achievement of human security include: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, and political security. The relevant elements of human security to this analysis will be discussed in Chapter 5.

[358] Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 120.

Table 6
Human Security
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	Living Under Drones	Will I Be Next?
Allies/Cooperation	3%	**8%**
Drone Strikes—Disruption of Community	**7%**	5%
Drone Strikes—Economic Hardship	**7%**	3%
Drone Strikes—Negative Language	**5%**	**5%**
Drone Strikes—Physical Injury	5%	**14%**
Drone Strikes—Precision	**4%**	2%
Drone Strikes—Property Damage	**6%**	5%
Drone Strikes—Psychological Trauma	**14%**	11%
Narrative—Family Member/Casualty	**14%**	10%
Narrative—Relationship	**12%**	9%
Narrative—Survivor	9%	**10%**
National Security	**3%**	2%
Response to Terrorism	7%	**17%**
September 11, 2001 Attacks	**2%**	0%
Soldier Safety/Casualty Avoidance	**2%**	0%

By combining the "Narrative" codes, the data indicates, first, that the *Living Under Drones* report contains more narratives and tells the stories of more individuals (35% of the report) than the Amnesty International report does (29% of the report). This finding is consistent with the overarching numbers in Table 1 (above) that suggest a human security focus present in the *Living Under Drones* report. Another interesting finding that emerged is the importance attributed to relationships within the narratives. 12% of in the *Living Under Drones* report and 9% of the Amnesty International report provide narratives and analysis that intentionally distinguishes the relationship of the storyteller to the victim.

Second, as was expected, both reports cover the physical and property damage caused by drone strikes, but an unexpected result was the percentage of the reports that discuss the

psychological trauma experienced by drone strikes in these reports (*Living Under Drones*—14% and Amnesty International—11%). Evident in these results is the implication that the lives of those impacted by drone-based warfare are often difficult and infiltrated with insecurity and fear that they might be the next victims of a drone strike. The Amnesty International report quotes a resident of a North Waziristan village that has been under threat not only by the Taliban and al Qaeda forces, but, consequently, also by American drone activity. "'Everyone is scared and they can't get out of their house without any tension and from the fear of drone attacks…We can't sleep because of the planes' loud sound. Even if they don't attack we still have the fear of attack in our mind.'"[359]

Subversive Discourse: Legality

The results of this content analysis suggests that while the dominant narrative utilizes legal language in order to justify drone strikes, the subversive discourse utilizes legal language in order to delegitimize the use of drones in counterterrorism missions. Both of the NGO reports are interested in the legal issues surrounding drone strikes, this is especially true with the Amnesty International report. As is described in Chapter Two, the drone legal literature is interested primarily in distinction (represented by the militant/civilian distinction and drone strikes—signature strikes codes) and proportionality (represented by the civilian casualties code). The results presented in Table 7, below, suggest that the *Living Under Drones* report is more interested in legal issues of proportionality (at 41% of the report) than is the *Will I Be Next?* report (16%). The reports appear slightly less focused on issues of distinction: 20% of the *Living Under Drones* report and 12% of the *Will I Be Next?* report.[360]

[359] Amnesty International, 31.

[360] These percentages are reached by combining the Table 7 values for the militant/civilian distinction and drone strikes—signature strikes codes.

Not surprisingly, both reports emphasize the importance of adherence to international law, but the Amnesty International report ups the proverbial ante by asserting in 7% of the codes that the Obama Administration may be committing war crimes through its drone-centric counterterrorism policies. Neither report actively discuss civilian safety, perhaps underpinned by the assumption that civilians are inherently not safe, as 41% of the *Living Under Drones* codes and 16% of the Amnesty International report codes focus on reports of civilian casualties. This is an interesting finding because the dominant discourse is intentional to discuss civilian safety.[361] This could be dismissed as rhetoric, but it could signify an authentic desire on the part of the Obama Administration to conduct drone strikes in ways that would be sensitive to civilian safety.

Table 7
Legality
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	**Living Under Drones**	**Will I Be Next?**
Civilian Casualties	**41%**	16%
Civilian Safety	1%	**4%**
Drone Strikes—Signature Strikes	**10%**	6%
Human Rights	10%	**24%**
Legal Language	26%	**37%**
Militant/Civilian Distinction	**10%**	6%
War Crimes	0%	**7%**

Importantly, the NGO reports are intentional to explain the difficulties they perceive for distinction between militants and civilians in the Obama Administration's use of drones. This is especially true when considering the practice of signature strikes, which distinguish militants from civilians not based on international law standards, but on observed practices.[362] These observations lend some support to Hypothesis 4 that the *terminology used in the NGO reports that distinguishes*

[361] The percentages of the dominant discourse speeches coded as civilian safety are as follows: Holder—4%; Brennan—19%; Obama-Speech—15%; Obama-Statement—15%.

[362] Dayna Greenfield defines signature strikes as "strikes conducted against individuals who 'match a pre-identified "signature" of behavior that the US links to militant activity,' rather than targeting a specific person" ("The Case Against Drone Strikes on People Who Only 'Act' Like Terrorists.")

civilian safety *from that of combatants or members of terrorist organizations*. However, the reports' discussions of civilian safety are unexpectedly low (1% for the *Living Under Drones* report and 4% for the *Will I Be Next?* report) and references to terrorism and/or combatants is higher than expected. [363]

Subversive Discourse: Exposure

One of the key themes in the dominant narratives is the efforts of the Obama Administration to utilize drones clandestinely, primarily through classified missions carried out by the CIA.[364] Thus, the analysis of the dominant narrative indicates a reluctance, if not outright refusal, to provide specifics on drone strikes, though countries are referenced.[365] In contrast, the subversive narrative is interested in exposing the clandestine by reporting on specific strikes on specific dates in specific locations that have affected specific people. This lends solid support to Hypothesis 4: *Terminology used in NGO reports will specify the* ***dates*** *or* ***locations*** *of drone strikes.*

Table 8
Exposure
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. Columns may not add up to 100%.

Codes	Living Under Drones	Will I Be Next?
Dates/Locations of Strikes	13%	**22%**
Dates/Locations of Strikes—Vague	0%	**2%**
Drone Strikes—Anti US Sentiment	**11%**	0%
Drone Strikes—CIA	**12%**	11%
Geography—Afghanistan	**1%**	**1%**
Geography—North Waziristan	21%	**26%**
Geography—Pakistan	**20%**	6%
Geography—Somalia	**1%**	0%
Geography—South Waziristan	**1%**	**1%**
Geography—Yemen	**2%**	1%

[363] This code has been organized under "human security" and can be found in Table 6. Reponses to terrorism represent 7% of the *Living Under Drones* report and 17% of the *Will I Be Next?* report within the Human Security thematic code.

[364] See Mayer, "The Drone Wars" and Sanger, *Confront and Conceal*, 243-270.

[365] The dominant discourse's commitment to the thematic code of hiddenness is as follows: Holder speech—2%; Brennan speech—19%; Obama speech—21%; Obama statement—28%. President Obama's contributions to this content analysis accounts for 49% of the hiddenness codes.

Public Debate—In the US	**5%**	0%
Transparency	5%	**13%**
Transparency—Lack of	8%	**17%**

The NGO reports note that strikes are occurring, not merely in "Pakistan," but in "North Waziristan," often noting the village or specific region of the strike. Additionally, both reports condemn the Obama Administration for a lack of transparency regarding orchestrated drone strikes (*Living Under Drones*—8%; *Will I Be Next?*—17%) and both reports call upon the Administration to increase transparency (*Living Under Drones*—5%; *Will I Be Next?*—13%). Of additional interest, 5% of the *Living Under Drones* (within the code of "exposure") request that the United States engage in a public debate regarding the tactical use of drones, and the authors believe that their report may be a first step in instigating this debate.[366]

Methodology: Visual Analysis

Discourses are not contained merely in texts and spoken words. "Images, photographs, diagrams, and graphics also work to create meaning."[367] Indeed, Clarke and Saldana each argue that the movement of Western culture into a "visually dependent culture"[368] has endowed "us by default with visual literacy—heightened awareness of images and their presentation and representation."[369] The public availability of Noor Behram's post-drone strike photography, taken in the FATA region of Pakistan, provides us with a unique opportunity to utilize the visual in order to better understand the assertions of the verbal. While scholars have generally discussed mixed methods as the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in social science research, the utilization of both interpretative content analysis and visual analysis is also an example of a mixed methods approach. As is argued to be true with the employment of both

[366] Stanford/NYU, *Living Under Drones*, viii.
[367] Machin and Mayr, 9.
[368] Clarke, 232.
[369] Saldana, 57.

quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a single study, the benefits of this methodological approach are also applicable in this case. The inclusion of another methodology (visual analysis) and mode of data (photography) creates a more robust data set, permitting triangulation of observations between the textual and the visual.[370]

The visual analysis of photography is a highly interpretative and subjective, thus hypothesis testing is not a fruitful endeavor, because it produces a sort of methodological tautology ("I predict that I will observe what I clearly see in front of me…") Clarke, however, suggests a rigorous and thorough three-step methodology for transforming the visual into text, through the writing of interpretive memos, for further analysis. Clarke's visual analysis methodology has three steps, each of which requires the writing of a memo to record ideas and interpretations of the photography.[371] This requires quite a bit of intentionally devoted time (in my case about three hours) with each photograph, but it is through this process that the researcher is able "to open the visual data up for analysis."[372]

The visual analysis methodology consists of three deliberate steps. First, Clarke recommends viewing the whole photograph and recording "first impression," which includes the analyst's initial reaction to the photograph. The second step is to look at "the big picture." This asks the analyst to describe what is seen in the photograph. Clarke notes that "the demands of actually writing a narrative description of the images will make you 'see' more clearly, elaborately, and precisely."[373] As I conducted my analysis, I found that my first impressions and big picture analysis naturally flowed together, so I collapsed these steps into one memo that addresses both

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[370] Julian Brannen, "Mixing Methods: The Entry of Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches into the Research Process," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* Vol. 8(3), 176 and Alan Bryman, "Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research: How is it Done?" *Qualitative Research* Vol. 6(1), 105.

[371] Clarke quips that this is a "…fussy, obsessive, and tedious [task]" (248). I don't disagree with her.

[372] Clarke, 248.

[373] Ibid., 251.

steps.[374] Third, Clarke advises the researcher to print each photograph and to divide it into quadrants. Each quadrant of the photograph is then analyzed, allowing for a granular evaluation of the photograph. Clarke explains that the objective of this step "is to describe in lush and vivid detail…what you see."[375]

At this point, Clarke recommends a complex process of concept mapping the memos in order to reach conclusions regarding the photographs. Marcus Banks, however recommends the utilization of interpretive content analysis when analyzing photographs. He believes that systematic content analysis takes into account the researcher's subjectivity in approaching a photograph as well as the need for formal analysis to reach conclusions regarding the photography.[376] Because this study used interpretative content analysis to establish the major themes present in the dominant and subversive narratives, I chose to use interpretative content analysis to analyze the memos of the pictures that I recorded as a result of the visual analysis process.

Subversive Discourse: Visual Analysis

This section analyzes nine of Noor Behram's thirteen photographs published by *Wired.com* in December of 2011.[377] These photographs depict landscapes, survivors, casualties, and destruction. They lend the viewer a unique collection of images taken at the (reported) height of

[374] Because this process is subjective and data analysis is dependent upon the researcher's interpretation for results, I have included my memos in Appendix C to increase scholar transparency.

[375] Clarke, 251.

[376] Banks, 44-46.

[377] I selected photographs that clearly depicted post-drone strike damage. Three of the photographs published by *Wired.com* were of the remnants of a Hellfire missile Behram had collected and had photographed in a studio-setting. One of the photographs was of a drone flying high above Behram's home in Western Pakistan. While it is interesting that Behram experiences the threat of drones in his immediate context, the photograph was not connected to the other photographs and its relevancy is unclear.

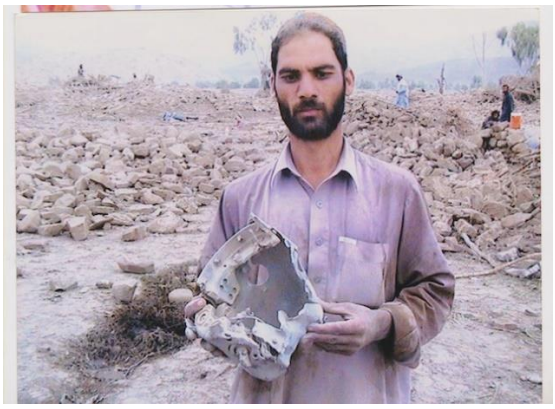
the Obama Administrations' drone strikes in Western Pakistan in 2009 and 2010.[378] The selected photographs for this analysis follow.[379]

Photograph 1 Datta Khel, October 13, 2010

Photograph 2 Mirin Shah, November 28, 2008

[378] Note: Photograph 2 was taken in 2008, a product of the Bush Administration. *The Long War Journal* estimates that 170 drone strikes occurred in Pakistan in 2009 and 2010. To give this number some context, the site estimates that 173 drone strikes have been occurred in Pakistan between 2011 and 2016 (Bill Roggio, "Charting the Data for US Airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004-2016," *The Long War Journal*, Internet; http://www.longwarjournal.org/pakistan-strikes/; Accessed 8 July, 2016. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism reports similar a number of drone strikes in Pakistan in 2009 and 2010 (182) and 193 strikes between 2011 and 2016 ("Get the Data: Drone Wars," Internet; https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/drones-graphs/; Accessed 8 July 2016). Ultimately, I am suspicious of reported numbers as these strikes are often not officially confirmed. These statistics do, however, establish a baseline for the prominence of drone strikes in southern Asia and show that there were quite a few strikes during the time covered by Behram's photographs.

[379] Dates and locations are as reported by Ackerman ("Rare Photographs Show Ground Zero of the Drone War").



Photograph 3 Dande Darpa Khel, August 21, 2009

Photograph 4 Dande Darpa Khel, August 21, 2009

Photograph 5 Dande Darpa Khel, August 21, 2009

Photograph 6 Tehsil Datta Khel, October 15, 2009

Photograph 7 Tehsil Datta Khel, December 18, 2009

Photograph 8 Datta Khel, October 28, 2010

Photograph 9 Datta Khel, October 18, 2010

Each of the photographs was evaluated using Clarke and Banks' recommendations for visual analysis. Each photograph was filtered through Clarke's three step analysis protocol with memos written to record my interpretations of the photographs. The resulting memos were consequently analyzed using the ATLAS.ti version 7.5 software and were subjected to two rounds of coding. Clarke's method is rooted in grounded theory, so all codes were emergent.[380] In the first round of coding, emergent code were established. In the second round, these codes were again applied to the memos. This process produced fifteen codes that were organized into three categories: human, landscape, and aesthetics.[381]

[380] Saldana, 101.
[381] Definitions for the codes are provided in the Code Book in Appendix A.

Table 9 **Codes Divided by Category**	
Codes	**Percentages**
Human	
Adult	7%
Casualty	4%
Children	**8%**
Dirty Clothing	5%
Emotion	5%
Women	1%
	Total: 30%
Landscape	
Barren Landscape	**6%**
Fire	4%
Mountains	3%
Sun	2%
	Total: 15%
Aesthetics	
Destruction	3%
Item Color	**22%**
Item Detail	6%
Metal Debris	5%
Rubble	19%
	Total: 55%

Visual Analysis: Results

The content analysis of the photographs' interpretative memos yielded some interesting results. The most prominent category was *Aesthetics* with over half of the memos (55%) discussing the aesthetic content of the photographs. Within this category, as we might expect from drone strike photos, 19% of the memos referenced the presence of rubble. More unexpectedly, the memos revealed the dominance of color as the most frequently used code during the analysis (22%).[382] This result indicates the importance of the "small pictures" or quadrant analysis portion of the process. When looking at photograph, it is often difficult to observe the details of the pictures

[382] It should be noted that this may not be a generalizable observation because I can see color. An individual, such as my uncle, Dr. Scott Hill, would not produce the same results because he is entirely color blind.

because we are taking in, observing, and interpreting the whole image at the same time. Breaking down the photographs into smaller units renders the often overlooked specifics of the photograph, such as the color of a displaced brick or a man's tunic, into visibility.

The "small pictures" step also allows for codes such as "item detail" (included in this were observations about patterns on bricks and printed fabric) to receive note. While the impact of this might not be immediately obvious, this engages the viewer more intentionally in the architecture of the region and provides hints about the types of brick that are present in the rubble and the socio-economic class of the people in the photographs. For example, a detailed look at the children in Photograph 4 suggests that they come from a well-off family. Their clothes (aside from being covered in dirt, conceivably a result of the strike) are in good shape and have details such as embroidery and paisley-printed fabric. This also allows for comparison across pictures. Does the rubble in Photograph 2 looks differently from the rubble in Photograph 8? Why or why not. While answers to these questions might not produce demonstrably significant answers, they do provide an ethical or philosophical answer indicating that the subjects of these photographs have been seen and have been recognized.

The content analysis of the visual analysis memos revealed some interesting revelations in the *Human* category. Making up 30% of the interpretation memos, it is interesting that the humans and human characteristic present in the photography was not more prominent. Especially considering that Noor Behram's primary goal, as conveyed to journalist Steve Coll, is to create "a partial record of the dead, the wounded, and their detritus."[383] If Behram's focus is on the humans affected by drone warfare, why did my memos not reflect that? It seems that composition might be a problem in Behram's pictures. While 2/3 of the analyzed pictures contain human subjects,

[383] Coll, "The Unblinking Stare."

less than 1/3 of the codes refer to the people in the pictures. That suggests that there is a lot of extra content in the picture. This indicates shortcomings in this methodology in two ways. First, it's possible that this result indicates a shortcoming in the "small pictures" step in Clarke's visual analysis methodology. Because the focus is to parse the photograph into as detailed of units as is possible, the main subject of the photogram can be obscured. Second, this may indicate a shortcoming in utilizing interpretive content analysis of the interpretive memos. Because more of the memo may unintentionally have been devoted to one aspect of the photograph over another, this would be reflected as "coder error" in the descriptive statistics after the content analysis has been conducted.[384]

While Behram's goal of focusing on people may not have been affirmed by this study's visual and content analysis of his photography, the *Human* category does show a focus on children (8% of the codes) and on the facially expressed emotion (5% of the codes) conveyed through the images. Coll reports that Behram "learned from conversations with editors and other journalists that if a drone missile killed an innocent adult male civilian, such as a vegetable vender or a fruit seller, the victim's long haired and beard would be enough to stereotype him as a militant. So he decided to focus on children."[385] *Wired.com* chose to publish two pictures of deceased children, both boys. While the shock of viewing dead children is difficult, it is likely that *Wired.com* published fairly sanitized photographs, limiting the true damage to one's body of being killed in a drone strike. Additionally, in both pictures of deceased children, the boys' wounds are covered by bandages, further obscuring the corporal damage.

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[384] A solution to this problem would be to have more than one coder to produce greater reliability in the coding process. Margaret Hermann suggests that a coder should have a high level of inter-coder reliability (.9 on a 1 point scale) in order to judge the content analysis' ability to be replicated by a third party. While I did not utilize this opportunity in this content analysis, it is a process that I should take advantage of in future iterations of this project. See: Margaret G. Hermann, "Content Analysis," *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, eds. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (London: Palgrave, 2009): 151-167.

[385] Coll, "The Unblinking Stare."

The final code category, *Landscape*, includes 15% of the coded interpretation memos. The codes contained in the *Landscape* category generally includes the background. As mentioned above, because Behram's photographs are intended to show as much of a drone strike's damage as is possible, the composition of the photos also show the topography of North Waziristan and its remoteness. The BBC report refers to this area as geographically "harsh" and that this isolation contributes to the disruption of the al-Qaeda forces believed to be operating in the area.[386] This is reflected by my interpretation of the photographs as well. A category leading 6% of the codes reference the "barren landscape."

In Sum

This chapter presents an evaluation and explanation of the major themes and ideas that compose the dominant and subversive discourses surrounding drone warfare. The content analysis conducted on Obama Administration speeches and the NYU/Stanford and Amnesty International reports, reveals the presence of three pairs of conflicting themes: National Security vs. Human Security, Legality vs. Illegality, and Hiddenness vs. Exposure. Additionally, the visual analysis and consequent content analysis of interpretive memos of Noor Behram's post-drone strike photography lends support to the subversive discourse theme of Exposure. The photography serves the role of visualizing the CIA's clandestine drone program. Each of these themes and conflicts will be discussed in Chapter Five.

[386] "'US Drone' Kills Four in Pakistan," *BBC.com*, 15 October, 2009, Internet; http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8308157.stm; Accessed 4 November 2015.

Chapter Five: *The Triumph of the Dominant Discourse: Framing and [lack] of Mobilization in Drone Discourse*

In a field outside of a village in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region in northwest Pakistan a 90 by 60 foot portrait of a small child stares into the sky. The portrait is an edited version of Noor Behram's photograph of three children, survivors of a drone strike that left them orphans. Created by a collective of Western and Pakistani artists who are interested in "[sharing] the untold stories and images of people in their communities,"[387] the art installation, entitled #NotABugSplat, can be seen by American drones conducting surveillance and combat missions.[388] The artists desire for this picture, of a child who lost her parents in a drone strike, is to "target predator drone operators sitting thousands of miles away who refer to kills as BugSplats. Now they'll see a child's face instead."[389] The artists behind #NotABugSplat do not intend to stop with one installation, but want "to continue to put up more posters of children to instigate further dialogue and awareness."[390]

Photograph 10 #NotABugSplat, Khyber Pakhtunkhawa, 2014

[387] Sophia Sifi, "Not a 'Bug Splat:' Artists Give Drone Victims a Face in Pakistan," *CNN.com*, 9 April 2014, Internet; http://www.cnn.com/2014/04/09/world/asia/pakistan-drones-not-a-bug-splat/; accessed 9 May 2014.

[388] Zach Schonfeld, "#NotABugSplat, an Art Project Designed to Be Seen by Drones," *Newsweek*, 8 April 2014, Internet; http://www.newsweek.com/notabugsplat-art-project-designed-be-seen-drones-245191; accessed 8 April, 2014.

[389] #NotABugSplat, "About," *NotABugSplat.com*, Internet; http://notabugsplat.com/about/; accessed 17 July 2014.

[390] Sifi, "Not a 'Bug Splat:' Artists Give Drone Victims a Face in Pakistan."

Despite the poignancy of this art installation's image and the compelling nature of its message, it is difficult to know if it evoked the sort of ethical considerations from drone pilots that it was intended to generate. What is clear, however, is that, despite the efforts of the subversive discourse, drone strikes still occur and that they continue to be a staple of the Obama Administration's counterterrorism policies. Thus, this chapter considers the following key question: Why has the subversive discourse failed to mobilize the American public to oppose the drone warfare of the Obama Administration?

Recognizing the power that discourse framing possesses to prompt action, this chapter's objective is to answer the above question. First, I look at how the six major themes established through the interpretive content analysis in Chapter Four are utilized by the frames presented in Chapter 1 (Security, Insecurity, and Story) and are used by the dominant and subversive discourses to mobilize, or to restrict mobilization. Next, this chapter will explain why the dominant discourse is ultimately victorious, arguing that the dominant discourse is actually able to coopt and/or neutralize the subversive discourse's Human Security and Exposure themes, and explains why the Illegality theme, especially as used by the Amnesty International report, utilizes rhetoric too extreme for resonance with the American public.

Discourses and Frames

The interpretive content analysis, conducted in Chapter Four, produces six themes that compose the dominant discourse (National Security, Legality, Hiddenness) and subversive discourse (Human Security, Illegality, Exposure). The dominant discourse is framed with a staunch fidelity to Security, encapsulating each of the major themes within its auspices. The subversive discourse is divided into two frames. The first is Insecurity (Human Security, Illegality) and Story (Exposure). In the following section the dominant and subversive discourses will be filtered

through their respective frames with special attention paid to the discursive themes produced through the interpretative content analysis.

Dominant Discourse: Security Frame

The **security** frame is utilized by the dominant discourse and is supported using the three themes that emerge from the interpretive discourse analysis articulated in Chapter Four: National Security, Legality, and Hiddenness. The dominant discourse has a distinct advantage over the subversive discourse because it is constructed and advocated for by political elites. Peoples and Vaughan-Williams explain that this is because "certain actors and institutions are better at securitizing than others, because they are perceived as being more credible by the relevant audience, and certain issues and objects are easier to securitize than others."[391] This is assuredly the case with the use of drones in counter terrorism efforts. As was discussed in Chapter Two, the American public is comfortable with distance-based, casualty averse counterterrorism tactics, such as drone warfare because it preserves an illusion of homeland security and soldier safety.

Instead of working to generate social mobilization, as is the objective of the insecurity and story frames below the security frame seeks to maintain the status quo and reduce the attractiveness of the subversive narrative. It achieves this objective by amplifying beliefs that are central to Americans' interests (i.e. national security) and by reminding the message recipients about the threat of terrorism that could return if support for the dominant discourse decreases.[392]

The first theme amplified through the dominant discourse is national security. The dominant discourse supports national security in three ways: first, by a general, persistent reminder that drone strikes promote national security, second, by linking the utilization of drone strikes to

[391] Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, 79.
[392] Snow, et. al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," 470.

counterterrorism efforts, and third by consistently linking current counterterrorism efforts within the context of 9/11.

First, the dominant discourse amplifies national security by consistently speaking of drone warfare as an important link to the preservation of national security. For example, Attorney General Eric Holder explains that despite counterterrorism successes, the threat to national security remains high and a consistent commitment to national security remains necessary.

> …Despite our recent national security successes, including the operation that brought to justice Osama bin Laden last year—there are people currently plotting to murder Americans, who reside in distant countries as well as within our own borders. Disrupting and preventing these plots—and using every available and appropriate tool to keep the American people safe—has been, and will remain, this Administration's top priority.[393]

Additionally, President Obama reminds his audience on May 23, 2013 that national security, protected through war, is vital for the maintenance of individual and corporate freedom.

> For over two centuries, the United States has been bound together by founding documents that defined who we are as Americans, and served as our compass through every type of change. Matters of war and peace are no different. Americans are deeply ambivalent about war, but having fought for our independence, we know a price must be paid for freedom.[394]

Thus, we see that security, articulated on a national level is an important strategy in maintaining support for endeavors that would preserve national security interests both at home and abroad.

The second way that national security is amplified through the dominant discourse is through the connection of drone warfare to sustained counterterrorism efforts. President Obama makes this link effectively in his May 23, 2013 speech. Following a historical review of the counterterrorism strategies employed after 9/11, President Obama reminds his audience, and the

[393] Eric Holder, "Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at Northwestern University School of Law."
[394] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University."

American people that the most effective way to conduct counterterrorism tactics in remote places in the world (such as Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen) is to utilize drones. "So it is in this context that the United States has taken lethal, targeted action against al Qaeda and its associated forces, including with remotely piloted aircraft commonly referred to as drones."[395]

The third strategy utilized within the national security theme to amplify belief is through the persistent linkage of current counterterrorism missions and tactics to the September 11th terrorist attacks. This is a worthwhile rhetorical strategy because 9/11 still resonates with the American people. Snow and Benford note that "stories, myths, and folks tales that are part and parcel of one's culture heritage" are forceful mechanisms in "[informing] events and experiences in the immediate present."[396] For example, in his speech on April 30, 2012, John Brennan reminds his audience: "The United States is in an armed conflict with al-Qaida, the Taliban, and associated forces, in response to the 9/11 attacks, and we may also use force consistent with our inherent right of national defense."[397] Additionally, when speaking about the accidental deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto in a drone strike in Pakistan, President Obama reminds the United States: "Since 9/11, our counterterrorism efforts have prevented terrorist attacks and saved innocent lives both here in America, and around the world."[398]

The second theme that is used to amplify the dominant discourse is Legality. The dominant discourse argues that its counterterrorism efforts are legal in two main ways. First, the Obama Administration points to its continued efforts to defeat the groups (and its affiliates) that has launched terrorist attacks against the United States and, unsuccessfully, planned many more. In his

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[395] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University."
[396] Snow and Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," 211.
[397] John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy."
[398] Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto."

May 23, 2013 speech, President Obama is clear to outline the legality of America's continued war against terrorists both within domestic and international legal frameworks.

> Moreover, America's actions are legal. We were attacked on 9/11. Within a week, Congress overwhelmingly authorized the use of force. Under domestic law, and international law, the United States is at war with al Qaeda, the Taliban, and their associated forces. We are at war with an organization that right now would kill as many Americans as they could if we did not stop them first. So, this is a just war—a war waged proportionally, in last resort, and in self-defense.[399]

Second, the dominant discourse is committed to presenting drone warfare as a legal, precise (thus discriminating), and proportionate military tactic. John Brennan lays out the dominant discourse's case for legality in his April 30, 2012 speech.

> Targeted strikes conform to the principles of distinction, the idea that only military objectives may be intentionally targeted and that civilians are protected from being intentionally targeted. With the unprecedented ability of remotely piloted aircraft to precisely target a military objective while minimizing collateral damage, one could argue that never before has there been a weapon that allows us to distinguish more effectively between an al-Qaida terrorist and innocent civilians.
>
> Targeted strikes conform to the principle of proportionality, the notion that the anticipated collateral damage of an action cannot be excessive in relation to anticipated military advantage. By targeting an individual terrorist or small numbers of terrorists with ordnance that can be adapted to avoid harming others in the immediate vicinity, it is hard to imagine a tool that can better minimize the risk to civilians than remotely piloted aircraft.[400]

The third theme that amplifies the security frame is Hiddenness. This refers to a clear goal on the part of the dominant discourse to maintain the clandestine nature of the drone program. As is described in Chapter One, because part of the drone program is operated by the CIA, transparency is not expected or available to the American public. President Obama argues,

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[399] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University."
[400] John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy."

however, that while secrecy is necessary, he is committed to oversight measures that prevent potential overreach.

> The very precision of drone strikes and the necessary secrecy often involved in such actions can end up shielding our government from the public scrutiny that a troop deployment invites. It can also lead a President and his team to view drone strikes as a cure-all for terrorism. And for this reason, I've insisted on strong oversight of all lethal action.[401]

Despite mention of the Obama Administration's "continuing commitment to greater transparency,"[402] mention of specific strikes, locations, and casualties remain vague throughout the analyzed speeches. The most transparent speech, President Obama's Weinstein statement contains the most specific details on a strike that killed an American and Italian hostage, imprisoned by al Qaeda. Even this revelation, however, remains vague, as if the details are not entirely known or able to be publicly released.

> Based on information and intelligence we have obtained, we believe that a US counterterrorism operation targeting an al Qaeda compound in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region accidently killed Warren and Giovanni this past January.[403]

The secrecy, or hiddenness, surrounding the United States drone program is the weakest part of the dominant discourse, signifying a clear place for questions and criticism from the subversive discourse and for the American people.

Subversive Discourse: Insecurity Frame

In order to generate mobilization, the subversive discourse utilizes the frame of **insecurity**. Ole Waever notes that insecurity shares the same "security problematique" as security. Whereas issues of security are characterized by action to alleviate the challenge to security, instances of

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[401] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University."
[402] John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy."
[403] Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto."

insecurity are situations "with a security problem and *no* response."[404] The NGO reports frame the problem of insecurity in two ways: first, through a concentration on human security and second, through a concentration on illegality. The development of the insecurity frame in Chapter One presents the components of Axel Honneth's practical spheres that measure human security. These include: "responsiveness to need, legal equity [and] justice to achievements."[405] This analysis will concentrate, first, on need and achievement and will address legal equity third.

The Stanford/NYU and Amnesty International reports present the lives of those impacted by drone-based warfare to be difficult and infiltrated with insecurity and fear that they might be the next victims of a drone strike. The Amnesty International report quotes a resident of a North Waziristan village that has been under threat not only by the Taliban and al Qaeda forces, but, consequently, also by American drone activity. "'Everyone is scared and they can't get out of their house without any tension and from the fear of drone attacks…We can't sleep because of the planes' loud sound. Even if they don't attack we still have the fear of attack in our mind.'"[406] The psychological challenges associated with drone warfare indicates the continual existential insecurity experienced by noncombatants. This sense of insecurity, not surprisingly, affects all aspects of the victims' lives.

The NGO drone reports elucidate an abridgement of human security expected by Honneth's first sphere of recognition: basic human need. People possess an intrinsic need to feel safe so that they are able to go about their lives' pursuits without fear of imminent death. The frequent tactical use of drones makes the experience of security difficult, if not impossible, for individuals living in areas heavily impacted by drone strikes. This is further complicated by the

[404] Waever, 56.
[405] Honneth, "Recognition and Justice," 361.
[406] Amnesty International, 31.

violent, unexpected deaths of noncombatants in these locations. For example, the Amnesty International report details the death of a grandmother who was killed by a drone strike in October of 2012 while harvesting okra in a field with four of her grandchildren nearby. "Before her family's eyes, Mamana Bibi was blown into pieces by at least two Hellfire missiles fired concurrently from a US drone aircraft."[407]

This level of insecurity is compounded for women who, by social standards lack power in their communities and homes. They express an inability to control who comes into their homes and, thus, are unable to prevent terrorists from meeting or residing with family members. This increases their anxiety that drones will strike their homes, putting them and their children at risk, and they feel powerless to stop this progression of events.[408]

Additionally, drone strikes reportedly prevent their victims from pursuing economic and academic advancement, causing Honneth's third sphere of recognition, achievement, to be unrecognized. A student who became disabled by a drone strike that hit his house, killing his father—the breadwinner for the family, tells the *Living Under Drones* researcher that he is no longer able to continue his studies because of his injuries. Additionally, he laments the fact that his disability (a lost leg) prevents him from working. Thus, his younger brothers are unable to attend school "because I can't afford to support them, buying their books, and paying their fees."[409] This is an especially difficult hardship as residents of the "FATA [suffer] from one of the highest poverty rates in the world. The per capita income in approximately US$250 per year."[410]

There is a cultural component to drone warfare as well. Reports show how drone warfare has entrenched itself within the cultural discourse of drone-targeted cultures, signifying the

[407] Amnesty International, 19.
[408] Ibid., 32-33.
[409] Stanford/NYU, *Living Under Drones*, 91.
[410] Ibid., 25.

naturalization of insecurity. "The mothers used…to tell their kids: Go to sleep or I will call your father. Now, instead, they say: Go [to] sleep or I will call the plane."[411] *Living Under Drones* researcher Jennifer Gibson argues that drone warfare is systematically destroying communities in areas targeted by, especially, weaponized UAVs. "Parents are afraid to send their children to school. Women are afraid to meet in markets. Families are afraid to gather at funerals for people wrongly killed in earlier strikes. Drivers are afraid to deliver food from other parts of the country. The routines of daily life have been ripped to shreds."[412]

The second theme discussed under the insecurity theme is illegality. Legal equity is also a key concern of Honneth's. The analysis in Chapter Four indicates that the Amnesty International report is far more concerned about legal issues than the Stanford/NYU report is. The authors of the Amnesty International report pull no punches about their legal concerns with drone strikes: "Amnesty International is seriously concerned that these and other strikes have resulted in unlawful killings that may constitute extrajudicial executions or war crimes."[413] Amnesty International is also concerned with the legality of its "borderless" drone war. The authors are clear:

> Amnesty International does not accept the USA's view that international law allows it to engage in a global and pervasive armed conflict against a diffuse network of non-state actors or that it is lawful to kill individual anywhere in the world at any time, whenever the USA deems appropriate.[414]

The insecurity frame articulates a significant critique against the dominant discourse. The NGO reports present the lives of impoverished people whose lives are made more psychologically

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[411] McEvers, "The Hidden Cost of the Drone Program."

[412] Jennifer Gibson, "Living With Death By Drone," *Los Angeles Times.com*, 04 October 2012, Accessed 11 December 2014, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/04/opinion/la-oe-gibson-drones-civilians-20121004.

[413] Amnesty Internationl, 8.

[414] Ibid., 48.

and economically difficult through their experiences with drone warfare. Additionally, the Amnesty International report presents strong language suggesting not only that the United States' counterterrorism policies are illegal under the auspices of international law but also asserts that strikes may constitute war crimes.

Subversive Discourse: Story Frame

The theoretical foundations of the **story** frame suggest that its primary goals are to provide voice to the silenced victims of drone warfare and to expose the realities of drone warfare both through the recounting of experiences and through the visualization of drone strikes' aftermath as captured in photography. First, the frame of story in the NGO reports will be explored. Second, the impact of the aesthetic in war photography will be discussed.

First, the goal subversive discourse when utilizing the story frame is to expose the dehumanizing narrative of the dominant discourse by providing a platform for the stories of drone victims to be articulated and distributed beyond the FATA region. Through the telling, recording, and reading of stories, others can recognize the experiences of victims. For those who experience the impact of drone surveillance and warfare on a daily basis, the act of storytelling is a process through which personal injustices might be identified and exposed.[415] It might also be an opportunity for the victims of drone warfare to express the difficulties and achievements present in their life experiences.

The telling and retelling of stories is a process that creates visibility for the voices of those who are underrepresented within the dominant discourse. The stories of noncombatants whose communities, families, and, sometimes, very livelihoods are threatened through drone-centric warfare have been largely untold both within both the public and academic arenas, but the NGO

[415] Fraser, 400.

reports analyzed in this project possess the ability not only to expose the "messiness" of the United States' tactical use of drones, but also of telling the stories of those affected in order to bring clarity to an intentionally opaque practice. The power of these stories is important as the global and digital nature of this conflict has caused, as philosopher Nancy Fraser tell us, "the claims for recognition of once-distant others [to] acquire a new proximity, destabilizing horizons of cultural value that were previously taken for granted."[416]

The stories told to the Amnesty International and Stanford/NYU researchers are poignant pieces of peoples' experiences. Thus, in order to allow the victim and the story to speak for his/herself, two stories selected from the Stanford/NYU report are provided below.[417]

> *"When the weather is clear, three or four [drones] can be seen . . . . They are in the air 24 [hours a day], seven [days a week], but not when it's raining. Every time they are in the air, they can be heard. And because of the noise, we're psychologically disturbed— women, men, and children. . . . When there were no drones, everything was all right. [There was] business, there was no psychological stress and the people did what they could do for a living." "[The drone strikes have caused many problems:] [f]irst, it's psychological. Diseases that people have—psychological, mental illnesses. And that's a huge issue. Secondly, a lot of men have been killed, so they're the wage earners for the house, and now the kids and the families don't have a source of income because of that." Hisham noted that "[others in the community help sometimes, but [i]n Waziristan, there are poor people, and [victims] usually rely on . . . daily wage earning. That's only sufficient for themselves, so it's hard to help others. But whenever they can, they do."*
>
> Hisham Abrar
> Interviewed in Islamabad, Pakistan on 26 February, 2012[418]

[416] Nancy Fraser, 396.

[417] Stories recorded in the *Living Under Drones* report were chosen over narratives from the Amnesty International *Will I Be Next?* Report for two reasons. First, the *Living Under Drones* report includes an appendix with twelve "testimonies" in which the story is recorded in the teller's own words. The *Will I Be Next?* report includes two lengthy case studies that, while containing quotations from witnesses and survivors, are narrated in the voice of the researcher. Second, the stories included in the *Living Under Drones* appendix are fairly short (a couple of paragraphs) whereas the *Will I Be Next* stories are several pages in length.

[418] Stanford/NYU, *Living Under Drones*, 150.

> *"[One day, [m]y brother was coming from college…dropping his friend to his house, which is located behind our house a few kilometers away…I was coming from Mir Ali Bazaar…going into my house. That's when I heard a drone strike and I felt something in my heart. I thought something had happened, but we didn't get to know until new day. That's when all the villagers came and brought us news that [my brother] had been [killed]…I was drinking tea when I found out. [My] entire family was there. They were crying…[T]o lose such a young one; everybody is sad and it also affects the tribe, our community as well. My mother is really affected. She is sad all the time, and my father is also heavily affected. At times he used to go to Peshawar or Karachi, he was outgoing, but now he sits at home."*
>
> *"I have been affected. The love I had for studies—that is finished. My determination to study—that is also gone…if, for instance, there is a drone strike and four or five of your villagers die and you feel sad for them and you feel like throwing everything away, because you feel death is near—[death is] so close, so why do you want to study?"*
>
> Khairullah Jan
> Interviewed in Islamabad, Pakistan on 29 February, 2012[419]

Second the visualization of the story frame and the exposure theme is captured by viewing and analyzing post drone strike photography. The visual analysis conducted in Chapter Four indicated key interpretive category of the aesthetic. The philosophical field of aesthetics is ancient, and provides insight into the power dynamics that are presented through artistic expression. Political theorist Diego Von Vacano defines the aesthetic within the political context as dealing with "the dimension of human experience that [allows] for purchase on the world through the senses, and how this relates to both political and moral evaluations."[420] In the case of war photography, there is a sense in which the beautiful, the aesthetic is considered sacrilegious. However, "the landscape of devastation is still a landscape. There is beauty in ruins."[421]

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[419] Stanford/NYU, *Living Under Drones*, 149-150.

[420] Diego A von Vacano, *The Art of Power: Machiavelli, Nietzsche, and the Making of Aesthetic Political Theory* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007) 2.

[421] Sontag, 75-76.

The aesthetic of war photography, especially in the current political milieu, is partially driven by an attraction to the sublime. Immanuel Kant distinguishes between that which is beautiful and the sublime.

> The sublime *moves*, the beautiful *charms*…The sublime is in turn of different kinds. Its feeling is sometimes accompanied with a certain dread, or melancholy; in some cases merely with quiet wonder; and in still others with a beauty completely pervading a sublime plan…The sublime must always be great; the beautiful can also be small. The sublime must be simple; the beautiful can be adorned and ornamented. A great height is just as sublime as a great depth, except that the latter is accompanied with the sensation of shuddering, the former with one of wonder.[422]

While potentially terrifying, "what the sublime involves is…a '*negative'* pleasure (as opposed to the '*positive*' pleasure of the beautiful)."[423] This sort of negative pleasure can be evoked when confronted with uncomfortable visualizations of warfare. Building upon the aesthetics of Kant, Debrix explains that "the spectator of the sublime image is placed in an expectative emotional state where by s/he must desperately wait for a subsequent explanation or justification in order to surmount the initial traumatic and unbearable scene."[424] Debrix goes on to argue that the dissonance felt by the viewer of the violent images of war is often resolved through the articulation of a narrative that affirms the violence as necessary and the viewers "come to accept and in fact demand abuses of power" so that political goals can be met.[425]

In order to prevent the potentially exploitative nature of sublime war photography, Debrix calls for an intellectual (and activist) "critical sublime" posture that is "on the lookout for and identify attempts at abusing the name of democracy in contemporary American military

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[422] Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, transl. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 47-49.

[423] Christine Battersby, *The Sublime, Terror and Human Difference* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 29.

[424] Debrix, 128.

[425] Ibid., 136.

operations…and in their visual…representations."[426] He concludes that a rupture of the "tabloid" understanding of the sublime would occur through "the open gift or unpredictable opportunity offered by this surprise of the event, by a sublime event that shocks and destabilizes but without providing answers and without bringing in new hopes."[427] This project does not achieve (or even broach) the most extreme goal of Debrix's critical sublime. However, it is critical in the fact that it is an attempt, at least on a discursive level, to unsettle—if possible—the dominantly held discourses of the "war machine."

In the case of Noor Behram's photography, the sublime takes center stage. The viewer of Behram's photography cannot help but be drawn in by the simultaneous awe of technological achievement and destructive abilities of weaponized drones and the horror and destruction that drones and hellfire missiles level upon its targets. This is the power that the visual possesses to expose the realities of the United States' clandestine drone wars and provides support for the stories of those who have been victims of drone warfare.

The Victory of the Dominant Discourse

In public opinion polls conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2013 and 2015, Americans who were polled were asked about their approval or disapproval of the use of drones in counterterrorism efforts "in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia."[428] In 2013, 56% of the Americans polled approved of the drone strikes, 26% disapproved, and 18% claimed to not know.[429] This poll was conducted again in 2015. The results remained fairly consistent: 58% approved of drone strikes, 35% disapproved, and 7% didn't know.[430] In the same polls,

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[426] Ibid., 142.
[427] Ibid., 143-144.
[428] Pew Research Center, "Continued Support for U.S. Drone Strikes," 11 February 2013; Internet; http://www.people-press.org/2013/02/11/continued-support-for-u-s-drone-strikes; Accessed 10 July 2016, 1.
[429] Pew Research Center, "Continued Support for U.S. Drone Strikes, 1.
[430] Pew Research Center, "Public Continues to Back U.S. Drone Attacks," 28 May 2015; Internet; http://www.people-press.org/2015/05/28/public-continues-to-back-u-s-drone-attacks/; Accessed 10 July 2016, 1.

respondents were asked if they were concerned about whether or not drones "Endanger civilian lives." In 2013, 53% of respondents were very concerned about the danger experienced by civilians in drone strikes.[431] In 2015, this number was slightly down to 48% respondents. [432] From this polling data, it appears that an overwhelming number of Americans support drone strikes, but are concerned about whether or not the strikes affect civilian lives.

If the subversive discourse had a discernable impact in mobilizing the American people against the Obama Administration's drone policies, we would expect to see support for drone strikes drop, rather than rise, especially in the 2015 numbers. Thus, using this polling data, I conclude that the subversive discourse has been ineffective in mobilizing the American public against drone strikes.

What this indicates is the intractable power of the dominant discourse in the case of American drone tactics. Richard Jackson explains the strength of the Obama Administration's counterterrorism discourse as follows:

> It is a deliberately and meticulously composed set of words, assumptions, metaphors, grammatical forms, myths and forms of knowledge—it is a carefully constructed *discourse*—that is designed to achieve a number of key political goals: to normalize and legitimize the current counterterrorism approach; to empower the authorities and shield them from criticism; to discipline domestic society by marginalizing dissent or protest; and to enforce national unity by reifying a narrow conception of national identity.[433]

The Obama Administration has been able to suppress the subversive discourse through public statements that strongly and consistently reiterate the positions of the Obama Administration outline above. Additionally, the dominant discourse is able to coopt two of the

[431] Pew Research Center, "Continued Support for U.S. Drone Strikes, 2.
[432] Pew Research Center, "Public Continues to Back U.S. Drone Strikes, 2.
[433]Jackson, 2. Emphasis is in the original.

subversive discourse's themes: human security and exposure. This diminishes the efficacy of the subversive discourse.

First, the dominant discourse is able to coopt issues of human security through the attention that it pays to civilians and civilian safety in the analyzed speeches. While the NGO reports condemn the insecurity that drones level against civilians in targets regions, the rhetoric of the dominant discourse is intentional to express acknowledgment and recognition of their plight. John Brennan argues that the number of civilian casualties is far less in drone strikes than in conventional warfare due to its precision and the standards held by the Obama Administration to avoid civilian deaths.

> I can tell you today that there have indeed been occasions when we decided against conducting a strike in order to avoid the injury or death of innocent civilians. This reflects our commitment to doing everything in our power to avoid civilian casualties, even if it means having to come back another day to take out that terrorist, as we have done previously. And I would note that these standards, for identifying a target and avoiding the loss of innocent—the loss of lives of innocent civilians, exceed what is required as a matter of international law on as typical battlefield. That's another example of the high standards to which we hold ourselves.[434]

President Obama also expresses deep concern for the protection of civilian lives and he actively discredits the casualty numbers reported by NGOs, including the reports analyzed in this project.

> Now, this last point is critical, because much of the criticism about drone strikes—both here at home and abroad—understandably centers on reports of civilian casualties. There's a wide gap between U.S. assessments of such casualties and nongovernmental reports. Nevertheless, it is a hard fact that U.S. strikes have resulted in civilian casualties, a risk that exists in every war. And for the families of those civilians, no words or legal construct can justify their loss. For me, and those in my chain of command, those deaths will haunt us as long as we live, just as we are haunted by the civilian casualties that have occurred throughout conventional fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq.[435]

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[434] John Brennan, "The Ethics and Efficacy of the President's Counterterrorism Strategy."
[435] Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the National Defense University."

Second, the dominant discourse is able to coopt the subversive discourse's exposure theme through "strategic transparency." Above, I suggested that the dominant discourse's hiddenness theme is the weakest of the three attributed to it. A way of mitigating that weakness is by strategically producing information that diffuses allegations of excessive opaqueness. Three such examples of this "strategic transparency" are the partial declassification of the Obama Administration's "U.S. Policy Standards and Procedures for the Use of Force in Counterterrorism Operations Outside the United States and Areas of Active Hostilities,"[436] President Obama's public statement, admitting to his role in the death of Warren Weinstein,[437] and the recent release of the number of deaths suffered by militants and noncombatants in the CIA's drone strikes.[438] In each of these cases, the Obama Administration lifted the curtain on its clandestine drone program just enough to seem transparent, while maintaining the secrecy it deems necessary.

[436] "U.S. Policy Standards and Procedures for the Use of Force in Counterterrorism Operations Outside the United States and Areas of Active Hostilities," 23 May 2013. Internet; https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/fact-sheet-us-policy-standards-and-procedures-use-force-counterterrorism; Accessed 10 March 2016.

[437] Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Deaths of Warren Weinstein and Giovanni Lo Porto."

[438] Liptak, "White House Reveals Number of Civilian Deaths From Drone Strike."

Chapter 6: *Conclusion*

> *But there was still the question of inner toughness: did Obama understand that as president he would be up against irredeemable people, for whom the only options would be to kill or capture them? [Richard] Clarke had spent a lifetime immersed in the dark corners of the terror wars; he had no illusions about what it would take to prevail against a nihilistic enemy like al-Qaeda. A president had to have a warrior instinct—an ability to be brutal at times. He made the point as directly as he knew how. Looking the senator in the eye, Clarke stated a simple fact. "As president, you kill people." He wasn't just talking about sending troops into battle—in the shadow wars, presidents know the names and addresses of people they have killed. Obama stared back at Clarke for several seconds. "I know that," he said very quietly and calmly. "He didn't flinch," Clarke later recalled.*[439]

Casualty averse warfare, isn't entirely casualty averse. Regardless of the precision of military technology people, civilians, die as a result of war. As has been the case with prior American wars, this remains the case with the United States' continued war on al-Qaeda and its affiliates throughout the world. The peril of precision and technologically-based warfare, such as weaponized drones, seems to create a trade-off between the human and the mechanized. This creates greater safety for some, while placing others at greater risk. Thus, the function of public discourses becomes a valuable platform through which critique and support of security policies can be articulated and debated.

This project indicates that the power that political elites have in dictating and maintaining security policy discourses. Additionally, political elites, using strong discursive frames, such as the security frame, have the resources, platform, and public attention necessary to disseminate information and maintain focus on their message alone. While there are voices of dissent, as this

[439] Klaidman, 15.

project has indicated, those voices must be strong, deliberate, and incessant in order to mobilize an opposition to the use of weaponized drones in warfare.

Lest it appear that the subversive discourse has accomplished nothing in its efforts, it is important to note the importance of the voice given to the "other" through the telling of their stories beyond their own families and villages. These stories should be told and retold on their merit. As Honneth and Butler suggest, this establishes a level of recognition that provides the story-teller with a level of grievability not allotted to those silenced by distance and difference.

In addition to the insightful interplay observed between the dominant and subversive discourses, this project elucidates a number of interesting avenues for future research. First, while this project does not access the feminist IR literature in an extensive way, there is space for discursive research on storytelling in a number of securitized areas that may yield interesting research. Second, while the international political sociology literature has loosely utilized "framing," there seems to be room for a project like this one to address some of the literature gaps in formally utilizing Snow and Benford's frame theory. Finally, I find great research potential in the employment of Adele Clarke's visual analysis and, not having seen it utilized within the post-structural IR literature, think that there is room for applying it to more expressions of security and artwork.

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Appendix A: Content Analysis Code Books
Dominant Narrative

Code	Code Definition	
Legality		
Civilian Casualties	Terminology and/or sections of text that discuss the death of or injury to defined civilians or noncombatants in combat. References to "collateral damage" are included under this code.	A Priori
Civilian Safety	Terminology and/or sections of text that discuss the provision of safety for civilians in combat scenarios	A Priori
Drone Strikes—Ethics	Portions of the text/speech that discuss the ethical viability of drone strikes in counterterrorism efforts	Emergent
Freedom	References to the creation and promotion of "American values" of liberty and freedom	Emergent
Human Rights	Narrative and analysis that refers to the importance of maintaining and enhancing human rights amongst civilians, usually in a universal sense. Human rights also covers references to "humanitarian law."	Emergent
Justice	References to acts of justice through the legal courts and extrajudicial actions of retribution.	Emergent
Legal Language	Terminology and/or sections of text that highlight the legality or illegality of weaponized drone counterterrorism tactics and justification for that stance	A Priori
Militant/Civilian Distinction	Discussion in the text regarding the distinction made between militants and civilians in regard to drone strikes. A perceived lack of distinction between militants and civilians are also included within this code.	Emergent
National Security		
Allies/Cooperation	Terminology and/or references to allies of the United States and cooperation with other states.	Emergent
American Leadership	Terminology and/or sections of text that discuss the leadership role that the United States serves in world politics.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Positive Language	A general code that includes language that promotes the utilization of drone strikes in counterterrorism efforts	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Precision	Language and/or analysis that references the precise targeting available with drone strikes.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Signature Strikes	Reference to drone strikes that are conducted using an observed pattern of activity that suggests terrorist activity and/or alliance with a terrorist organization	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Terrorist Casualties	Reference to the efficacy of drone strikes as a method of causing terrorist casualties and/or reducing the effectiveness of terrorist activity.	Emergent
National Security	Terminology and/or sections of text that prioritize and/or explain practices and policies of national security	A Priori
Public Debate—United States	Discussion about and/or reference to the exchange of ideas or debate regarding counterterrorism in the United States especially regarding the use of drones.	Emergent
Response to Terrorism (relationship to "national security)	Terminology that references acts of terrorism and/or terrorist groups in relationship to national security and/or drone strikes.	Emergent
September 11, 2001 Attacks (relationship to "national security")	Reference to the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks on the United States that took place on September 11, 2001.	Emergent
Soldier Casualty	A specific reference to the death of a United States soldier	Emergent

Soldier Safety/Casualty Avoidance	Terminology and/or sections of texts that prioritize soldier safety and/or the utilization of tactics that are intended to reduce casualties and risk to soldiers in combat	A Priori
Warfare	Terminology and/or sections of text that generally discuss "war" and/or specifically describe the on-going American conflict with al Qaeda and its affiliates	Emergent
Hiddenness		
Dates/Locations of Strikes	Terminology and/or sections of text that mention dates and/or locations of specific drone strikes	A Priori
Dates/Locations of Strikes—Vague	Terminology and/or sections of text that provide vague statements about strike locations/dates	A Priori
Drone Strikes—CIA	Reference to intelligence gathering, human intelligence, and CIA-orchestrated drone activities	Emergent
Geography—Afghanistan	References to Afghanistan	Emergent
Geography—Iraq	References to Iraq	Emergent
Geography—Pakistan	References to Pakistan	Emergent
Geography—Remote	Descriptive reference to rural and/or difficult locations to access. This code generally is used in reference to the Federally Administered Tribal Area of Pakistan.	Emergent
Geography--Somalia	References to Somalia	Emergent
Geography—Yemen	References to Yemen	Emergent
Transparency	Analysis that requests or indicates transparency regarding drone strikes by the United States government	Emergent
Transparency—Lack Of	Analysis that indicates and/or condemns a lack of transparency regarding drone strikes by the United States government. This includes language asserting that information should remain clandestine.	Emergent

Subversive Narrative: Content Analysis of Texts

Code	Code Definition	
Legality		
Civilian Casualties	Terminology and/or sections of text that discuss the death of or injury to defined civilians or noncombatants in combat. References to "collateral damage" are included under this code.	A Priori
Civilian Safety	Terminology and/or sections of text that discuss the provision of safety for civilians in combat scenarios	A Priori
Drone Strikes—Signature Strikes	Reference to drone strikes that are conducted using an observed pattern of activity that suggests terrorist activity and/or alliance with a terrorist organization	Emergent
Human Rights	Narrative and analysis that refers to the importance of maintaining and enhancing human rights amongst civilians, usually in a universal sense. Human rights also covers references to "humanitarian law."	Emergent
Legal Language	Terminology and/or sections of text that highlight the legality or illegality of weaponized drone counterterrorism tactics and justification for that stance	A Priori
Militant/Civilian Distinction	Discussion in the text regarding the distinction made between militants and civilians in regard to drone strikes. A perceived lack of distinction between militants and civilians are also included within this code.	Emergent
War Crimes	Pointed and subtle references to and analysis concerning American drone strikes as violating international law and constituting war crimes	Emergent
Human Security		

Allies/Cooperation	Terminology and/or references to allies of the United States and cooperation with other states.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Disruption of Community	Descriptions of community, religious, and/or cultural activities because disrupted by drone strikes	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Economic Hardship	Reference to the economic challenges experienced by those affected by drone strikes. This includes narratives and formal analysis.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Negative Language	A catch-all code that covers negative reference to drone strikes that do not intuitively fit under other "drone strike" codes.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Physical Injury	Narratives and analysis that discuss physical damage to humans resulting from drone strikes	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Precision	Language and/or analysis that references the precise targeting available with drone strikes.	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Property Damage	Narratives and analysis that discuss the destruction of property resulting from drone strikes	Emergent
Drone Strikes—Psychological Trauma	Narratives and analysis that discuss the disruption of life activities due to drone-caused PTSD, fear and other psychological and/or emotional traumas.	Emergent
Narrative—Family Member/Casualty	Section of narrative text that describes the loss or injury of a family member, neighbor, or friend resulting from a drone strike	A Priori
Narrative—Relationship	Narratives and analysis that specifically note the relationship of the story-teller to the victim	Emergent
Narrative—Survivor	Section of narrative text that describes the experience of a drone strike and/or injury from the perspective of a survivor	A Priori
National Security	Terminology and/or sections of text that prioritize and/or explain practices and policies of national security	A Priori
Response to Terrorism	Terminology that references acts of terrorism and/or terrorist groups in relationship to national security and/or drone strikes.	Emergent
September 11, 2001 Attacks	Reference to the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks on the United States that took place on September 11, 2001.	Emergent
Soldier Safety/Casualty Avoidance	Terminology and/or sections of texts that prioritize soldier safety and/or the utilization of tactics that are intended to reduce casualties and risk to soldiers in combat	A Priori
Exposure		
Dates/Locations of Strikes	Terminology and/or sections of text that mention dates and/or locations of specific drone strikes	A Priori
Dates/Locations of Strikes—Vague	Terminology and/or sections of text that provide vague statements about strike locations/dates	A Priori
Drone Strikes—Anti-US Sentiment	Analytical remarks made in texts/reports that suggest that drone strikes result in increased anti-US Sentiment in areas targeted by drone strikes	Emergent
Drone Strikes—CIA	Reference to intelligence gathering, human intelligence, and CIA-orchestrated drone activities	Emergent
Geography—Afghanistan	References to Afghanistan	Emergent
Geography—North Waziristan	References to the northern part of Waziristan, a mountainous region on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan	Emergent
Geography—Pakistan	References to Pakistan	Emergent
Geography—Somalia	References to Somalia	Emergent
Geography—South Waziristan	References to the southern part of Waziristan, a mountainous region on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan	
Geography—Yemen	References to Yemen	Emergent
Public Debate—United States	Discussion about and/or reference to the exchange of ideas or debate regarding counterterrorism in the United States especially regarding the use of drones	
Transparency	Analysis that requests or indicates transparency regarding drone strikes by the United States government	Emergent

Transparency—Lack Of	Analysis that indicates and/or condemns a lack of transparency regarding drone strikes by the United States government. This includes language asserting that information should remain clandestine.	Emergent

Subversive Narrative: Visual and Content Analysis of Photography

Code	Code Definition	
Adult	Language referencing the presence of adult persons in the photographs	Emergent
Barren Landscape	Language referring to the remote nature of the landscape in the photographs	Emergent
Casualty	Discussion of injury and/or death	Emergent
Children	Language regarding the presence of children in photographs	Emergent
Destruction	Language referring to the process of destruction	Emergent
Dirty Clothing	Discussion of the soiled condition of clothing worn by individuals in the photographs	Emergent
Emotion	Words describing the interpretation of emotions based on individuals' facial expressions in the photographs	Emergent
Fire	Language discussing the presence of fire and/or areas appearing to be burned/blackened in photographs	Emergent
Item Color	Descriptions of the colors of particular items in the photographs	Emergent
Item Detail	Descriptions of artistic imprinting on items, patterns on carpets, etc. in photographs	Emergent
Metal Debris	Discussion of metal objects present in photographs. Description of remaining pieces of hell fire missiles are included under this code	Emergent
Mountains	Description of mountainous terrain in the photograph	Emergent
Rubble	Language describing building and infrastructure debris present in photographs	Emergent
Sun	Reference to sun and clear skies in the photographs	Emergent
Women	Language regarding the presence of women in photographs	Emergent

Appendix B: Visual Analysis Memos

Noor Behram's Drone Photography

https://www.wired.com/2011/12/photos-pakistan-drone-war/

Initial thoughts:

Of the 11 photographs posted in the "Wired" story, I selected nine to analyze. The nine selected included visual evidence (according to Behram and *Wired.com*) of the impact of drone strikes. To me, these revealed the impact that drone strikes have on individual people in homes and in communities. I chose the *Wired* photographs (instead of *The Guardian* and *Der Spiegel*'s published photography) because they were vetted by the author of the *Wired.com* article and seem to be triangulated with accounts of reported strikes by Western news sources. This triangulation also provided me with some context for the photographs.

This analysis follows the "Big Picture Memo" approach developed by Robert E. Park and explained and developed by Clarke. The data creation comes not only from the photograph, but also from the composed memo, which is an account of the analyst's interpretation of the photographs.

As I embarked on the "first impressions" step, I naturally described the photograph. Thus, I collapsed steps one and two into one step. After this, I used printed versions of the photographs that were divided into quadrants in order to complete the "little pictures" step. Because I didn't have access to a color printer, I used a black & white print out and looked at the colored photo on a computer screen in order to analyze the colors of the various quadrants.

Photograph 1:

First Impressions/Big Picture:

- Seven children holding pieces of metal debris. These pieces of metal seem to be important as the children have collected the pieces and are holding them in an organized group to be photographed.
- All of the children appear to be male. The three taller boys (in the back) appear to be teenagers, while the four near the front of the photograph appear to be grade school aged.
- The children are wearing what I would expect to be "traditional" South Asian garb. With the exception of the boy second from the right who is wearing white and the tall boy in the back, who is wearing blue, the boys are wearing dark clothing. Some of the boys' clothes (notably the boy in maroon in the center) are very dirty. One might assume that they became dirty when searching for and/or retrieving the metal objects they are holding. All of the boys are wearing head coverings (though we cannot see the top of the boy in blue's head.) Not all of the boys' headwear appears similar. Some appear to have more turban-like or wrapped head coverings, while others have more structured caps.
- It is clearly a sunny day. The picture is slightly over-exposed due to the sunlight. The green trees in the background pop out against the boys' (generally) drab clothing.
- The buildings in the background seem to be intact, as do the trees, so we might assume that the boys are standing a distance away from the drone strike location.
- With the exception of the boy on the far right of the photograph, none of the boys are looking directly into the camera. The younger boys seem to be looking, with curiosity, directly at their metal debris. The older boys towards the left side of the picture appear disgusted or angry. The tall boy in blue does not have an interpretable facial expression.
- The boy on the far right stands in a more aggressive pose than the other boys—as if he is shoving his piece of metal directly at the camera. "See? Look at what I have here."

- On photo composition: This photograph seems hastily taken. It is not formally posed and neglects to include the entirely of the group. The subject of the photograph seems to be the metal debris that the boys are carrying.

Little Pictures:

- 1-A
    - When pulled in this close, the expressions of the older, taller boys is clearer. Both appear very angry. The boy in the blue scarf also appears sad.
    - I am curious about the black strap across the scarf-wearing boy's chest. It might be a bag, but that is unclear.
    - The boy on the far left looks quizzically at the missile piece in his hand.
- 1-B
    - The tall boy in the back, wearing the light blue, seems emotionless. He also doesn't seem to have anything in his hands (unlike the other boys in the picture). Because his head is cut off in the photograph, it appears that he is not included in the group. He seems to be a bit of an outsider or perhaps was not involved in the missile-piece collection endeavor.
    - The facial expressions of the three younger boys are very interesting. The smallest boy (left) is carefully examining his missile piece, but seems sad—maybe afraid of it. The middle boy (in white) is gasping at his missile piece. Perhaps he's about to drop it. The boy to the far right appears defiant and is aiming his missile piece at the photographer, towards the viewer. His eyes are squinting, almost as if he is aiming the missile piece (like a gun).
    - The boys are wearing similar hats that are dissimilar from the boys' hats in 1-A. I wonder if they might be siblings.
- 1-C
    - The missile pieces in this quadrant are each spent. They are hollow inside. I'm surprised that they are in as large of fragments as they are post-strike. They must be fairly light as the boys can hold them with one hand.
- 1-D
    - Same comments re: missile pieces as in 1-C. Few dissimilarities are noticed.

Photograph 2:

First Impressions/Big Picture:

- This photograph shows a pile of rubble/debris next to an intact wall.
- Because the lower part of the wall is painted blue, it strikes me that this may be an interior wall or the exterior wall of a porch. Apparently it was an area of importance to the home owner since it was painted such a bright color.
- Included in the pile of debris appear to be electrical wine, cement with exposed rebar, decorative stone or bricks, loose bricks (not decorative), bricks that are still held together with mortar. Long, thin pieces of wood are leaning against the wall.
- The building in the background has doors and a window. The glass or screen on the window (left-center portion of the photo) seems to still be intact.
- It doesn't appear that there has been a fire here, just destruction—maybe an explosion.
- The building appears to be sitting upon a concrete foundation with a step up (far right-center of the photograph)

- No household items (furniture, etc.) appear to be in the debris.
- On photo composition: This photograph is composed with the pile of debris as the primary subject of the photograph.

Little Pictures:

- 2-A
    - The diagonally situated pieces seem to be metal. Some have holes for screws, but they are no longer connected.
    - This appears to be the exterior of a building painted white with a bold, blue stripe.
    - The windows and doors are painted brown and have panes of glass. It appears that the glass in the windows and doors is not broken (though it's difficult to tell)
    - This house has an electrical box attached to the wall between the window and door. Perhaps it is for an exterior light.
- 2-B
    - One of the window panes/shutters is open. It's not clear if this is the way its supposed to be or not.
    - There are black marks on the back wall. This stands in stark contrast to the white walls.
    - The beam that is leaning has rebar coming out of the top. It appears to be plaster-covered cement. It might be brick
    - Metal pieces—laid diagonally—cut through the center of this quadrant.
- 2-C
    - This quadrant shows a pile of displaced bricks. Towards the bottom, the bricks are still neatly laid—so the disparency between the two is clear.
    - A piece of electrical cord (conceivably) runs through the upper right portion of this quadrant.
    - Some of the bricks seems to have a stamp—maybe a date or location of manufacture.
    - In the top right, a chunk of mortared brick lays—it appears dislodged from the foundation.
- 2-D
    - In this quadrant we see more brick debris
    - In the far left corner of the quadrant is a delicately-carved brick/stone with a flower or star at the center and filigree on the edges as a border.

Photograph 3:

First Impressions/Big Picture:

- This photograph shows a man wearing a purple shirt, holding a piece of metal (similar to those held by the boys in photograph 1). He is very direty. The sleeves of his shirt have become discolored and appear brown. His hands are also very dirty and appear to be covered with the dirt that surrounds him. He is showing the camera the piece of metal as if this is the important thing that he wants the photographer to see. In the background is an expansive pile of rubble. It fills most of the background of the photograph. In the background are at least three people. They are concentrated to the right side of the photograph. There are two figures in the background to the left of the man. These could be people, bodies, or piles of fabric (curtain material or rugs). The photograph does not make this clear. Further back in the photograph, we see that this is a mountainous region

and that there are trees and bushes in the background. While it's difficult to tell for sure, it appears that the men to the right might be taking a water break (that looks like an orange water cooler to me—where would they have gotten that?!) The person to the right-center (in the blue) appears to be walking into the rubble. The people in the background appear interested in the photographer. They are also looking towards the camera, despite their distance from the photographer. They seem to be wondering: "What's going on over there?"

- The man in the picture: He seems to be well-dressed (my response to the photograph: "That's a nice shirt!") Despite his surroundings, his shirt appears well-pressed. His beard is well-maintained. He looks directly into camera, confidently, but he appears concerned. His eyebrows are furled and his eyes slightly squinted. Perhaps he is questioning the photographer.
- On photo composition: This photograph is more aesthetically pleasing than the previous two and seems to deliberately tell a story of individuals who were doing clean up. The photographer seems to be making a connection between the piece of metal that the man in the foreground is holding and the destruction in the background. It's interesting that this photograph, while showing a lot of debris in the background does not pull back far enough to see all of the destruction/debris/rubble. Nor is it clearly depicting the activities in the background of the photograph.

Little Pictures:

- 3-A
    - This picture was taken on a bright, sunny day.
    - There is mountainous terrain in the background, though it is faint
    - There are two individuals standing in the background. It's unclear what they are doing.
    - There is a bundle of blue fabric in the right center of the quadrant. It is laid out as if it could be a victim on the outskirts of the rubble, but that is not clear.
    - In the foreground, we see a landscape of various-sized stones and debris.
- 3-B:
    - In this quadrant, we first see the photograph's main subject face. An adult man (30-40 years of age) is looking directly at the camera. His facial expression conveys concern, anger, sadness.
    - In the background, we see three individuals. All appear to be men. The two on the right appear to be to be taking a water break and are gathered around an orange cooler (similar to the kind that construction workers use in the US) that is sitting atop a pile of stones. They are dressed in dark clothing.
    - In the center, another man moves from right to left, towards the rubble. He is wearing white and blue, causing him to stand out against the darkly clothed individuals.
    - In the background, we can see some barren trees as well as some more lush greenery. Mountains and a tree line are visible in the far distance.
- 3-C:
    - In this quadrant, we see the piece of a missile that the subject (the man) is holding. It is metal and gray and appears to be empty.

    - To the left, there are a few stones scattered. They appear to be distinct from the rubble pile depicted in 3A and 3B. They ground appears unlevel, but not affected by an explosion.
    - In the top center, there is a black area—perhaps the site of impact or a hole—with some brown/dried vegetation around the black hole.
- 3-D:
    - In this quadrant, we see primarily the man's sleeve and left hand. His clothing is dirty, presumably from the efforts of extracting the missile piece that he is displaying in 3-C.
    - The ground in the right (vertical) third of the photograph also seems undisturbed.

Photograph 4:

First Impressions/Big Picture

- This photograph depicts three children. They seem to know each other—I would guess that they are siblings. The smallest child (in green) looks to the middle child (a girl) for explanation. He might not understand why this photograph is being taken. Each child is holding some stones or pieces of brick and are showing them to the photographer. Despite being very dirty, the children's attire seems well-cared for (it's dirty, but doesn't have holes in it). In contrast to the boys in photograph one, these children are wearing light/bright colored clothing (white, green, paisley-printed). The girl to the left is looking directly into the camera. She seems interested in what the photographer is doing. While the boy on the right appears to be looking at the camera, it seems that he is actually looking at the rocks in his hands. To the right, in the bottom corner, we see a fire burning. It appears to be wood burning, but the purpose of the fire and/or its origins are unclear.
- In the background we see a flat, rocky area that leads up to a tree line and then to some larger hills/mountains. There are a lot of rocks. Everywhere. The tree in the upper right doesn't seem to be especially vibrant. It appears to be leaning off of the small hill that it is growing out of.
- On photo composition: The subject of this photograph is clearly the children. While their story is not clear from the photo, what is clear is their interest in the photographer, the rocks that they are holding onto, and each other. The photographer seems to have situated the children away from the village and from other people. They are placed against the background of what lies beyond their place of residence, free of buildings or other people. I'm not sure that the photographer intended the fire to be included in the photograph. At least, there is little clue from the photo's composition concerning the purpose of the fire. More so than the other photographs, this one seems posed.

Little Pictures:

- 4-A
    - While the little girl in this photograph is not (probably) the intended subject in this photograph, I think that the interaction between her and her (conceivably) younger sibling is precious.
    - The girl stares directly into the camera looking interested—not sad or afraid. Her hair is neatly cut and has a couple of curls flying away on top.
    - The girl's dress is cute—looking almost Western in origin. It is white with a pink or purple paisley print.
    - She holds something—perhaps a rock—in her hands

    - To the right, the girl's younger sibling appears to be asking her a question (perhaps about the photographer).
    - The area directly behind the two children is rocky rough terrain. In the distance is a tree line and past that emerge mountains.
- 4-B
    - This quadrant shows only an older boy. In his hands, he holds two rocks or bricks. What they are for or what they for is not clear.
    - He smiles at the rocks, seemingly interested in them—perhaps he's thinking of what he could do with them.
    - The boy wears white clothes that seem fairly clear except for a couple of smudges of dirt on the sleeves.
    - Over the boy's shoulder, a tree grows on a hill or out of a rocky outcropping. There also appears to be some vegetative ground cover.
- 4-C
    - In this quadrant, it is clear that the small child is also holding a rock. He/she has decorative embroidery on his/her clothes
    - From this quadrant, the girl's dress is clearly very dirty—with dirt and dust. It appears that she may have been covered in dust from an explosion.
- 4-D
    - In this quadrant we see that the older boy's clothing is also quite dirty—similar to the girl's clothing in 4-C.
    - The fire in the bottom right is a bit peculiar. It appears that wood is burning, but it is not clear what purpose the fire serves.
    - Behind the fire is rocky terrain, perhaps rubble.

Photograph 5:

First Impressions/Big Picture:

- This picture is hard. That's because I know at first glance that this is the death portrait of a child.
- The child's eyes are closed. He has some discoloration around his nostrils (dried blood?) and on his lip. Someone has placed a white bandage around his head. The child is wearing a blue jacket that is very dusty and dirty.
- In the background we see a red, patterned rug. It's quite beautiful and might be a special possession of the owner.
- On photo composition: The child is the subject of this photo. His head is situated between two white columns, which provides an aesthetic frame for the child.
- It is interesting to me that this is a picture of a child. There are not pictures of deceased adults included in this collection of photography. **That indicates a very clear message to the viewer. While the deaths of others are important, it's the death of children that are the most important.**

Little Pictures:

- I evaluated this picture in its quadrants, but did not see anything additionally helpful. I think this is primarily because the quadrants were equally divided on the child's face. Additionally, because the photograph was taken up close, much of the detail of the photograph is clear from a "big picture" analysis.

Photograph 6:

First Impressions:

- This photograph shows a destroyed building in the midst of a desolate, rural landscape. The remaining wall (in the upper left) appears to be made out of mud. There are exposed beams on the building's "floor." Perhaps pieces of rebar (though that's difficult to tell. There are blackened pieces of wood (conceivably from fire) in the bottom third of the photograph.
- Towards the center of the photograph, in the midst of the rubble is a red patterned rug. That leads me to wonder if this had been someone's home.
- In the center back of the photograph there is a lone telephone pole, suggesting modern contact with the outside world. This is juxtaposed against the barren land in the background. The terrain contains some grass (now browned) and scattered bushes. In the far background we see some trees emerging. ?In the very back of the photograph there are large hills or mountains.
- On photo composition: This photo is a landscape. The rug and the charred wood in the midst of the rubble seem to be the subject of this photograph, though it is taken at such an angle that it makes it difficult to see detail of either. The rug sees to emerge from the rubble. The white remaining wall stands in stark contrast to the rest of the color scheme, which leads us towards the telephone pole.

Little Pictures:

- 6-A
    - This quadrant shows a crumbling wall that appears to be constructed from mud, wood, and stone. It could also be made from concrete that hasn't been carefully smoothed (as it might be in American construction).
    - Some sticks protrude from the top of the mud wall and seem to be covered with straw (perhaps for the building's roof).
    - Dislodged stones or bricks and wood are scattered on the ground.
    - In the distance, we see the horizon, lined with trees and with some brush in front of that.
- 6-B
    - There are two things that stick out to me in this quadrant:
        - The remnants of a wall that had been painted white. It appears to have had a substantial chunk removed from it.
        - A telephone pole dividing the quadrant. This technology is juxtaposed against a very remote backdrop. This scene actually reminds me of the landscape (dotted with telephone poles) at my family's ranch in eastern Montana.
    - The foreground shows a number of stones, bricks, and sticks strewn on the ground.
    - The background shows a barren landscape: flat grass land transitions quickly into rolling hills, which transitions to a timber line, and then to mountains in the distance. One can see a very long distance in this area.
- 6-C
    - The quadrant shows a pile of rubble that appears to be composed of stones, lumber, sticks and bricks.

        - Originally I thought that the sticks might be rebar, but from this vantage, they appear to be more wood-like than metal. I could still be wrong here.
    - Near the center of the frame, we see that some of the lumber has been charred, conceivably from a fire.
    - Near the dead center of the quadrant there appears to be a short cylinder. It looks different from the other materials in the rubble, leading me to wonder if it might be part of the missile that hit this building.
    - The upper right corner of this quadrant shows part of a red, white, and black patterned rug.
- 6-D
    - This quadrant shows more of the rubble.
    - The sticks in this area are positioned more evenly, almost laying perfectly horizontally.
    - There are some charred elements in the bottom left corner of the quadrant.
    - The upper-left corner shows the rest of the rug (mentioned in 6-C). In this quadrant, the color of the rug (red) and its pattern (white background with black circles) are clearer as a corner of the rug is flipped over and is displaying the color.

Photograph 7:

First Impressions/Big Picture

- This photograph doesn't strike me as very exciting, which makes me wonder why *Wired* chose to include it. It doesn't seem to give any indication of being anything more than a garbage pile against a building wall. I suspect that there's more in the article's backstory.
- This photograph shows a pile of whole and broken bricks in front of a white and brick building wall. There appear to be pipes intermixed in the pile at odd angles. Laying on top of the pile and slightly behind it are dried straw or grasses. Cutting through the photograph (tilted towards the upper right corner) is a blue metal piece that (probably because of the direction in which it's pointed) reminds me of a ladder.
- The longer I look at this photograph, I realize that the area behind the rubble is actually open. Initially, I thought that it was a white wall, but in the very far right corner, there is a tree. The picture is slightly overexposed, causing the daylight to appear white. Whatever was previously behind the pile of rubble is no longer present. The walls' interiors (I'm guessing) are exposed to the outside and to the sun.

Little Pictures:

- 7-A
    - This quadrant shows thick wooden poles leaning up against a brick and concrete wall.
    - Cutting through the frame is a blue metal piece that is sitting diagonally—lower left corner to upper right. There is a wooden pole laying cross-wise on it.
    - The concrete wall appears to be painted a brick red color on the lower half
    - In the background, we see an unknown arched structure and the white light of daylight
- 7-B
    - This quadrant doesn't seem especially informative or interesting
    - On the far right we see a brick, mortared structure—perhaps a chimney.

    - Throughout the center of the frame are dried grasses, straw, etc.
    - There is a concrete-covered brick structure (maybe a wall?) towards the back of the frame. It appears to be crumbling and has suffered damage, but is standing.
- 7-C
    - This quadrant shows the blue metal piece in the upper left coming out of the ground and extending into the 7-A quadrant. We can see the pole crossing it here.
        - It strikes me that perhaps the pole fell on the blue metal object, knocking it down
    - There are a number of stones and bricks strewn on the ground. Grasses and/or straw is interwoven throughout the rubble.
    - It appears that there might be a wooden or metal table within the rubble. It looks like a small side table or a night stand.
- 7-D
    - This quadrant shows dislodged and fallen bricks.
    - There are some metal pipes (maybe copper?) laying horizontally at the top and center of the quadrant and a pipe cutting the upper right corner.

Photograph 8:

First Impressions/Big Picture

- This photograph depicts an area of strewn rock, stone, and brick. Approximately twelve individuals stand looking at the rubble from a firm rock or concrete street or building foundation. There is a mixture of adults and children. One person (likely a man) stands in the midst of the stones and appears to be searching for something.
- I could be incorrect, but I think that this is the first depiction of women in the *Wired.com* Noor Behram photographs. I am assuming that some of the individuals standing in the upper right corner because they are waring fabric head coverings that appear to me to be hijabs.
- The spectators are wearing a variety of colors. While some are wearing dark colors (black, brown), the individuals at the center are wearing light colors (white, yellow, blue) that cause them to stand out against the monotone tan foreground of the photograph.
- In the background of the photograph, a stone/brick wall remains intact with a red-curtained window pops out in the upper left. The photograph is framed in the upper left, as well, with some tree or bush branches.
- Some of the stones/bricks in the pile seem unremarkable, but there are several that contain decorative stamping. That indicates to me that this building/wall was/.is special to the people who are gathered.
- In the lower third of the photograph, in the center, is a heap of brown fabric. While I am hopeful that it is some strewn clothing, it's possible that it marks the location of a victim beneath the rubble.

Little Pictures:

- 8-A
    - In this quadrant, we see a man bending over in a pile of rubble, looking for something or someone. Despite the fact that he is wearing a rather drab color (brown), he stands out against the light-colored stone/brick that he is standing on.
    - A man in black (on the far right) watches the man in brown's search.

    - On the left side of the frame is a tree with green leaves.
    - Behind the pile of rubble is a tall stone wall with a red-curtained door or window.
        - It's possible that this rubble was caused by the destruction of a similar wall. Perhaps this used to be a courtyard of sorts.
- 8-B
    - This quadrant includes a crowd of spectators. All seem to be watching the man in brown's search through the rubble (quadrant 8-A).
        - I believe that I count 13 onlookers in this quadrant
    - The three men on the right seem to be talking to each other
    - It appears that there are two children standing near the center of the group and 2-3 women (who are identified from their head scarves).
        - As a side note, this is the first presence of women in the *Wired.com* photographs
    - There appears to be a red vehicle in the background and some still-standing buildings in the distance.
- 8-C
    - This quadrant shows a pile of stone and brick rubble.
    - Most of the bricks appear plain, but some have decorative markings—perhaps a flower
    - Towards the lower right corner is a brown bit of fabric. It's difficult to tell if it might be covering a victim. If so, this might be the individual that the man in brown is searching for. If not, it appears to be some clothing in the midst of the rubble.
- 8-D
    - The quadrant shows more stone and brick debris
    - Here we can see more clearly some of the decorative markings on the brick. It might be crest or a decorative emblem.
        - It seems that this place was valued—as is clear by the care in including decorative bricks in its construction.

Photograph 9:

First Impressions/Big Picture

- Again, this photograph of an injured, perhaps dead, child is difficult.
- Different from the other photographs posted by *Wired.com*, this is the only photograph that is displayed vertically. This may be because the photographer is interested in showing only the child, not the background.
- The child appears to be elementary school aged (maybe 8-10 years old) and is shirtless and is covered in bandages on his torso, but his face appears fairly free of damage. He rests his head either on his white shirt or the shirt of a rescuer. The lower half of his body is covered in a brown and black plaid blanket or sheet.
- His right hand and arm appear to be burned. He has an IV in his left hand, indicating to me that this picture has been taken at the hospital or doctor's clinic.
- Despite his clear injuries, the child appears peaceful—as though he is sleeping.

Little Picture

- Similar to the situation with Photograph 5. Because this is a close-up photograph of an injured or deceased child, the quadrant approach does not seem to add anything of help to the analysis that isn't already present in the First Impressions/Big Picture step.