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"Hello my name is Inigo Montoya, you killed my father, prepare to die!" Messaging Effects on Support for Violent Non-state Actors

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*“HELLO MY NAME IS INIGO MONTOYA, YOU KILLED MY FATHER, PREPARE TO
DIE!”* MESSAGING EFFECTS ON SUPPORT FOR
VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS

By Alexandra Danielle Haines

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Abstract

Given the sheer number of stories that permeate each and every culture, it seems impossible to deny the profound effect that storytelling has on our lives. Previous research, exploring the relationship between personal frames and human rights campaigns, concludes that exposure to a story involving an individual's victimization will most successfully mobilize support for that campaign. However, there has not yet been any systematic research to determine whether personal narratives will mobilize support when a campaign is not philanthropic in nature, but instead inherently violent and destructive. This study, therefore, examines how certain messaging strategies influence support for the use of violence by violent non-state actors. I tested the efficacy of personal frames using an experimental research design in which participants were randomly assigned to the control group (shown no personal narrative) or one of the four treatment groups and shown varying accounts of a young girl, who joins a "resistance" group following the death of her mother. I then surveyed respondents on their attitudes, emotions and their willingness to support violence. Results demonstrate that amplified personal frames, containing humanizing language and/or vivid details of the injustice, are most effective in generating consensus mobilization towards the use of violence by violent non-state actors.

Étant donné le grand nombre d'histoires qui imprègnent chaque culture, il semble impossible de nier l'effet profond que la narration a sur nos vies. Des recherches antérieures, explorant la relation entre les images personnelles et des campagnes des droits de l'homme, conclut que l'exposition à une histoire impliquant la victimisation d'un individu sera le plus grand succès de mobiliser le soutien pour cette campagne. Cependant, il n'y a pas encore eu de recherches systématiques pour déterminer si des récits personnels vont mobiliser le soutien quand une campagne est non philanthropique dans la nature, mais intrinsèquement violentes et destructrices. Cette étude examine donc comment certaines stratégies de messagerie influent soutien à l'utilisation de la violence par des acteurs non-étatiques violents. Je l'ai testé l'efficacité des cadres personnels à l'aide d'une conception de la recherche expérimentale dans laquelle les participants ont été assignés au hasard au groupe de contrôle (montré aucune narration personnelle) ou l'un des quatre groupes de traitement et montré différents comptes d'une jeune fille, qui se joint à une «résistance» groupe après la mort de sa mère. Je puis sondé les répondants sur leurs attitudes, les émotions et leur volonté de soutenir la violence. Les résultats démontrent que les cadres personnels amplifiés, contenant un langage humanisant et / ou détails saisissants de l'injustice, sont les plus efficaces pour générer la mobilisation de consensus en vue de l'utilisation de violence par des acteurs non-étatiques violents.

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Chapter One: Introduction

He glides across the floor with the swift grace of an expert swordsman, clutching his bloody wounds and invoking the illustrious phrase over and over, his voice growing stronger with determination. “Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya, you killed my father, prepare to die!” As a child, during this scene from the beloved film, “The Princess Bride,” I would erupt in applause once Inigo, the hero, finally got his revenge against the evil nobleman who murdered his father. Irrespective of the violence that ensued, I felt as though Inigo had somehow set the world back into balance with this vengeful act. Though I did not know it yet, I had learned a valuable lesson in the powerful role that storytelling plays in the construction of our reality.

When looking at the course of human history, the influence of stories cannot be understated. The ancient Greeks used storytelling to interpret their chaotic world, creating a rich society and civilization that would be studied for centuries to come. The tale of events at the Boston Tea Party in 1773 sparked the political upheaval that became the American Revolution, summoning with it the eminent slogan, “No taxation without representation!” Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Germany established a notorious narrative that led to the systematic extermination of about six million Jews and the deadliest war in our history. In the prelude to the Rwandan Genocide, the Hutu political elite reinforced pre-existing ethnic tensions with “us versus them” rhetoric and hate speech, constructing a formidable divide between the Tutsis and the Hutus and effectively legitimizing the 100-day massacre that took the lives of an estimated 800,000 people. Our complex history suggests that as long as there are people willing to use violence, there will also be narratives created to support it.

This theoretical link between narratives and violent behavior has largely been unexplored by scholars and policymakers alike. While perhaps many have questioned why someone would ultimately risk their life to participate in a violent movement, few have systematically analyzed the isolated effects of various messaging strategies on support for such movements. Yet, as thousands flock to war-torn Syria to join the ranks of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or “ISIS,” gaining a better understanding of the motivations and objectives of violent non-state group’s propaganda seems of paramount importance. Thus, in the following Independent Study Thesis, I endeavor to address some of these critical gaps in examining which kinds of narratives are most effective in galvanizing support for violent non-state actors. I am investigating these enigmatic relationships in pursuit, not of a panacea to violence, but of an increased awareness of how certain messages impact mobilization towards violence.

Chapter two contextualizes my research question through a discussion of three dominant schools of thought regarding mobilization around high-risk social movements in relation to the process of “framing.” In chapter three, I present my methodological approach for testing the hypotheses, as well as outlining the advantages and disadvantages of my chosen experimental research design. The results from the statistical analyses are presented and discussed in chapter four. Chapter five concludes the thesis, contributing new insights regarding the role of messages in mobilizing support for violent non-state actors.

Chapter Two: Theory and Literature Review

Meet Leila. Leila and her family were forced to flee their home following the emergence of a civil war. After years living in abject poverty, Leila wishes to return home and strongly supports the principle of political agency for herself and her fellow people. An organization holds similar beliefs and advocates to this cause. In fact, it was just announced that this group is recruiting new members to engage in an “armed struggle” to obtain autonomy. Will Leila join the movement despite the risks or decide to stay home?

For centuries, sociologists, economists, psychologists and political scientists have ventured to predict and explain human behavior in regards to high-risk collective action. The relevant social movement literature can be conceptually divided into three “schools” of thought – grievances, rational choice theory and emotional engagements. Some have argued that these approaches are rival or incompatible, yet there is little empirical evidence to suggest that there is a single explanation for participation in collective violence, thus they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, each theory speaks to the other in an effort to build a more cohesive framework with which to better understand the preconditions and determinants for high-risk collective action. Throughout this chapter, I will first examine each school of thought chronologically in order to better evaluate the progression and growth of collective action theory, while identifying the research gaps or weaknesses that exist within each theoretical argument. Next, I will discuss how certain social movement actors carefully construct powerful, emotion-laden messages through a process known as “framing,” in order to motivate individuals to engage in collective action.

The Grievance Approach

Aristotle wrote in his fifth book within the philosophical work *Politics*, “The cause of revolution always is to be found in [relative] inequality,” laying the foundation for the first conceptual framework linking grievances to participation in collective violence (as cited in Kort, 1952, 486). Largely explored by scholars of revolution and rebellion, this approach highlights the motivations rooted in an individual’s discontent with his or her economic position in society relative to others (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008). Since Aristotle, certain scholars have speculated as to whether the mere presence of grievances stemming from inequality, such as landlessness, unemployment and marginalization from political decision-making, can sufficiently explain why individuals mobilize towards violence. Rather than comparing one’s position with others in society, these theorists posited that in order for participation to occur, individuals judge their circumstances relative to their own expectations of what they deserve, a mechanism known as “relative deprivation” (Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970). There are several variations of this basic argument. Karl Marx, for example, identified social class as the critical determinant of participation, proposing that individuals’ shared experiences of exploitation would result in revolution against the capitalist system (Marx, 1848). Others focus on cultural differences between ethnic groups to explain participation in collective violence (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008, 440).

The presence of individual grievances seem, at least, a necessary condition for collective violence, as individuals who become involved with such movements often cite instances of perceived injustices, discrimination and oppression as principal reasons for their involvement. For example, in their survey research with 441 individuals in communities across Afghanistan, Reza Fazli, Casey Johnson and Peyton Cooke found

that survey respondents consistently emphasized the importance of grievances, namely marginalization and corrupt governance, as drivers of their participation in a violent extremist group (Fazli et al., 2015, 7). “Relative deprivation” is observed to be most prevalent in environments where expectations from recent economic development or progress are heightened (Sigelman and Simpson, 1977). A well-known example comes from the precarious years leading up to the Iranian Revolution of 1979. One scholar writes, “The conspicuous consumption on the part of Iranian high society...produced an acute sense of relative deprivation,” creating widespread frustration and discontent among the middle and lower classes (Arjomand, 1986, 397). Thus, given the interconnected state of the world today, where the effects of globalization allow for quick and easy access to information with which to assess our subjective “relative deprivation,” one should observe widespread collective violence. Yet, even in environments plagued with considerable inequality, grievances are often not sufficient to mobilize participation in high-risk collective action.

Rational Choice Theory

Turning decades of scholarship on its head, Mancur Olson applied rational choice theory to explain why the rational, self-interested individuals will not bear the costs of participation when faced with the choice to engage in general collective action (Olson, 1965). Often referred to as the “public goods problem,” Olson’s framework simply argues that while the choice to mobilize could be mutually beneficial, if enjoyment of the benefits is not contingent on participation (a public good), individuals will instead choose to free ride on the contributions of others, sharing in the benefits, and yet absorbing none

of the costs (1965). The burgeoning of these individual cost-benefit analyses is at the center of the dilemma, known as the ‘collective action problem’ (Lichbach, 1995).

Once a movement employs the use of violence, the perceived costs of participation rise even higher and plummet the probability of individuals engaging in collective action. Indeed, Jeremy M. Weinstein in his research on rebel recruitment writes, “rebel leaders face an uphill battle in convincing individuals to rebel,” as the majority of the benefits of a victory will be experienced independent of participation and the risks, including loss of life, provide every reason not to partake in such a movement” (Weinstein, 2005, 600). To account for collective action observed in practice, however, Olson explained that individuals would indeed take the risk and engage in collective action if leaders offer selective incentives as a reward for participation (Olson, 1965; Lichbach, 1995). He writes, “the incentive must be “selective” so that those who do not join the organization working for the group’s interest...can be treated differently from those who do” (Olson, 1965, 51).

These private “inducements to participation” have been catalogued across a variety of contexts and studies (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008). In 1979, Samuel Popkin observed that the use of incentives, in the form of “material benefits,” was a central strategy in gaining peasant support during the rebellion in Vietnam (Popkin, 1979). These potential material benefits ranged from access to land, positions of authority, forms of protection and “loot” (money). Although the role of selective incentives in motivating participation in collective action is now widely accepted, one study conducted by Jeremy M. Weinstein revealed that certain incentives might prove problematic for the long-term goals of the armed group.

Differentiating between high-commitment recruits, “investors” and low-commitment recruits, “consumers,” Weinstein’s work suggests that the “consumers,” who join rebel groups on the basis of short-term rewards, “are unwilling to make investments of time, energy, and resources without receiving the material rewards they have been promised” (Weinstein, 2005, 621). Given this shortcoming of material incentives, Weinstein explains that rebel leaders have adopted and continue to utilize non-material rewards or “pull factors,” such as the emotional or spiritual benefits which affiliation with a group may confer in order to attract “investors” to their organization (Fazli et al., 2015, Weinstein, 2005). These “pull factors” may vary from the promise of accruing social capital, such as a promotion to a position of authority, to simply the benefit of protection and security in an otherwise unpredictable, tumultuous living environment (Fazli et al., 2015; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008). Still, Olson’s theory only requires that the benefits of joining outweigh the costs of participation which other empirical research has shown, may not always be the principle calculation for involvement.

Emotional Engagements

Drawing from interviews with approximately 200 supporters of the insurgency from the civil war in El Salvador, Elisabeth Wood concluded that the conventional explanations for ‘insurgent collective action’ (i.e. material benefits or widening political opportunity) could not adequately explain mobilization in the Salvadoran context. In this case, Wood found that the majority of those who actively participated in abetting of the insurgents had virtually nothing to gain, yet everything to lose. Rather, her study revealed that a visceral emotion, which she calls “moral outrage,” cultivated from the “injustice of

landlessness and the brutal measures taken to ensure it,” provided a powerful, initial motivation to mobilize against the elite (Wood, 2003, 18). Historically, scholars of social movements and collective action have been reluctant to theorize about the role that emotions play in stimulating violent conflicts. Instead, emotions were often deemed as an irrational and/or irrelevant approach to explaining “big phenomena” such as social movements (Jasper, 1998). Yet, the conceptual and empirical research that has been conducted clearly identifies the “causal force” of emotions in emerging collective action.

Jeff Goodwin and Steven Pfaff maintain, “the key causal factors that analysts of social movements emphasize...social networks, grievances, collective identities, cultural frames and ideologies, even shifting political opportunity structure – derive much of their causal power from the strong emotions that they embody or evoke among actors” (Goodwin and Pfaff, 2001, 282). Indeed, in his conceptual analysis of emotions in protest, James Jasper finds that emotions are ubiquitous to all social life and that “without them, there might be no social action at all” (Jasper, 1998, 398). Additionally, Jasper distinguishes between both “transitory, context-specific emotions,” which are reactions to new information and events, and the more stable “affective bonds or loyalties,” from preexisting cultural ties and individual idiosyncrasies (Jasper, 1998). Transitory or “reactive emotions,” such as anger, grief, and outrage, are of particular interest to my study, as these are the emotions that are subject to manipulation. In order to spur participation, leaders strategically construct messages to gain the “hearts and minds” of their target audiences through a process known as “framing.”

Framing Theory

Erving Goffman first introduced the concept of “framing” and compared it to that of a camera, which has the ability to change focus in order to describe an event (Goffman, 1974, 8). Over the years, scholars who examine the processes of framing have tweaked its definition, yet the central idea remains unchanged. Snow and Benford define a frame as an “interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment” (Snow and Benford, 1992, 137). According to Robert Entman in his summary of this field, “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993, 52). In essence, frames function to organize experiences and guide action (Snow et al., 1986). Based on the scholarship, the observed effects of framing support its conceptualization and emphasize its importance in creating strong emotional reactions that stimulate mobilization.

Perhaps the most prominent method to observe the effects of framing in the literature has been to examine the relationship between the media discourse and public opinion. In these studies, where the researchers operationalize various news frames and present them to survey participants, the results indicate that frames do indeed have a significant impact on individual’s perceptions, beliefs or attitudes towards the issues discussed in the frame presented (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989; Gamson et al., 1992; Entman, 1993; Nelson et al., 1997; Druckman 2001; Pan and Kosicki, 1993). For example, in the archetypical study observing the tolerance for a public Ku Klux Klan

rally, Nelson, Clawson and Oxley find that their experimental group exposed to a “free speech” news frame expressed more tolerance for the KKK rally, while those exposed to a “public safety” news frame expressed less tolerance for the rally. The implication of these studies is clear – frames matter, in that they affect how individuals process information and assign larger sociopolitical or cultural meaning to their own experiences (McEntire et al., 2015).

Framing and Mobilization Towards Violence

“Violent non-state actors” (VNSAs), or individuals or groups that are not a part of the state and utilize violence as a strategy to achieve their goals, understand this powerful relationship between the media and the stories they tell. The relevant discourse involving VNSAs suggests that they regard both the mass media and new media as very powerful tools to legitimize or justify their movement, spread messages to reach potential recruits, as well as intimidate opponents (Griset and Mahan, 2003; Moghaddam, 2005; Corman and Schiefelbein, 2006). A British radical Islamist effectively illustrated this belief in an article, published by *The New Yorker* by stating, “You can’t do what the prophets of old did, which was to stand on the hills and the mountains and address people,” he said, “The hills and mountains today are Sky News, CNN, Fox News, the BBC” (Taub, 2015). Moreover, with the introduction of new media, VNSAs, particularly the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, have become adept at using social media platforms, like Twitter, to rapidly disseminate their messages to reach a mass audience and attract new recruits (Byman and Shapiro, 2014; Berger and Morgan, 2015).

Even though the introduction of new media platforms has altered the speed and reach with which VNSAs can propagate their messages, the elemental structure of the

propaganda remains unchanged. VNSAs are tasked with generating persuasive frames to bring individuals' views on the issues at hand in line with their own, a process known as "consensus mobilization" (Klandermans 1984). As consensus mobilization is at least a necessary condition of action mobilization, the efficacy of a mobilization campaign in persuading the individual is a key determinant of participation. In order to succeed in this persuasion, Snow and Benford build on previous theoretical work and distinguish three "core framing tasks" (2000).

The first task, known as "diagnostic framing," expands on what Gamson referred to as "injustice frames," which ultimately work to create an adversary by identifying "victims" and then amplifying their victimization (Gamson, 1992). The diagnostic frame, therefore, articulates the "problem" and attributes blame to construct both protagonists and antagonists in a given narrative. Snow and Benford maintain the importance of this particular frame, finding that injustice frames appeared to be "fairly ubiquitous across movements advocating some form of political and/or economic change" (Snow and Benford, 2000, 616). Prognostic framing, the second core framing task, then projects a solution or plan to address the identified problem. In the final core framing task, motivational framing, movement leaders provide a salient rationale for participation in their movement. Taken together, Snow and Benford argue that these core framing tasks attend to the interrelated problems of both consensus and action mobilization (Snow and Benford, 2000; Gamson, 1992). And although scholars maintain that, "framing processes have come to be regarded...as a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of social movements," there has been little, if any, empirical research concerning the isolated effects of these various frames on the level of mobilization to support or engage in collective *violence* – a necessary precondition for creating strategies to combat

it (Snow and Benford, 2000, 612). As collective violence is not a new phenomenon, however, one can trace how certain framing techniques have manifested in the “real world,” by reviewing some of the rhetoric utilized by leaders of VNSAs.

On April 19th 1980, a professor of philosophy named Abimael Guzmán delivered his infamous speech, “We are the initiators.” This charismatic leader and orator instilled a “fierce sense of destiny” into his followers, effectively launching the collective armed struggle of the Shining Path against the Peruvian government during which an estimated 69,000 were killed or disappeared (Starn et al., 2005, 320). In an effort to propose a solution or plan to the “problem,” Guzmán employed a prognostic frame and declared to his supporters that revolution was the only path to bringing about a new world order. Creating a vision for the future, Guzmán explained, “The people rear up, arm themselves, and rise in revolution to put the noose around the neck of imperialism and the reactionaries, seizing and garroting them by the throat” (as cited in Starn et al., 2005, 328). Using a motivational frame, he emphasized the urgency of this plan, a “call to arms” as it were, proclaiming,

“It has fallen to these men of today, these men that breathe, toil, and combat, the task of sweeping the reactionaries from the face of the earth. It is the most luminous and glorious mission ever entrusted to any generation...Comrades, the hour has arrived. There is nothing to discuss. Debate has ended. It is time for action. The future lies in guns and cannons! The armed revolution has begun! Glory to Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought! Let us initiate the armed struggle!” (as cited in Starn et al., 2005, 329)

Perhaps most importantly, Guzmán accounts for the “diagnostic frame,” by articulating the many, profound injustices against the “masses” and amplifying their

victimization. He refers to the masses as “history’s orphans” who have been “exploited, subjugated, implacably oppressed” (as cited in Starn et al., 2005, 326). In emphasizing this victimization, Guzmán transformed what people once considered an unfortunate condition of their life into a salient injustice (Snow et al. 1986). To complete the diagnostic frame, Guzmán attributes blame, thus creating a malevolent antagonist for his movement to fight against - “This class grows in combat out of capitalism: a sinister system that sweats blood and filth from all its pores” (as cited in Starn et al., 2005, 326). Although this particular example portrays an abstract concept, “capitalism,” as the antagonist, there are cases in which the boundary between “good” and “evil” is framed as somewhat less ambiguous.

For example, in the case of the armed insurgency in El Salvador, the state’s repression was severe and served as ample motivation or fuel for the resistance’s propaganda effort. One child recalls, “They burned the houses and fields, they poisoned the water and killed whomever they saw. They took people out at night and disappeared them. During each invasion people were killed; perhaps a majority of the people died – pregnant mothers, kids, all and everyone” (Wood, 2003, 94). If the state does not use repressive tactics, however, VNSAs might also engage in “disinformation” campaigns, where they actively spread rumors, casting their opponents as immoral, duplicitous or evil in order to create an exaggerated fear of “the other,” a common tactic used in ethnic conflicts to encourage violence (Goodwin and Pfaff, 2001, 284). In his book, “Agents of Atrocity,” Neil J. Mitchell maintains, “Leaders justify policies and provide excuses for their actions to motivate their agents... They need to persuade their agents, with argument and evidence, that what they are doing is appropriate or even necessary” (Mitchell, 2004,

43). As a result, adherents of VNSAs often consider their violent strategy to be a moral and righteous necessity.

Such efforts would be wasted, however, if it weren't for the effective targeting and adaptation of messages to respective audiences. In his report on "The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy," Charlie Winter writes, "there is no one-size-fits-all messaging strategy for any political movement, jihadist or otherwise" (Winter, 2015, 32). Thus, VNSAs employ "the most fundamental rule of any communication effort," - adapting their messages to select or target audiences so as to better tap into those stable "affective bonds or loyalties," formed from preexisting cultural identities, and elicit a strong emotional response (Corman and Schiefelbein, 2006, 10; Jasper, 1998). The effective construction of the diagnostic frame works to amplify the perceived injustice of individuals' experiences, inciting an almost visceral emotional response and rationale for participation.

In this way, "personal frames" can be understood as a type of diagnostic frame. The personal frame focuses on a single, "identifiable" victim, rather than a group of "unidentified" or "statistical" victims (Small and Loewenstein, 2003; Kogut and Ritov, 2005). Several studies, which explore the relationship between personal frames and charitable behavior, suggest that when people are exposed to a story involving one person's victimization, they will feel more sympathetic and will be more likely to contribute to the cause (McEntire et al., 2015; Small and Loewenstein, 2003). Indeed, in her book "It was like a fever: storytelling in protest and politics," Francesca Polletta observes, "personal stories chip away at the public wall of indifference," eliciting an emotional and empathetic response that makes people feel the need to act on behalf of the suffering of others (Polletta, 2006). Unsurprisingly, people are more likely to care when

the victims in the frame are “innocent women and children,” groups that are often portrayed as synonymous with vulnerable civilians (Carpenter, 2005).

As a result, human rights organizations often employ personal narratives or frames to mobilize support and participation in their campaigns. Previous empirical research has established that these personal frames are more effective at mobilizing support than other types of frames, which focus on statistics and other objective information (McEntire et al., 2015). While some scholarship has established that personal frames successfully promote altruistic behavior, there has not yet been any systematic, empirical research to determine whether those individuals would still mobilize when a campaign was inherently violent and destructive. Given this theoretical foundation and my research question (What kinds of frames most effectively mobilize support for VNSAs?), I offer the subsequent hypotheses.

Hypotheses

First, I hypothesize that reading a *basic personal frame* will increase individuals’ willingness to support the use of violence. I refer to this frame as “basic” due to its lack of rhetorical devices. The remaining hypotheses, therefore, concern what I have deemed “amplified” versions of the basic personal frame. The amplified personal frames contain the same outline of characters and events, but are intensified with humanizing details of the main character in the narrative, and/or more description of the event or “injustice” in the narrative (diagnostic frame). Following the assertion that in order for messages to truly move people to act and particularly, engage in high-risk collective action, the narrative must cause the audience to “identify, empathize and adopt the beliefs of the character(s),” (Haven and Seese, 2015, 12) I argue that exposure to any of these *amplified*

versions of the personal frame will result in more stated support for violence, than exposure to just the basic personal frame.

Due to the novelty and exploratory nature of my study, I cannot make any confident predictions regarding the impact of the different amplified versions of the personal frame. However, literature surrounding grievances and emotional engagements suggests that people who experience a significant amount of anger, shock, or frustration might be more likely to support the use of violence. Furthermore, previous empirical work concludes that people are more receptive to humanitarian issues when those affected are framed as “civilians,” a term laden with perceptions of innocence and vulnerability (Carpenter, 2005). This notion informs my hypothesis that those who perceive the main character in the narrative as particularly *innocent* or *vulnerable* may be more likely to once again, “identify, empathize, and adopt the beliefs of the character(s),” which in this case seek to justify the use of violence by way of injustice framing and will therefore increase support for the use of violence (Haven and Seese, 2015, 12).

Following this reasoning, I also believe that emphasizing the injustice of the events in the frame may serve to strengthen the perception that the main character is innocent and vulnerable and therefore, increase willingness to support of violence. As a result, I posit that exposure to the most amplified personal frame, containing both the humanizing language and increased details of the injustice, will result in the strongest support for the use of violence. In the next chapter, I will discuss my methodology for testing these proposed relationships.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Rationale for Research Design

Given the aforementioned gap in the literature, I chose an experimental survey method to test the efficacy of personal frames on generating support for violence carried out by VNSAs.¹ I arrived at this research design after careful consideration of several factors. Due to the personal risk posed by surfing the web for propaganda released by VNSAs, like the Islamic State (ISIS) and other organizations scrutinized by United States government agencies, I was prohibited from conducting any systematic, observational analyses of extant texts. However, even if I could overcome this obstacle and safely collect and observe primary source propaganda, it does not seem feasible that I could control for the variation among the variables involved, such as the type of VNSA, its goals, and the country or conflict context, in order to isolate the effect on my dependent variable and make any significant conclusions. As a result, it was difficult to know conclusively what kinds of frames these VNSAs are actually using and how often. In recent months, however, there has been some research that attempts to deconstruct the narratives utilized by violent or extremist groups. In an extensive report on ISIS's propaganda strategies, Charlie Winter writes,

A June 2015 video from Islamic State's Nineveh Province...opens with the depiction of a fighter handling a child's disembodied arm at an unnamed bombsite. Shortly after, three groups of alleged 'spies' are burned alive in a car hit by a rocket-propelled grenade, drowned in a steel cage and beheaded with explosives. The depiction of the child's corpse at the beginning of the video is intended to drive home the victimization of Iraq's Sunnis as well as justify what followed. (Winter, 2015, 25)

¹ This study was approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee (HSRC) at The College of Wooster on February 5, 2016

Reports like this one offer some insight into the messaging techniques that are often employed by VNSAs. As discussed in Chapter Two, the mass media also provides a window, however distorted it may be, into the framing strategies of these groups, which helped inform the development of the personal frames used in this study.² Even with the absence of primary source propaganda, the relevant scholarship suggests that there are strong academic reasons to expect a positive, significant relationship between the use of personal narratives and consequential support for the violence executed by a VNSA.

Second, an experimental survey method allows for a more systematic and controlled evaluation of the data and increases the reliability of my findings, which is an essential component to establishing a legitimate study for future research to build upon. While experiments have fairly high internal validity, in order to confidently establish any causal relationships in my study, I included a control group into the experiment, ensured randomization and made certain that each treatment frame was identical, except for the specific variables being measured. Furthermore, question design was a crucial part of my process so as to most effectively capture the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable, eliminating any potential confounding variables. The wording of the survey questions is revisited later in this chapter.

However, like all methods in the social sciences, experimental surveys are not free from error. One major critique of this methodology lies in its inherent weakness in generalizability. As such, this study is somewhat limited due the constraints previously mentioned in analyzing genuine frames produced by VNSAs. Over the course of this

² For example, this article from “Albawaba,” a Palestinian news outlet published a story detailing a young girl’s unjust arrest by Israeli authorities. (<http://www.albawaba.com/news/fourteen-year-old-palestinian-girl-jailed-israeli-courts-647638>)

research project, however, new studies have come to light reflecting the current landscape in Iraq and Syria, where children are not only being used as tools of propaganda to evoke sympathy, but also as militants and “martyrs” for their cause (Bloom et al., 2016). This increases the external validity of my study, as the personal frames that are utilized specifically describe events involving a young girl using violence in association with a VNSA. To further increase the external validity or generalizability of my findings, I used Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to access a more diverse sample than the alternative provided by The College of Wooster student population. I also recruited 100 participants per group for a total (N) of 500 survey respondents to improve the generalizability of the data.

Variable Measurement

Independent Variable

The independent variable in this study, “group assignment,” is simply the treatment group to which participants are randomly assigned. Also known as a categorical variable, each group took a value of 0-4, with 0 assigned to the control group and 1-4 for the treatments groups, to effectively account for the presence of some categorical effect that may influence the dependent variable. Participants across every treatment group saw these basic instructions, “Please read the following story and answer a short questionnaire,” then read the corresponding personal frame. Those randomly assigned to the control group were taken directly to the survey questionnaire. The frames are intentionally analogous to enhance comparability across treatments and read as follows,

Basic Personal Frame

On Leila's 6th birthday, three soldiers entered her home. Her mother was beaten and then, killed. Leila was left an orphan. Still grieving and enraged at the attack against her mother, four years later, Leila joined the violent resistance to the regime and participated in an attack that resulted in the death of a soldier.

Amplified (with "humanizing" language)

Leila had just finished her toast on her 6th birthday when three soldiers entered her home. Leila remained frozen in her "big girl chair" but kept whimpering "mama, mama, mama..." while her mother was beaten and then, killed. Leila was left an orphan. Still grieving and enraged at the attack against her mother, four years later, Leila joined the violent resistance to the regime and participated in an attack that resulted in the death of a soldier.

Amplified (with event intensification)

On Leila's 6th birthday, three soldiers burst into her home. One of them grabbed her mother by the throat and shoved her face onto the white kitchen tile and beat her. Soon, however, the once sparkling white tiles turned crimson; her mother was gone. Leila was left an orphan. Still grieving and enraged at the attack against her mother, four years later, Leila joined the violent resistance to the regime and participated in an attack that resulted in the death of a soldier.

Amplified (with both "humanizing" language and event intensification)

Leila had just finished her toast on her 6th birthday when three soldiers burst into her home. One of them grabbed her mother by the throat and shoved her face onto the white kitchen tile and beat her. Leila remained frozen in her "big girl chair" but kept whimpering "mama, mama, mama..." Soon, however, the once sparkling white tiles turned crimson; her mother was gone. Leila was left an orphan. Still grieving and enraged at the attack against her mother, four years later, Leila joined the violent resistance to the regime and participated in an attack that resulted in the death of a soldier.

The frames contained only general indicators, like "violent resistance" and "state," in an effort to eliminate any possibility of mobilizing participants in my survey towards joining a real VNSA. This also limited potential biases that could arise from naming a specific VNSA or country context. Still, there was a certain level of deception involved here, as I imply that the fictional story in each frame is true. However, this deception is vital to obtaining significant results for analysis and previous research suggests that even if the subject is suspicious, the deception will not affect performance and participants will still follow directions "faithfully" (Fillenbaum, 1966).

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable, “support for violence,” can perhaps be better understood as a form of mobilization commonly known as “consensus mobilization.” As discussed in the previous chapter, consensus mobilization refers to the “[purposeful] process through which a social movement tries to obtain support for its viewpoints” (Klandermans, 1984). Thus, the dependent variable was measured by the answers provided by participants in the survey questionnaire regarding the use of violence. However, measuring support for (or degree of consensus mobilization) violence generated through framing or messaging techniques has received little empirical attention in the past. Therefore, without much past instrumentation as a guide, I used two different measures of the dependent variable to enhance internal validity of the experiment.

The wording of the survey was also consistent across treatment groups to ensure reliability of the data and was phrased in such a way so that the control group could still answer the questions in an informed manner. For the first measure of the dependent variable, participants used an ordinal scale of 1 to 5 to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the reverse-coded statement, “Violence is never an appropriate response to any situation.” Additionally, using an ordinal scale of 1 to 5, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement, “Violence can be an appropriate response in certain situations.” By presenting the participants with these opposing statements, I did a “robustness check” to ensure the validity of the data.

Intervening Variables

The intervening variables in this study pertain to the previously stated hypotheses, the first of which posits that participants who perceive the main character in the narrative as particularly *innocent* or *vulnerable* will be more likely to support the use of violence

by the VNNSA. In order to measure this perception, respondents used a Likert scale from “Not at all” to “Very well” to indicate how well a list of relevant characteristics described the main character in the personal frame, Leila.³

Given the effectiveness of “diagnostic” frames, which serve to amplify the perceived injustice of individuals’ experiences and incite an almost visceral emotional response and rationale for participation, I also measured the emotional reaction expressed by each participant after exposed to one of the treatment groups. First, respondents were asked to describe how well a list of emotional characteristics described their current emotional state in relation to the materials they read. The list included the following characteristics, “Angry, Happy, Sad, Shocked, Scared, Frustrated, Disgusted, Calm” and responses were measured using a Likert scale from “Not at all” to “Very well.” While I am not certain whether there will be an observed effect on the dependent variable, the vast amount of literature surrounding grievances and emotional engagements suggests that participants who indicate higher levels of anger, shock, or frustration might be more prone to support the violent response described in the narrative.

In addition to the type of emotional reaction that they experience due to the narrative, respondents were also asked to indicate the extent of their emotional reaction “when thinking about state violence against women and children,” as well as “when thinking about groups that use violence against the state,” also using a Likert scale from “None ” to “A lot.” Those who experience a strong emotional reaction in relation to state violence against women and children, may be more likely to support the violent response in the frame, as well as those who view Leila as more innocent, vulnerable, and without agency. However, I suspect that participants, who indicate a strong emotional reaction in

³ For the complete list of characteristics and survey questions, please see Appendix A.

relation to VNSAs or groups that use violence against the state, will be less likely to support the violent response described in the narrative and view Leila as less innocent and vulnerable.

Control Variables

In an effort to isolate the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, I controlled for common demographic variables such as, age, gender, education level and ethnicity. However, due to the extant scholarship and my own life experience, there were a few other variables that I suspected might have an influence on the dependent variable. Religion has become such a significant element in the discourse pertaining to violent non-state actors. While I remain skeptical of the ways these discussions have been overly generalized, I nevertheless included a question pertaining to religious affiliation, as well as religiosity, to observe whether there might be a relationship between certain affiliations and support for violent behaviors. I am also curious as to whether a higher level of reported religiosity is inversely correlated with support for violent behaviors.

Following the rather common knowledge that Republicans tend to be more “hawkish,” or more prone to support the use of force in matters of diplomacy, I included a political affiliation question with the belief that participants identifying as “Strong Republican,” will be more likely to support the violent response described in the narrative. Upon further reflection, however, it became apparent that the same behavior of being “hawkish,” which ultimately promotes and accepts the use of violence by the state, might also result in less stated support for the violence described in the narrative, because it is carried out by a violent *non-state* actor. Additionally, I controlled for political efficacy with the expectation that those who indicate a lower level of agency may be

more likely to support or resort to the use of violence, as they might believe there is no other legitimate alternative course of action provided by the state. I also included a question to measure interest in international affairs (“How often do you follow world news?”), as I expected increased exposure to world events might desensitize an audience to violence and result in greater stated support for it. Finally, I controlled for participants who were or have known victims of violence, as those individuals might have less tolerance for the use of violence and would be less likely to support its use, no matter the circumstances.

Sampling and Data Collection

Participants for this study were recruited through Amazon’s MTurk, a unique online program that allows users to pay anonymous workers or “MTurkers” a small compensation to complete various tasks. Over the past couple years, MTurk has become established as a popular and reliable source of data for social science research (Berinsky et al., 2012). It provides swift data collection and a sample size large and diverse enough to make more generalizable assertions about the impact of personal frames on support for violence committed by VNSAs. Still, some studies have noted that there are certain demographic dimensions, such as education level and nationality, which are more homogeneous than often desired by researchers (Ross et al., 2010; Berinsky et al., 2012). For example, this system requires Internet access and English language skills and compared to the entire population, MTurk workers are mostly white, slightly younger, include a significantly greater number of male members, and tend towards lower levels of annual income (Huff and Tingley, 2015). In order to participate in my study, workers were required to be at least 18 years of age, live in the United States, and have a

completed task satisfaction rate of at least 85 percent. While this was a non-probability, convenience sample, participants were randomly assigned to either one of the treatment groups or the control group, to ensure that biases in the population were not systematic.

In reality, VNSAs produce narratives that target specific audiences to play upon preexisting cultural ties and evoke a stronger emotional response that stimulates participation and recruitment. But, given the experimental constraints and safety concerns of this study, I relied on the convenience sample provided by MTurk. In this way, my study exemplifies a “hard test,” because the participants involved represent a “cold population” or a group of people who do not have any known preexisting grievances to target so as to incite a stronger emotional reaction. Consequently, if MTurkers in this study, who have not experienced the hardship that comes with living in a conflict setting, are still moved to express support for the use of violence, then one can reasonably expect that the impact of personal narratives will only become stronger when applied to aggrieved populations, such as residents of Syria and surrounding countries.

Tasks on MTurk are distributed in the form of a HIT (“Human Intelligence Task”), where a description of the survey is posted on the site for MTurkers to choose from among other tasks posted by requesters. MTurkers who selected my task were given a link that directed them to my survey at Qualtrics.com (online survey software) and were randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups or the control group. Before respondents began, however, MTurkers were asked to consent by manually checking a box that indicated that they have read the consent form, understand the task and reserve the right to stop the survey at any time. After completion of the survey, respondents were debriefed. Participants would then receive the stated compensation (\$0.50), provided in part by the generosity of the Henry J. Copeland Grant Committee. Once the data from

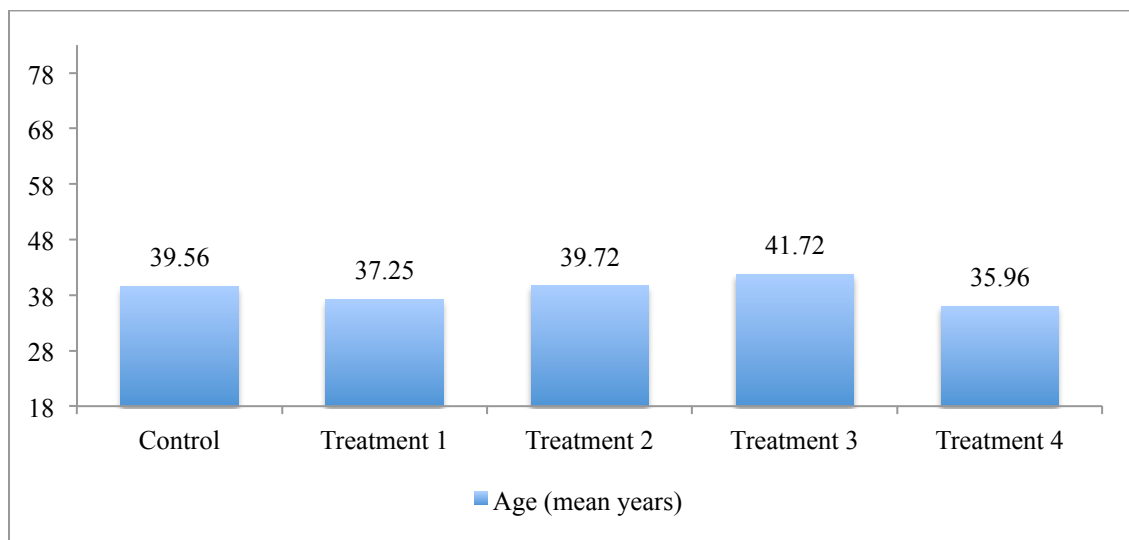
the surveys were collected, it was converted to a STATA dataset. I then conducted several statistical analyses, including ordered logistic regressions to examine the impact of the various personal frames on the dependent variable, support for the use of violence by VNSAs. Ordered logit is used, because the dependent variable is an ordinal measure, as opposed to dichotomous or continuous measure. In other words, it has more than two categories and the values of each category have a meaningful sequential order.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis

In this chapter, I present the results from my analyses, which measure the impact of various personal narratives or “frames” on individuals’ willingness to support the use of violence by VNSAs. First, in an effort to better understand the population in my study, I created several charts that outline the demographic profile of the sample population. The total population of the sample was 497.⁵ Given that random assignment was used in this experiment, I reasonably expect that there were no statistically significant differences in the demographics of the sample population across the control or treatment groups.⁶

Demographics and Descriptive Statistics

Chart 1: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents



⁵ 500 MTurkers participated in the survey, however, every participant had to answer a simple math question (What is 5 minus 2?) to ensure validity of the data. Any respondent that gave an answer other than 3 was subsequently dropped from the statistical analyses. Additionally, in order to be included in the regression analyses, respondents had to have correctly answered at least 1 validity question in relation to the frame or have been assigned to the control group.

⁶ Due to time constraints, I was not able to conduct the difference of means t-tests of each control variable across the groups. However, I have provided a table in Appendix B, containing all of the descriptive statistics across the control and treatment groups.

Participants' profiles appear to be consistent with other studies using MTurk (Berinsky et al., 2012; Huff and Tingley, 2015), as respondents were mostly white (Chart 2), mostly liberal (Chart 4) and slightly younger than a nationally representative sample. Additionally, the participants were more highly educated than the U.S. population, with the majority indicating they had attended at least some college (Chart 3). However, the sample contained slightly more females than male (52% versus 47%).

Chart 2: Ethnicity Distribution of Survey Respondents

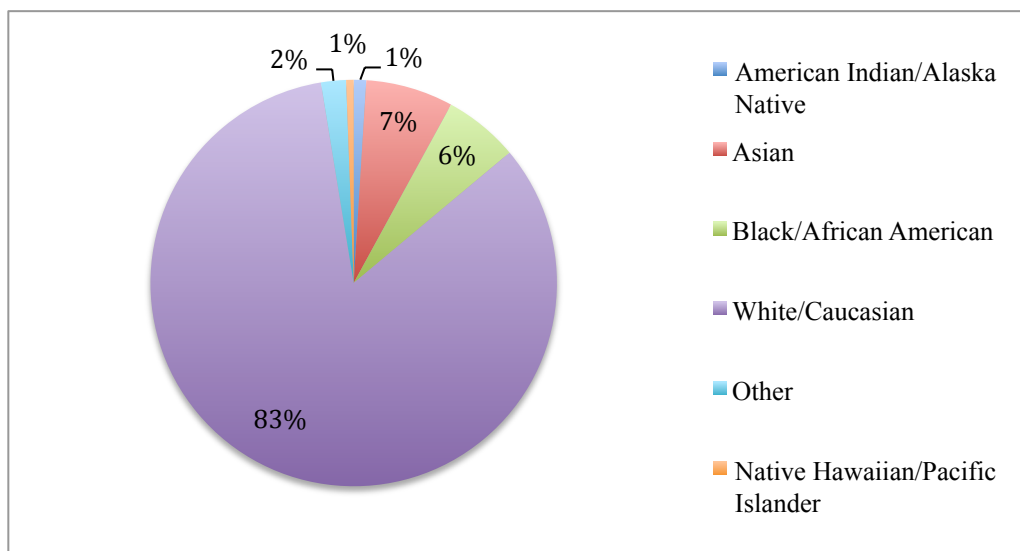
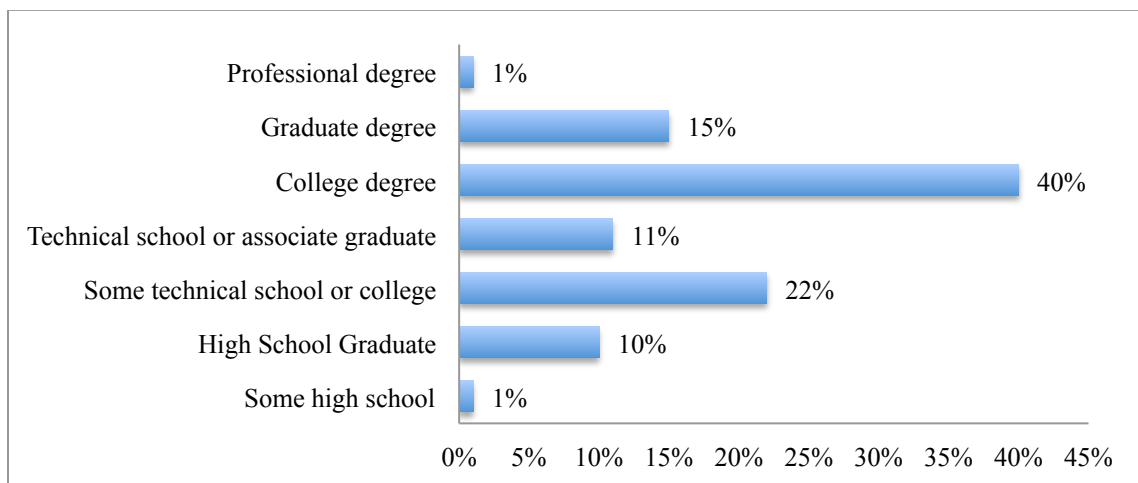
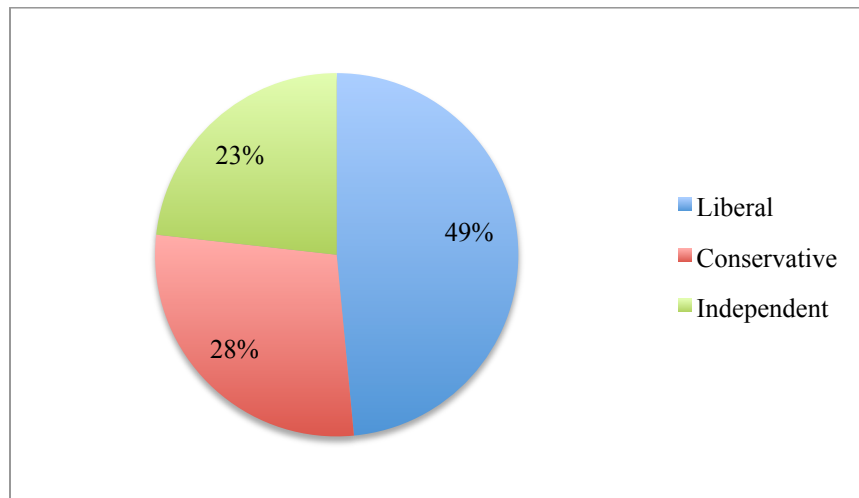


Chart 3: Education Distribution of Survey Respondents



In terms of self-reported political affiliation, the sample skewed toward the liberal end of the spectrum. After recoding a seven-category scale (strongly conservative to strongly liberal) into three categories (conservative, independent, and liberal), 49% were considered liberal, compared to only 28% conservative, with 23% being independent (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Political Affiliation of Survey Respondents



Next, I ran a correlation analysis to check the variables for multicollinearity, the results of which are presented in Table 1. Given these results, I was able to establish that the variables in my model were not highly correlated with one another, thus I was able to include all of them in subsequent analyses.

Dependent Variables

As previously mentioned, measuring support for violence has received very little empirical attention in the past. Therefore, I examined data from two ordinal measures of the dependent variable to increase the robustness of my analyses. The first measure was a reverse-coded statement; “Violence is never an appropriate response to any situation,”

Table 1: Correlation Matrix (obs=490)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
(1) DV	1.000										
(2) Age	0.0899	1.000									
(3) Gender	-0.1153	0.0162	1.000								
(4) Religion	-0.0704	0.0554	0.1125	1.000							
(5) Religiosity	-0.0433	-0.0410	0.0305	0.2328	1.000						
(6) Ethnicity	0.0617	0.1464	0.0656	0.0032	-0.0052	1.000					
(7) Education	0.0011	0.1053	-0.1217	-0.0330	0.0876	-0.0665	1.000				
(8) News	0.1407	0.2719	-0.1034	-0.0314	0.0075	0.0251	0.1723	1.000			
(9) Political Efficacy	-0.0639	-0.0392	0.0692	0.0022	0.1192	-0.0376	0.1339	0.2239	1.000		
(10) Political Affiliation	-0.0525	-0.0198	0.0567	-0.1406	-0.1949	-0.0136	-0.0048	0.0353	.1866	1.000	
(11) Victim of Violence	-0.0174	-0.0313	-0.0964	-0.0150	0.0685	-0.0878	0.0687	-0.0406	-0.0423	-0.1199	1.000

while the second measure explicitly stated, “Violence can be an appropriate response in certain situations.” I included the reverse-coded measure, because of the potential benefit of limiting “non-substantive” responses among participants (Weijters et al., 2013, 1). However, the data collected from the first measure resulted in variation among responses, while the majority of participants (74%) either agreed or strongly agreed with second measure. These results suggest that many respondents agreed that violence is both never appropriate and that it can be appropriate in certain situations and thus, reflects some of the problems associated with using reverse-coded measures. A recent psychological study explores the distinct mechanisms that affect responses in reverse-coded measures, finding that inconsistencies often arise from acquiescence and carelessness in respondents (Weijters et al., 2013). Therefore, in order to limit any spurious factors in my analyses, I will focus solely on the more straightforward second measure of the dependent variable. I have provided a more thorough depiction of the data on each measure in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Dependent Variable Measures (%)

Ordinal Scale	<i>DV Measure 1 (Reverse-coded)</i>	<i>DV Measure 2</i>
1 Strongly disagree	9	1
2 Disagree	29	6
3 Neither agree nor disagree	23	18
4 Agree	28	55
5 Strongly agree	12	19

Below I present the results of the ordered logit models, where I created seven statistical models to test the impact of various personal frames, as well as perceptions of innocence and vulnerability, on support for the use of violence. Models 1-4 are presented in Table 3 and Models 5-7 are shown in Table 4. Each model employs the same control variables and all models were estimated using STATA software, version 11.3.

Table 3: The Effects of Personal Frames on Support for Violence (Estimated using Ordered Logit)

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
Independent Variables				
Any Frame v. Control	.448* (.212)	-	-	-
Basic Frame v. Control	-	-.017 (.329)	-	-
Any Amplified Frame v. Basic Frame	-	-	.513* (.254)	-
Most Amplified Frame v. Single Amplification	-	-	-	-.666** (.260)
Control Variables				
Age	.006 (.007)	-.019 (.013)	.014 (.007)	.012 (.009)
Gender	-.428* (.201)	-.408 (.365)	-.378 (.224)	-.234 (.256)
Ethnicity	.169 (.107)	.329 (.212)	.134 (.112)	.232 (.131)
Religion	-.031 (.043)	-.081 (.093)	-.058 (.049)	-.059 (.052)
Religiosity	-.100 (.128)	.194 (.213)	-.124 (.145)	-.111 (.173)
Education	-.050 (.076)	.002 (.123)	-.072 (.088)	-.126 (.104)
News	.267** (.095)	.351* (.176)	.194 (.107)	.311** (.120)
Political Efficacy	-.305* (.156)	-.047 (.238)	-.345* (.170)	-.461* (.215)
Political Affiliation	-.079 (.054)	.026 (.103)	-.102 (.061)	-.144* (.070)
Victim of Violence	-.073 (.192)	.460 (.356)	-.249 (.215)	-.475 (.257)
N	435	164	351	271
χ^2 (12)	32.34***	18.48	33.98***	44.21***
Log pseudo-likelihood	-501.34943	-174.66103	-407.24162	-304.4576

Notes: Two-tailed tests; robust standard errors in parentheses; * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

In Model 1, the regression revealed that compared to the control group, exposure to any of the treatments significantly increased one's likelihood of viewing violence as appropriate in certain situations. For example, reading any version of the personal frame (compared to reading nothing) resulted in a positive 0.45 increase in the log odds in respondents' view that violence can be appropriate.

Model 2 tests my first hypothesis; "*participants exposed to the basic personal frame will indicate more support for violence, than participants in the control group.*" To begin, I generated a dichotomous variable in STATA. Participants who were randomly assigned to the control group were recoded as "= 0" and those who were put into treatment group 1 and read the basic personal frame were recoded as "=1." Following an ordered logit regression of the dependent variable comparing the control group to the

treatment group 1, the relationship was insignificant and I was not able to reject the null hypothesis. This rather unexpected finding suggests that a basic personal frame is not enough to generate a significant effect on the level of consensus mobilization towards support for violence.

Model 3 examines my second hypothesis, *“participants exposed to any of the amplified versions of the personal frame will indicate more support for violence (consensus mobilization), than participants exposed to just the basic personal frame.”*

Once again, I generated a new, dichotomous variable in STATA, where participants who were randomly assigned to treatment group 1 were recoded as “=0” and participants in treatment groups 2, 3, and 4 were recoded as “=1.” The results indicated that respondents who read any amplified version of the personal frame were significantly more likely to agree that violence can be appropriate in certain situations than respondents who just read a basic personal frame. In this case, with a statistically significant p-value of less than 0.05, I can successfully reject the null hypothesis (that there is no difference in support for violence between amplified and basic personal narratives). Therefore, compared to a basic frame that lacks rhetorical devices, it seems as though the addition of detailed language pertaining to the main character and the injustice in the narrative more successfully causes the audience to “identify, empathize and adopt the beliefs of the character(s),” which can increase the likelihood for individuals to engage in high-risk collective action (Haven and Seese, 2015, 12).

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, I was not able to conduct the predicted probabilities to capture the substantive impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable and therefore cannot answer my hypothesis, *“participants exposed to the most amplified personal frame, containing both the humanizing language and*

increased details of the event, will indicate the strongest support for violence.”

Therefore, I thought it would be interesting to instead compare the effect on support for violence between the treatment groups with a single amplification - either “humanizing” or “event intensification” - with those who read the most amplified version of the frame in Model 4. In other words, I would modify my original hypothesis to “participants exposed to the most amplified personal frame, containing both humanizing language and increased details of the event, will indicate more support for violence than those who read a frame with a single amplification.” To test modified hypothesis, I generated a new, dichotomous variable where respondents in the “single” amplified frames were recoded as “= 0” and respondents exposed to the most amplified frame were recoded as “= 1.” The regression revealed that there was a significant increase in the likelihood of agreeing that violence can be appropriate when respondents read the most amplified version of the personal frame.

Table 4: The Effects of Personal Frames on Perception of Innocence and Vulnerability (Estimated using Ordered Logit)

	<i>Model 5 Innocent</i>	<i>Model 6 Vulnerable</i>	<i>Model 7 Vulnerable</i>
Independent Variables			
Any Amplified v. Basic	-	-	.558* (.249)
“Humanizing” v. Basic	.632** (.267)	.683** (.265)	-
Control Variables			
Age	.029** (.010)	.021* (.009)	.558***(.008)
Gender	.422 (.230)	.534* (.243)	.557** (.210)
Ethnicity	-.006 (.149)	.009 (.130)	-.010 (.111)
Religion	.094 (.061)	-.088(.067)	-.027 (.059)
Religiosity	-.150 (.152)	.167 (.146)	.228 (.139)
Education	-.233** (.097)	-.064 (.098)	-.070 (.087)
News	.147 (.109)	.166 (.111)	.119 (.101)
Political Efficacy	-.284 (.164)	-.161 (.160)	-.078 (.148)
Political Affiliation	.004 (.080)	.104 (.069)	.106 (.058)
Victim of Violence	.227 (.257)	-.485 (.263)	-.532* (.228)
N	269	271	351
χ^2 (12)	34.33***	28.97***	40.77***
Log pseudo-likelihood	-293.18499	-264.75671	-347.49153

*Notes: Two-tailed tests; robust standard errors in parentheses; * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$*

Table 4 presents the results that tested my final hypothesis, “*participants who perceive the main character (Leila) in the narrative as particularly innocent and vulnerable will be more likely to support violence.*” Responses from survey participants were measured on a 4-point Likert scale, from “Not at all” to “Very well,” following the question, “Based on what you just read, how well does each of following characteristics describe Leila?” Next, I conducted several regressions comparing the perception of innocence across treatment groups, however the models in Table 4 only present the regressions that yielded significant results. Model 5 displays that there was a significant increase ($p < 0.05$) in the likelihood of perceiving Leila as more *innocent* when comparing the responses from those in treatment group 1, who read a basic personal, with respondents who read the amplified “humanizing” version of the personal frame (treatment group 2). As a reminder, the only difference between these two narratives was in the additional details pertaining to Leila (i.e. Leila had just finished her toast on her 6th birthday when three soldiers entered her home. Leila remained frozen in her “big girl chair” but kept whimpering “mama, mama, mama...”). However, no other regression across treatment groups yielded significant results, which suggests that the amplified “humanizing” frame was most effective in producing a perception of innocence towards Leila.

When examining the perception of vulnerability, Model 6 shows that participants who read the amplified “humanizing” version of the personal frame were also significantly more likely to perceive Leila as *vulnerable* ($p < 0.01$), than those who read just the basic personal frame. Model 7 demonstrates that respondents were significantly more likely to view Leila as more *vulnerable* when exposed to any amplified version of the personal frame ($p < 0.05$) compared to participants who read just the basic version.

These findings suggest that reading an amplified version of the narrative, particularly one that includes details of a character's personality or behavior, increases the perception of vulnerability of that character.

Given these results, I examined the perception indicators of "innocent" and then "vulnerable" as the independent variables against the dependent variable in an effort to establish a link between whether an increase in the perception of innocence also increases support for violence. Unfortunately, the results were not significant and I could not reject the null hypothesis (that perception of innocence and vulnerability does not increase willingness to support violence).

Taken together, these findings offer some support for my third hypothesis, in so far as the messaging techniques used in the amplifications were effective in conjuring the perception of innocence and vulnerability. However, the data also suggests that viewing someone as more innocent and vulnerable is not sufficient in producing a higher level of consensus mobilization regarding support for violence.

Intervening Variables

To recap, I discussed three different intervening variables of interest in the previous chapter. First, as stated in my hypotheses and previously discussed in Models 5-7, I proposed that respondents who perceived the main character in the narrative as particularly innocent and vulnerable would indicate a higher level of consensus mobilization towards violence.

Second, given the literature surrounding grievances and emotional engagements, I predicted that participants who indicate higher levels of anger, shock, or frustration will be more likely to support the violent response described in the narrative. To measure

these emotional reactions, directly after exposure to one of the treatments, participants were asked, “How well does each of the following characteristics describe your reaction to the materials you just saw?” Each characteristic was measured using a 4-point Likert scale, from “Not at all” to “Very well.” After running an ordered logit regression on each of the ordinal emotion indicators and comparing across treatment groups, only the emotion “shock” produced a significant effect on the responses between groups. For example, reading any version of the amplified personal frame resulted in a positive 0.76 increase in the log odds of reporting a higher level of shock ($p < 0.00$) compared to those who only read a basic personal frame. This result strengthens theories discussed in Chapter two surrounding the important role that strong emotions play in serving in inciting mobilization towards support for violence. However, after running a regression with the emotion indicator of “shock” as the independent variable on the dependent variable, in an effort to establish a link between whether an increase in the shock emotion also increases support for violence, the results were insignificant. Therefore, it seems that particular emotional reactions, such as shock, are not enough to generate support for violence.

In addition to the type of emotions experienced after exposure to the narrative, I wanted to examine the extent or degree of respondent’s emotional reaction when considering two situations in relation to the narrative they just read. Therefore, participants were first asked to indicate, using a 4-point Likert scale from “None” to “A lot,” “How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about state violence against women and children?” As well as, “How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about groups that use violence against the state?” I suspected that respondents, who indicate a strong emotional reaction in relation to state

violence against women and children, might be more likely to support the violent response in the frame. And on the other hand, I believed that those who indicate a strong emotional reaction in relation to VNSAs or groups that use violence against the state will be less likely to support the violent response described in the narrative. The results from the regressions remain rather ambiguous.

The first measure of the emotional reaction (How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about state violence against women and children?) was only significant when comparing those in the control group against those in any treatment group ($p < 0.05$). While this supports the idea that reading a personal narrative produces a strong emotional reaction, there was no significant change when comparing between treatment groups. This finding reveals that amplifications of a basic personal frame do not give rise to any significant effects on the extent of an emotional reaction when thinking about violence against women and children. However, there already seems to be a general consensus among the population that violence against women and children is wrong and therefore the data surrounding this measure is not very useful in distinguishing between cultural biases and the genuine emotional reactions provoked by exposure to the personal frames.

The second measure of the emotional reaction (How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about groups that use violence against the state?) is more difficult to interpret, as the survey does not require respondents to specifically explain their reactions. Still, the personal frames seemed to have an effect, as the regression revealed that respondents were significantly more likely to indicate a strong emotional reaction when comparing the control group to any treatment, the basic personal frame to any of the amplified versions of the frame, as well as when comparing

the basic personal frame to the amplified “humanizing” frame. However, neither the first or second measure of the emotional reaction produced significant results in a regression with the dependent variable (“violence can be appropriate...”). Therefore, I could not conclude that a stronger emotional response leads to an increase in stated support for violence.

Control Variables

When examining the control variables across the statistical analyses, the most consistently significant variables seemed to be “news” and “political efficacy.” Respondents who said they followed world news “daily” were more likely to agree that violence can be appropriate in certain situations. This result may indicate that those who follow news more often are somewhat more desensitized or more accepting of violence, perhaps because they see it so often, however the genuine cause behind this finding is beyond the scope of my study. I controlled for political efficacy with the question, “How much influence do you think you can have in shaping public policy?” The results revealed an inverse relationship with the dependent variable. In other words, those who believed they had “none” to “little” influence or agency in shaping public policy were more likely to agree that violence can be appropriate. This finding bolsters my aforementioned belief that those who believe they have less influence in the public sphere are more likely to support the use of violence. I find this result rather intriguing, as it pertains to conflict and violence within democratic states where the level of political efficacy should be higher than in, say, more authoritative states.

In the regression analyses that tested the impact of the various personal frames on perceptions of innocence and vulnerability, the control variable “age” was consistently

significant. In each model the coefficient was positive; therefore, as the age of survey respondents increased so did the likelihood that they would view Leila as more innocent and vulnerable. By means of conjecture, I can imagine that older survey participants are more likely to have children and as a result, feel more protective over Leila, the main character in the frame.

Several other variables, which I controlled for mostly out of experimental curiosity, such as religion, or religiosity, and being a victim of violence, were never significant in any regression, with one exception. When comparing across treatment group 2 (those who read the amplified “humanizing” version of the personal frame) with treatment group 1 (the basic frame) in measuring support for violence there was an inversely significant relationship between religion and the dependent variable. According to the coding of that variable, those respondents who identified towards the bottom of the scale (1- “Agnostic” 2- “Atheist”) were more likely to agree that violence can be appropriate. The variable, “political affiliation” was also significant in one regression, comparing the most amplified frame to the frames with only a single amplification. The log-odds coefficient was negative, therefore, participants who identified as more Republican, were more likely to support violence. This finding offers some support for the stereotype that Republicans tend to be more “hawkish,” or more prone to support the use of force in matters of diplomacy.

Discussion

In relation to my research question (What kinds of frames most effectively mobilize support for VNSAs?), my statistical analyses suggest that reading any personal frame results in a higher level of stated support for the use of violence when compared to

those who did not read any frame. However, the basic personal frame, which lacked rhetorical devices and intimate details of the main character, did not produce a significant change in responses on the dependent variable when compared to the control group. Therefore, it's plausible to conclude that a basic frame is not enough to impact support for the use of violence. Yet, when this same story is amplified with both humanizing language and details of the injustice that took place, there is an observable, significant increase in stated agreement that violence can be appropriate. Thus, my research suggests that personal stories, which contain ample details of an individual and the injustice that takes place, are most effective in generating consensus mobilization around the use of violence.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This study offers the first systematic examination of the effect of personal frames on consensus mobilization regarding support for violence. My findings demonstrate that personal narratives, amplified with both “humanizing” language pertaining to the main character and increased details of an injustice, are more effective at generating support for violence than a basic version of the same narrative or no narrative at all. Thus, my contribution to this field begins by reinforcing the fundamental argument of this study – frames really do matter.

Twenty-three years ago, Robert Entman wrote, “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993, 52). And today, in retrospect of completing this thesis, his words have renewed relevance. The old adage “one man’s suicide bomber is another man’s freedom fighter,” comes to mind. That is to say, in a society saturated with violence, it is imperative to remain aware of the processes of framing and the rather enigmatic ways in which stories construct our reality so as to contemplate solutions to such violence.

I believe that policymakers and other agents of change, who hope to thwart the mobilization efforts of violent non-state actors, should not discount the powerful influence of framing. This means, increasing funding for research projects that critically and systematically analyze the messaging strategies employed by VNSAs. While my study reveals that amplified personal frames result in greater willingness to support violence, those interested in preventing violent mobilization should be wary of simply invalidating these personal narratives. I believe this course of action may only serve to

strengthen the perception of victimization and ultimately galvanize more support for violence, however future research is needed to better understand the consequences of specific strategies. Despite the limitations that barred me from observing propaganda constructed by real VNSAs, policymakers cannot ignore the unique contextual factors that accompany each group, should they wish to develop effective strategies to combat them.

This experimental study provides valuable insight into the interplay between personal narratives and support for violence, with high internal, as well as external validity. However, through this research, I have discovered some important limitations to experimental surveys, as well as social sciences research in general. First, measuring opinions and emotions in this context is particularly limited. Respondents are given 5 or 4 options on scale that may or may not capture their view regarding the question, thus it's difficult to emphasize the generalizability of the findings, as the data cannot reflect the nuances of human expression. I found this phenomenon particularly frustrating when examining results from the intervening variables regarding how much of an emotional reaction one has when thinking about a particular event. To enhance this study, I might have provided an additional text box for respondents to explain the reason behind their emotional reaction in their own words for clearer interpretation after data collection. To further improve this analysis, I would have liked to conduct predicted probabilities tests to determine the size and strength of the relationships between the variables, and thus reflect on which frames were comparatively most successful in generating a greater degree of consensus mobilization.

My hope is that this study stimulates future research regarding the impacts of framing techniques on not only consensus mobilization, but also action mobilization.

Because, while consensus mobilization is a necessary precondition for violence, ultimately it's whether one chooses to act with violence that provokes and haunts researchers and policymakers. Several questions remain, such as, does continued exposure to personal injustice frames increase one's willingness to engage in high-risk collective action? And furthermore, how might the addition of photographs and video footage to a story, as we observe in the real world, influence violent behavior? We as researchers must endeavor to answer these questions. As the "battle for the hearts and minds" continues, obtaining a deeper awareness and understanding of the mechanisms that lead people to support or utilize violence is essential to forming effective strategies to combat it.

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire⁷

Consent: Please read the directions and answer the questions that follow. The survey is completely confidential, so please answer as honestly as possible. You may refuse to answer any question or end your participation in the survey at any time. After completing the survey you will be credited \$0.50 to your MTurk account. By clicking next you are consenting to participate in the survey and certify that you are over 18 years of age. Thank you for your time.

Please note that this survey may contain sensitive information regarding violence

1. ***How well does each of the following characteristics describe your reaction to the materials you just saw?⁸**

	Not at all	Not very well	Somewhat well	Very well
Angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shocked	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frustrated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disgusted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Calm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. **Violence is never an appropriate response to any situation**

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

3. **Using violence in self-defense is appropriate.**

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

4. **Using violence to defend a loved one is appropriate.**

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

⁷ This survey includes a complete example of the survey questionnaire, however it is important to note that questions marked in gray are not a part of the current analysis

⁸ Questions marked with asterisks were only shown to respondents randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups

5. Using violence to advance a political goal is appropriate.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

6. Using violence in retaliation for a past transgression or wrongdoing against you or a loved one is appropriate?

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

7. Violence can be an appropriate response in certain situations.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

8. *Based on what you just read, how well does each of following characteristics describe Leila? At times, you may feel unsure or that you don't have enough information. When this is the case, you should guess. Please give a rating for every characteristic.

	Not at all	Not very well	Somewhat well	Very well
Daughter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victim	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Survivor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innocent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aggressive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Just	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foolish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about state violence against women and children?

- None
 Little
 Some
 A lot

10. How much of an emotional reaction do you experience when thinking about groups that use violence against the state?

- None
 Little
 Some
 A lot

11. We are currently collecting names for a petition to be sent to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, demanding sanctions against states that engage in violent attacks against women and children. Would you like to add your name to the petition?

- Yes
- No

12. We are currently collecting names for a petition to be sent to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, demanding immediate action against those involved in rebel attacks against state militaries. Would you like to add your name to the petition?

- Yes
- No

13. We are currently collecting funds to be sent to young children orphaned after state attacks. Would you like to donate the \$0.50 you would otherwise be credited for completing this HIT to this fund?

- Yes
- No

14. We are currently collecting funds to be sent to the families of fallen soldiers recently killed by armed rebels. Would you like to donate the \$0.50 you would otherwise be credited for completing this HIT to this fund?

- Yes
 - No
-

15. *How old was Leila (in years) at the time of her mother's attack?

16. *How old was Leila (in years) when she joined the resistance?

17. *How many soldiers were involved in the attack on Leila's mother?

18. What is 5-2?

19. What is your age in years?

20. Which of the following best describes your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Other, please describe _____

21. Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation?

- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Other, please describe _____

22. In the past month, how many times have you attended religious services?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5 or more

23. Which of the following best describes you?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- White/Caucasian
- Other, please describe _____

24. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- Yes
- No

25. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Some high school
- High school graduate
- Some technical school or college
- Technical school or associate graduate
- College degree (example: BS, BA)
- Graduate degree (example: MA, MS, PhD, EdD)
- Professional degree (example: MD, DDS, DVM)

26. How often do you follow world news?

- Never
- Rarely
- Several Times a Month
- Once a Week
- Daily

27. How much influence do you think you can have in shaping public policy?

- None
- Little

- Some
- A lot

28. Which of the following best characterizes your political affiliation?

- Strong Republican
- Weak Republican
- Independent who leans Republican
- Independent
- Independent who leans Democrat
- Weak Democrat
- Strong Democrat

29. Charitable giving is an effective way to make a difference.

- Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

30. In the past year, how many times have you made a financial contribution to a charitable organization? Please specify below.

31. Have you or a loved one ever been the victim of violence?

- Yes
- No

If during your participation in this study you experience any symptoms of psychological distress, please contact the National Helpline, a confidential and free 24-hour service, to speak with a trained professional (1-800-662-HELP).

Debrief: Thank you for your participation in this study. The purpose of this investigation is to determine if and how certain messaging techniques affect individuals' attitudes toward participation in violent movements. In order to ensure participants' safety and wellbeing, we created a fictitious scenario with fabricated characters and details. Participants were shown varying accounts of a young girl, named Leila, who joins a "resistance" group following the death of her mother. All participants were asked questions about their opinions regarding Leila's decision, as well as their emotional reactions to the story. We anticipate that participants shown the story containing the most detailed version of the scenario would be more likely to have a strong emotional reaction in defense of the victim (Leila) and thus support Leila's decision to engage in a violent organization that resulted in the death of another human being. The characters of Leila and her mother, as well as the story presented, are entirely fictitious. Thank you again for your participation in this study. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Michele Leiby at mleiby@wooster.edu or 1-330-287-1951.

Appendix B: Statistical Tables and Charts

Chart 1: Age Distribution of Survey Respondents

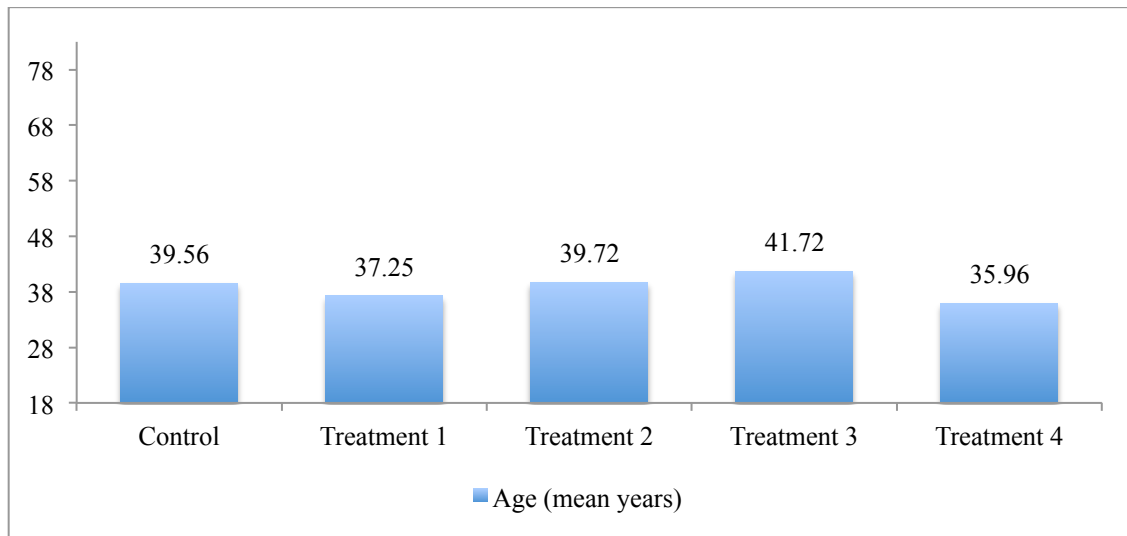


Chart 2: Ethnicity Distribution of Survey Respondents

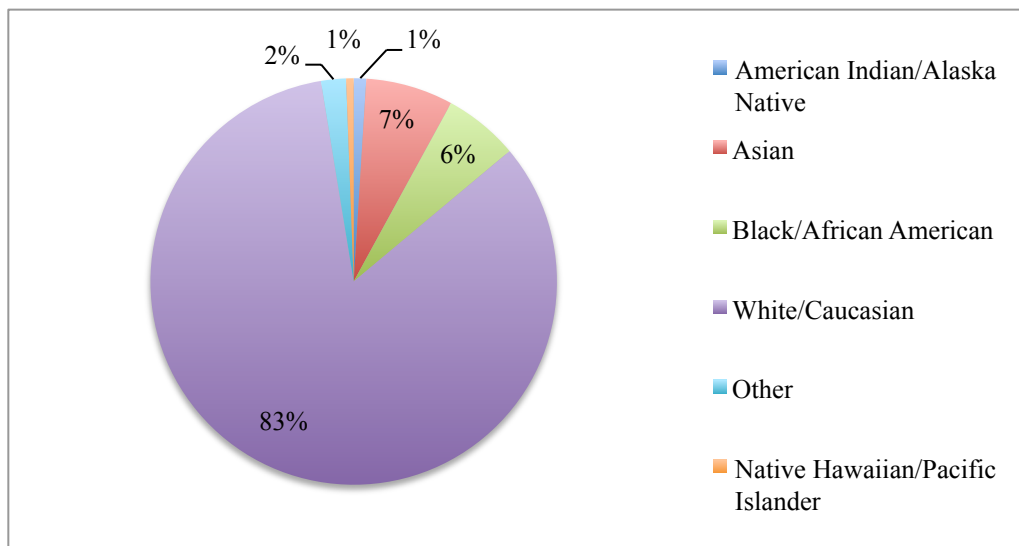


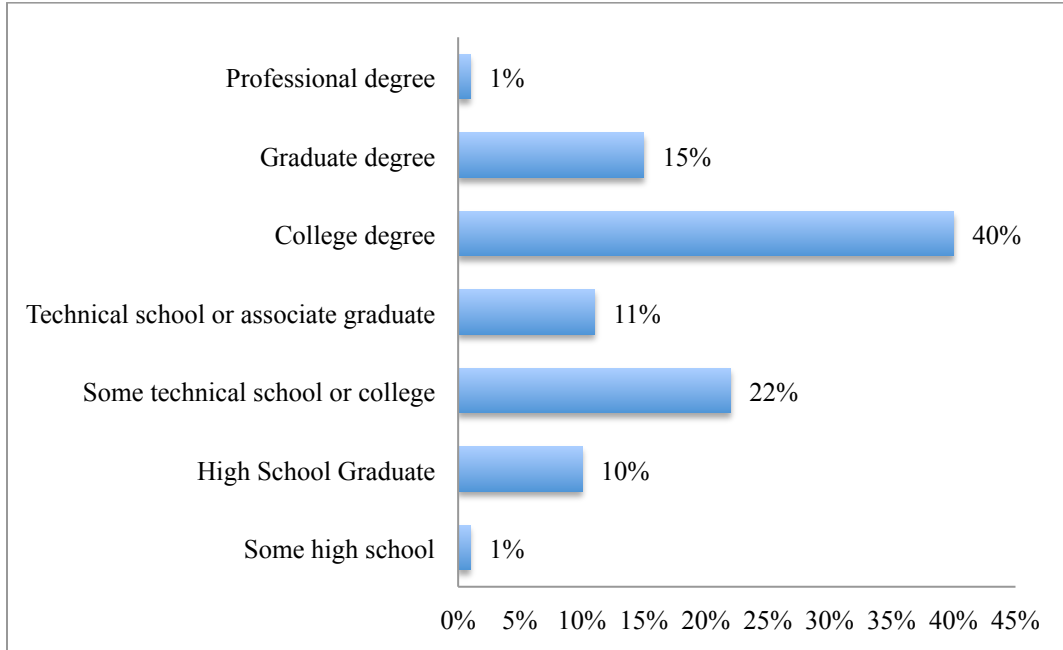
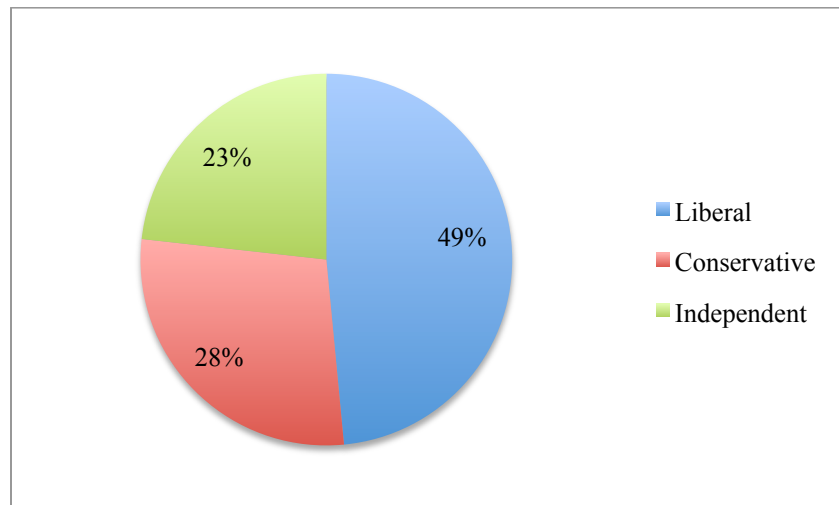
Chart 3: Education Distribution of Survey Respondents**Chart 4: Political Affiliation of Survey Respondents**

Table 1: Correlation Matrix (obs=490)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
(1) DV	1.000										
(2) Age	0.0899	1.000									
(3) Gender	-0.1153	0.0162	1.000								
(4) Religion	-0.0704	0.0554	0.1125	1.000							
(5) Religiosity	-0.0433	-0.0410	0.0305	0.2328	1.000						
(6) Ethnicity	0.0617	0.1464	0.0656	0.0032	-0.0052	1.000					
(7) Education	0.0011	0.1053	-0.1217	-0.0330	0.0876	-0.0665	1.000				
(8) News	0.1407	0.2719	-0.1034	-0.0314	0.0075	0.0251	0.1723	1.000			
(9) Political Efficacy	-0.0639	-0.0392	0.0692	0.0022	0.1192	-0.0376	0.1339	0.2239	1.000		
(10) Political Affiliation	-0.0525	-0.0198	0.0567	-0.1406	-0.1949	-0.0136	-0.0048	0.0353	.1866	1.000	
(11) Victim of Violence	-0.0174	-0.0313	-0.0964	-0.0150	0.0685	-0.0878	0.0687	-0.0406	-0.0423	-0.1199	1.000

Table 2: Distribution of Dependent Variable Measures (%)

Ordinal Scale	<i>DV Measure 1 (Reverse-coded)</i>	<i>DV Measure 2</i>
1 Strongly disagree	9	1
2 Disagree	29	6
3 Neither agree nor disagree	23	18
4 Agree	28	55
5 Strongly agree	12	19

Table 3: The Effects of Personal Frames on Support for Violence (Estimated using Ordered Logit)

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
Independent Variables				
Any Frame v. Control	.448* (.212)	-	-	-
Basic Frame v. Control	-	-.017 (.329)	-	-
Any Amplified Frame v. Basic Frame	-	-	.513* (.254)	-
Most Amplified Frame v. Single Amplification	-	-	-	-.666** (.260)
Control Variables				
Age	.006 (.007)	-.019 (.013)	.014 (.007)	.012 (.009)
Gender	-.428* (.201)	-.408 (.365)	-.378 (.224)	-.234 (.256)
Ethnicity	.169 (.107)	.329 (.212)	.134 (.112)	.232 (.131)
Religion	-.031 (.043)	-.081 (.093)	-.058 (.049)	-.059 (.052)
Religiosity	-.100 (.128)	.194 (.213)	-.124 (.145)	-.111 (.173)
Education	-.050 (.076)	.002 (.123)	-.072 (.088)	-.126 (.104)
News	.267** (.095)	.351* (.176)	.194 (.107)	.311** (.120)
Political Efficacy	-.305* (.156)	-.047 (.238)	-.345* (.170)	-.461* (.215)
Political Affiliation	-.079 (.054)	.026 (.103)	-.102 (.061)	-.144* (.070)
Victim of Violence	-.073 (.192)	.460 (.356)	-.249 (.215)	-.475 (.257)
N	435	164	351	271
χ^2 (12)	32.34***	18.48	33.98***	44.21***
Log pseudo-likelihood	-501.34943	-174.66103	-407.24162	-304.4576

Notes: Two-tailed tests; robust standard errors in parentheses; * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

Table 4: The Effects of Personal Frames on Perception of Innocence and Vulnerability (Estimated using Ordered Logit)

	<i>Model 5</i> <i>Innocent</i>	<i>Model 6</i> <i>Vulnerable</i>	<i>Model 7</i> <i>Vulnerable</i>
Independent Variables			
Any Amplified v. Basic	-	-	.558* (.249)
“Humanizing” v. Basic	.632** (.267)	.683** (.265)	-
Control Variables			
Age	.029** (.010)	.021* (.009)	.558*** (.008)
Gender	.422 (.230)	.534* (.243)	.557** (.210)
Ethnicity	-.006 (.149)	.009 (.130)	-.010 (.111)
Religion	.094 (.061)	-.088 (.067)	-.027 (.059)
Religiosity	-.150 (.152)	.167 (.146)	.228 (.139)
Education	-.233** (.097)	-.064 (.098)	-.070 (.087)
News	.147 (.109)	.166 (.111)	.119 (.101)
Political Efficacy	-.284 (.164)	-.161 (.160)	-.078 (.148)
Political Affiliation	.004 (.080)	.104 (.069)	.106 (.058)
Victim of Violence	.227 (.257)	-.485 (.263)	-.532* (.228)
N	269	271	351
χ^2 (12)	34.33***	28.97***	40.77***
Log pseudo-likelihood	-293.18499	-264.75671	-347.49153

Notes: Two-tailed tests; robust standard errors in parentheses; * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

Table 5: Demographic Profile of Control and Treatment Groups

Variable		Control	T1	T2	T3	T4	Aggregate
Age (mean years)		39.56	37.25	39.72	41.72	35.96	38.75
Gender (%)	Male	48	50	46	53	40	47%
	Female	52	50	51	47	60	52%
	Other	0	0	1.9	0	0.9	.6%
Religion (%)	Agnostic	52	19	23	23	23	22%
	Atheist	0	22	10	18	14	16%
	Buddhist	1	3	2	2	2	2%
	Christian	53	49	52	47	47	50%
	Hindu	1	0	1	0	1	0.60%
	Jewish	0	2	1	1	1	1%
	Muslim	0	1	2	0	1	0.80%
	Other	5	4	9	9	12	8%
Religiosity, mean 1=0 - 4=5 or more	Religious services attended monthly	1.52	1.51	1.45	1.43	1.6	1.5
Ethnicity (%)	American Indian/Alaska	0	0	3	2	0	1%
	Asian	7	8	7	8	4	7%
	Black/African American	5	10	5	8	4	6%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific	1	0	0	2	0	0.60%
	White/Caucasian	86	80	84	77	92	84%
	Other	1	2	2	2	1	2%
Education (%)	Some high school	2	2	1	0	2	1%
	High school graduate	16	12	9	6	8	10%
	Some technical school or college	18	24	27	17	26	22%
	Technical school or associate gr	11	15	11	7	12	11%
	College degree	40	39	38	45	30	40%
	Graduate degree	12	9	13	24	19	15%
Professional degree	1	0	1	1	4	1%	
News, 1=never - 5=daily	How often do you follow world news?	4.04	3.96	3.94	4.08	4	4
Political Efficacy, 1=none - 4=a lot	How much influence do you think you can have in shaping public policy?	2.05	1.99	1.97	2.01	2.1	2
Political Affiliation, 1=strong Republican 7=strong Democrat		4.18	4.38	4.68	4.47	4.41	4.4
Victim of Violence (%)	Yes	39	38	33	41	40	38%
	No	61	62	67	59	60	62%
N (total population)		85	101	105	96	110	497

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