

**Gender and Violent Extremism: Examining the Psychology of Women Participating in
Non-State Armed Groups**

by Rebecca Dougherty and P. Kathleen Frier

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Directed by

Rebecca Patterson
PhD, National Security Policy

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Dedication

The authors wish to dedicate this publication to the family and friends whose support made this project possible. With special thanks to our advisor Dr. Rebecca Patterson, whose guidance and patience have made this a far better report than we could have imagined. We would also like to specially thank Drs. Aisling Swaine and Bill Rolston, whose invaluable advice made our field research possible.

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Abstract

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There is a presumption that women do not use violence as a means of exercising their political will, because most traditional notions of femininity emphasize motherhood, peacefulness, and stability. Like the repressive power relations between men and women in Islamic State society, the norms that dominated Western culture throughout the early 20th century mirror those affecting women under the IS regime in many ways. In Northern Ireland, these norms shaped women's identities prior to, during, and after the conflict; analysis of female fighters in Northern Ireland provides a parallel context for understanding women participating in other violent non-state armed groups like IS. This paper seeks to understand which factors make women vulnerable or averse to radicalization, and asks: *do these factors differ from those that drive men into violent extremist groups?* Understanding similarities and differences between men and women with regard to radicalization will enable policymakers to develop policies that effectively prevent and disrupt violent extremism.

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“It became a joke over the years [in prison], this gentle, mothering image of us.

We would joke that it doesn’t reflect us ... and it doesn’t reflect Ireland.”

Female Combatant

Executive Summary

There is a presumption that women do not use violence as a means of exercising their political will, because most traditional notions of femininity emphasize motherhood, peacefulness, and stability. Like the repressive power relations between men and women in Islamic State society, the norms that dominated Western culture throughout the early 20th century mirror those affecting women under the IS regime in many ways. In Northern Ireland, these norms shaped women's identities prior to, during, and after the conflict; analysis of female fighters in Northern Ireland provides a parallel context for understanding women participating in other violent non-state armed groups like IS. This paper seeks to understand which factors make women vulnerable or averse to radicalization, and asks: *do these factors differ from those that drive men into violent extremist groups?* Understanding similarities and differences between men and women with regard to radicalization will enable policymakers to develop policies that effectively prevent and disrupt violent extremism.

The study of Northern Ireland is particularly useful in this endeavor given that the “nationalist roots of the conflict are mirrored elsewhere in the world, including Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and Iraq.” When the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ignited, the U.S. government relied heavily on exporting British counterterrorism policy and practice from Northern Ireland directly to the Middle East. As the emerging threat posed by Islamic State grows, the legacy and efficacy of these policies demands scrutiny.

Through our field research and analysis, we confirm that trends the U.S. Department of State has laid out in its CVE framework were present in Northern Ireland throughout the Troubles and

believe many of those factors propelled women to participate in paramilitary groups. These trends are almost identical to the drivers for men, with the addition of the pursuit of gender equality and equal representation in politics. Curiously, we expected gender equality to play a *more* significant role in their decision making, but feelings of alienation, denial of opportunity based on faith, and deeply personal experience with state sanctioned violence factored equally in women's choices to join the Republican cause. This suggests that politics are a major driving force in a woman's decision to join NSAGs, and that bucketing women's actions to a gender specific cause provides an incomplete picture of their rationale. Ultimately, our findings suggest that both men and women perpetrate violence for social, emotional, and political reasons. Finally, the prevailing success of the Good Friday Agreement suggests that the study of Northern Ireland is important in understanding not only radicalization, but in crafting enduring, effective peace processes in other conflicts, like those in Syria or Libya.

Introduction

Research, programming, and policy surrounding countering violent extremism (CVE) has gained prominence in recent years as governments have been struck by the impact of radicalization and an increasing foreign fighter phenomenon. The use of social media by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) to recruit vulnerable populations has drawn special attention as a new and sinister means of radicalization. Though current CVE research is abundant, how women are impacted by radicalization and why they propagate political violence has been largely ignored, especially within U.S. counterterrorism policy. Policymakers should not assume that women are susceptible to recruitment and radicalization for the same reasons as men, or assume that they will be agents of prevention simply because of their gender identity. Understanding the psychology of extremism and the gender dynamics within non-state armed groups is critical to the development and implementation of policy that will successfully combat radicalization.

The academic narratives surrounding women in radical groups are framed as a binary – there are narratives of the “violent woman” juxtaposed to those of the “peacemaker.” A majority of current policy assumes that women are inherently peaceful because of their traditional roles as mothers. This role within the family does indeed put many women in a position to act as agents of prevention, but the narrative does not consider that women may use this position to perpetrate or provoke violence. This vision of women gives little insight into what might drive a woman into participating in political violence.

This paper seeks to understand which factors make women vulnerable or averse to radicalization, and asks: *do these factors differ from those that drive men into violent extremist groups?*

Understanding potential similarities and differences between men and women in regard to radicalization will enable policymakers to develop policies that effectively prevent and disrupt violent extremism.

To build a picture of how and why women might choose violence to exercise their political voice, we comprehensively review the existing literature on radicalization as well as gender norms and stereotypes; we examine current policies for combatting violent extremism and radicalization in the international community; we detail and assess case study data on female combatants in the Irish Republican Army; and, we provide a policy recommendation in hope that we might aid policymakers to successfully combat violent extremism in emerging conflicts.

Important Vocabulary in this Report

We have chosen to examine the role women played throughout the history of Irish and Northern Irish independence, and have narrowed the focus of our research to the role of women in the Irish Republican Army (IRA) during the Troubles (1968-1998). The IRA and its splinter groups are considered by many to be “extremist” however the language of terrorism and its political implications are fraught with political tension.¹ For the purposes of this paper, we will use the term “non-state armed group” (NSAG) when referring to the IRA in an effort to distance our analysis from any inherent political bias.

Common Abbreviations in this Report

CT	Counterterrorism
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
HMG	Her Majesty’s Government (United Kingdom)
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IS	Islamic State
Loyalist	Ideology favoring continuing political union with Great Britain (UVF)
NSAG	Non-State Armed Group
Republican	Ideology favoring expulsion of the British from Northern Ireland (IRA)
Troubles	Height of violence in the Northern Ireland Conflict 1969-1998
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

¹ Such as the Provisional IRA (PIRA), the Real IRA (RIRA), and the Continuity IRA (CIRA). There are many splinter groups that continue an insurgency against the British government and Parliament in the Northern Ireland. For clarity, the IRA has, since 1998, disarmed its combatants and taken an active role in peace building through its political arm called Sinn Fein. The PIRA, RIRA, and CIRA are not supported by the IRA, but are dissident factions of the original movement.

The Need for Research on Women in Non-State Armed Groups

Though gender is a social construct, it is a crucial element in understanding how individuals lead their lives.² It shapes the resources to which they have access and the power or authority they wield in their society.³ Frequently women are depicted as passive, as victims, helpless, subordinate, or inherently maternal – all assumptions that reinforce gender stereotypes. As a result, women are less likely to be considered “at risk” for recruitment, and are perceived as less dangerous than their male counterparts in NSAGs. Performing a gender analysis provides policymakers with the opportunity to think critically about women’s involvement in NSAGs from the perspective of their gendered identity. Looking through this “gender lens” is a way to focus on gender as it relates to power and to identify the way in which gender is central to understanding international processes and conflicts.

Many non-state armed groups (NSAGs), like the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), have actively recruited and involved women in their organizations, recognizing the influence they exert in their communities. Though terrorism is often considered a male occupation, existing research on women’s roles within these organizations is often characterized by bias, misconceptions, and gender stereotypes. To successfully dismantle NSAGs, it is essential that policymakers and counterterrorism experts understand the ways in which women are radicalized, how they recruit others, and their role in perpetrating acts of violence.

² Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. "Women, Gender and Terrorism." (2011): 1-25.

³ Cohn, Carol. *Women and Wars*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2013. Print.

Literature Review

To comprehensively address the question of women in NSAGs, this paper reviews the literature on the psychology of terrorism and feminist theory independently, ultimately synthesizing the two schools of thought in a cross disciplinary analysis of women in NSAGs. This allows us to fully discern the complexity of radicalization while interpreting accepted radicalization models through a gender lens.

Psychology and Extremism

The process of radicalization is complex; there is no single profile that can predict an individual's predisposition to violence. Factors associated with radicalization are often constructed as inescapable precursors to acts of violence, suggesting a causal relationship between radicalization and terrorism.⁴ However, a more holistic look at psychology tells us that there is no causal relationship between violence and ideology or religion. Experts agree that radicalization is often mischaracterized as a mental disability or illness, when in fact the process of radicalization is similar to the processes that lead to other "extreme" behaviors such as self-harm, alcoholism, or addiction.⁵ In this frame, ideology is cognitively irrelevant.

Violence is simply an outcome of an underlying cognitive vulnerability often caused by trauma. This trauma leads to, what practitioners refer to as, a cognitive opening. This opening is the space that is required for extreme behavior to take root. It is important to note that no extreme behavior occurs overnight; often the behavior grows over time until an individual feels trapped

⁴ Brown, Katherine. *Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terrorism Measures*, Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism: Human Rights Perspectives . ed. / Margaret Satterthwaite; Jayne Huckerby. Abingdon : Routledge, 2013. p. 36-59

⁵ Philipson, Judith. *Political Psychology*, Lecture Series; George Washington University, 2015.

by circumstance or has become dependent. If violence is simply an outcome of an increasingly extreme behavior in response to trauma, what causes an individual to choose one extreme behavior over another?

In moments of vulnerability most people are deeply influenced by their families, social groups, and communities. Individuals who participate in violent extremism are no different. Often exposed to extremism by a friend or family member, when tragedy creates a cognitive opening, an individual becomes more receptive to “the extreme”. Particularly as a response to trauma, individuals seek control over environments where they have none, and this is the space that ideologies of violence take root, thanks to social group, family, or community influence.⁶ Social group influence is the most important factor in guiding an individual through a traumatic event. Psychologists and mental health experts around the world agree about the importance of counseling and support following a traumatic event or loss, but in many economically disadvantaged or war torn parts of the world, those resources are simply not available. During times of cognitive vulnerability, individuals who are alienated, exposed to propaganda and violence, or systematically denied opportunity are more likely to engage in extreme or risky behavior.⁷

Decades of research confirm worldview, social, political, and gender identity as important factors in a person’s decision making, yet there is little research discussing whether men and women react to these “radicalizing” influences in the same way.^{8,9} Research can identify and

⁶ Neumann, Peter. King’s College London - Interview. March 2016.

⁷ Blinken, Antony, Deputy Secretary of State. New Frameworks for Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (Speech). Brookings Institute; 16 February 2016.

⁸ Cialdini, Robert. *The Science of Persuasion*, Scientific American, February 2001. Pages 77-81.

map an individual's social group, and even understand likely influencers; in that vein, this paper attempts to identify whether or not men and women react similarly to alienation, propaganda, and violence.

The study of cognitive functioning and social group influence can help policymakers understand how and why people engage in "extreme" behavior, and may dispel the growing perception that one faith is more violent than another. Instead psychology reminds us of how similar all of humanity is: when any person suffers a trauma or loss, he or she is vulnerable. How that vulnerability or cognitive opening is exploited, and whether reaction to influence toward extreme behavior varies by gender remains to be seen.

Gender Norms and Stereotypes

As the literature has grown, assertions about women's involvement in NSAGs have been plagued by stereotypes of women as pawns or victims.¹⁰ Often assumptions about why women join NSAGs mirrors theories about female activity in the domestic realm, diminishing women's credibility.^{11,12} This assumption shapes the programs and policies that the U.S. uses to counter violent extremism and restricts their impact and efficacy.

⁹ McAdams, Dan P. *What Psychobiographers Might Learn from Personality Psychology*, the Handbook of Psychology, Chapter 4, Pages 64-83. Oxford University Press, 2005.

¹⁰ Cunningham, Karla. *Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol 26, Issue 3, Pages 171-195.

¹¹ Cunningham, Karla. *Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol 26, Issue 3, Pages 171-195.

¹² Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. "Women, Gender and Terrorism." (2011): 1-25.

Current research suggests women's agency is located within the family. Women are expected to be pacifist and moderate, not radical.¹³ Muslim women in particular are assumed to conform to such norms and stereotypes, purportedly lacking agency outside the private sphere of their homes. Their encounters with "radical Islam" are defined through their roles as wives, mothers, and sisters of radical men. This relies on maternalistic and instrumentalist logic that constrains policymakers to understand women solely through their relations with male relatives.¹⁴ The denial of women's agency affects counterterrorism and counter-radicalization efforts substantially. Essentializing women in counter-radicalization efforts denies the experiences and identities of these women and creates policies and programs using a fundamentally flawed logic that understands women's participation according to expected gender roles.¹⁵

For many acknowledging that women can be "terrorists" or even violent is a contradiction.

Violent women interrupt such stereotypes about women's roles in war and their roles in society, suggesting that women who commit violence are not the peaceful, war-resistant, conservative, virtuous and subdued women that require protection – instead, these women are a security threat themselves.¹⁶

The limited reporting on women who engage in NSAGs often portrays them as unnatural, gender defiant, sexually deviant, psychologically unstable, or easily manipulated. In fact, this pervasive

¹³ Brown, Katherine. *Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terrorism Measures, Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism: Human Rights Perspectives* . ed. / Margaret Satterthwaite; Jayne Huckerby. Abingdon : Routledge, 2013. p. 36-59

¹⁴ Brown, Katherine. *Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terrorism Measures, Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism: Human Rights Perspectives* . ed. / Margaret Satterthwaite; Jayne Huckerby. Abingdon : Routledge, 2013. p. 36-59

¹⁵ Brown, Katherine. *Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terrorism Measures, Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism: Human Rights Perspectives* . ed. / Margaret Satterthwaite; Jayne Huckerby. Abingdon : Routledge, 2013. p. 36-59

¹⁶ Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. *Women, Gender and Terrorism*. (2011): 1-25.

bias is one that psychologists and feminist scholars alike argue against. These personal pathologies suggest that women engage in violence because of male family members, poverty, rape, or coercion.¹⁷ Mia Bloom cites almost exclusively personal reasons in her research on female terrorists, including “revenge for personal loss, the desire to redeem the family name, to escape a life of sheltered monotony, to achieve fame, and to level the patriarchal societies in which they live.”¹⁸ Looking more closely at the context of women’s violence would help to nuance and correct these depictions.¹⁹

Women and Recruitment

Although literature on the recruitment of women into NSAGs is sparse, a number of recruitment pathways can be identified by interweaving the known psychology of extreme behavior or radicalization with existing biographies and interviews with female perpetrators of violent extremism.²⁰ These interviews amplify the notion that women participate in violence for similar reasons as men, such as personal distress, religion, nationalism, or anger; however, women also participate for reasons related to achieving equality, an inherently political issue.^{21, 22} The issue of gender equality was famously brought to the forefront of the nationalist cause by the 1916 Irish Uprising and remained a foundational political tenet of the Irish struggle against Great Britain.^{23,24}

¹⁷ Cunningham, Karla. *Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol 26, Issue 3, Pages 171-195

¹⁸ Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. *Women, Gender and Terrorism*. (2011): 1-25.

¹⁹ Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. *Women, Gender and Terrorism*. (2011): 1-25.

²⁰ Jacques, Karen and Taylor, Paul. *Female Terrorism: A Review*, Terrorism and Political Violence, 2009. Volume 21, Issue 3, Pages 499-315.

²¹ Jacques, Karen and Taylor, Paul. *Female Terrorism: A Review*, Terrorism and Political Violence, 2009. Volume 21, Issue 3, Pages 499-315

²² Cunningham argues that women have complex motivations for participation, combining collective incentives-- such as the desire for national independence with individual motivations like the desire for gender equality.

²³ Jacques, Karen and Taylor, Paul. *Female Terrorism: A Review*, Terrorism and Political Violence, 2009. Volume 21, Issue 3, Pages 499-315.

Because women self-report that they are most likely to participate in violence to transform their status in society, it is essential that counterterrorism experts and policymakers recognize women not only as emotional and maternal beings but political agents and activists in their own right. Policy which continues to promote notions that women do not choose to commit acts of violence of their own volition, and focuses solely on their “novelty” or relationship with male relatives, will fail to provide answers for women’s recruitment and violent involvement in NSAGs.

Many reports from the scholarly and policy worlds arrive at similar conclusions – women engage in terrorism for personal reasons. However, many of these same reports however fail to acknowledge that men participate in political violence for emotional reasons as well as political ones.^{25,26} While feminist scholars have critiqued narratives that attribute women’s activism to emotion, many have committed the same fallacy in upholding the stereotype that men join for purely rational or political reasons.²⁷ There is an underlying presumption that women cannot or do not participate in violence as a means of exercising their own political will which this research attempts to refute.

This research attempts to reinforce emerging research suggesting women participate in NSAGs, sometimes violently, and seeks to explain some of the motivations behind their involvement. Understanding why women are driven to use violence will help define policies to interdict the radicalization and recruitment of women.

²⁴ Cunningham, Karla. *Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol 26, Issue 3, Pages 171-195.

²⁵ Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. *Women, Gender and Terrorism*. (2011): 1-25.

²⁶ Conway, Maura. Dublin City University, Interview – March 2016.

²⁷ Sjoberg, Laura, Grace Cooke, and Stacy Reiter Neal. *Women, Gender and Terrorism*. (2011): 1-25.

Review of Current Policy

United Nations Security Council: Resolution 2242

UNSC Resolution 2242 was adopted in October 2015, and is the first of the Security Council resolutions to include a focus on women's involvement in terrorism and violent extremism.²⁸ The resolution calls for greater integration of gender in states' counterterrorism and counter-extremism strategies, acknowledging that holding consultations with women and women's organizations may help inform these efforts.²⁹ It urges the leadership of women in developing strategies to counter extremism and terrorism to effectively address the spread of terrorism. Such language is a subtle recognition of the lack of women involved in the development of existing state-level policies on CT and CVE. Finally, the resolution urges member states and relevant UN entities (UN Counterterrorism Executive Directorate & UN Women) to "conduct and gather gender-sensitive research and data collection on the drivers of radicalization for women." This component of the resolution highlights the need for research on the ways in which women are radicalized, as it increasingly poses a threat to international security. Though this recognition seems like a significant step forward, it does not guarantee or translate directly into state-level policy. As "soft" law, resolutions possess no enforcement mechanism to ensure states implement the recommendations made throughout the resolution, though states are obliged to implement them.

Efforts within the U.S. Government

In response to the rise of violent extremism, the U.S. Department of State is revamping its counterterrorism efforts. What was once the Bureau of Counterterrorism will now become the

²⁸ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) [on women and peace and security] , 13 October 2015, S/RES/2242 (2015)

²⁹ UN Security Council, Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) [on women and peace and security] , 13 October 2015, S/RES/2242 (2015)

Bureau of Counterterrorism and Violent Extremism with separate programming focused specifically on women and violent extremism. Two of the Bureau's broad efforts to engage women in this space include a multilateral approach for the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 2242, as well as the formation of an interagency working group with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and others.

Part of the effort to engage multilaterally on Resolution 2242 necessitates the U.S. to update its own National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security. The development of the interagency working group creates space for government agencies working on CVE to collaborate, share best practices and ultimately increase the efficiency of CT and CVE programming. These strategies on behalf of agencies are recent, and whether they succeed in mainstreaming gender into programming will remain to be seen.

Case Study: The Women of the Irish Republican Army

Case Selection Criteria

The following case study on women's participation in the Irish Republican Army (IRA) sheds light on the roles women played in one of the world's longest standing violent political conflicts. The case study reinforces a growing body of research recognizing women use violence as a means to a political end, and it supports the U.S. Department of State's framework for radicalization by linking women's activities in the IRA directly to framework indices.

Analysis of the Northern Ireland conflict and the processes of Republican recruitment are instructive when linked to emergent conflicts. Ireland endured decades of political violence, and the tradition of violence was passed down from generation to generation. We aim to provide insight into how and why women were radicalized and recruited to aid policymakers in replicating the success of the Good Friday Agreement in combatting IS.

The study of Northern Ireland is particularly useful given the "nationalist roots of the conflict in Northern Ireland are mirrored elsewhere in the world, including Chechnya, Sri Lanka, and Iraq."³⁰ Indeed many experts have compared British internment camps to the United States' infamous Camp Bucca in Iraq, blaming the heavy handed tactic in both instances for furthering radicalizing prisoners.³¹ Furthermore, when the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began, the U.S. government relied heavily on exporting British CT policy from Northern Ireland to the Middle East. This suggests a study of Northern Ireland is important in understanding not only

³⁰ Dingley, James. *Combating Terrorism in Northern Ireland*, Cass Series on Political Violence. Routledge Press, 2009

³¹ Taylor, Peter. *Comparing the Evolution of IS and the IRA*, BBC News, April 2015.

radicalization, but provides insight into crafting an enduring, effective peace process as well.^{32,33,34}

Though power relations between men and women in IS society cannot be characterized as anything less than oppressive, in many ways they mirror the patriarchal norms that dominated Northern Irish society throughout the Troubles and shaped women's identities prior to, during, and after the conflict. Like IS, the Irish Nationalist cause traditionally associated femininity with the domestic, traditional, and private realms of life.³⁵ This provides us with a similar context while analyzing women's recruitment and involvement in NSAGs under situations of increasing violence and sectarianism like those in Syria or Libya.

Background

On April 10, 1998 members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), the Government of the United Kingdom, and Unionist factions penned the Good Friday Agreement in Belfast, Northern Ireland, formally ending an 800-year long conflict.

The split between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland was and is tied deeply to the British conquest of Ireland and an 1885 proposal for Home Rule. Fighting endured for over a hundred years and tensions between factions grew deeper as the question of Irish identity become more muddled. Ultimately warring groups fell broadly on two sides of the conflict. Nationalists were Roman Catholic and represented a political **minority** in the North; they campaigned for British

³² Neumann, Peter. *Iraq: Lessons from Northern Ireland, History Today*, Volume 54, Issue 2. February 2004.

³³ British Government Official – Interview, March 2016.

³⁴ Ellison, Graham and O'Reilly CF. *From Empire to Iraq and the "War on Terror": The Transplantation and Commodification of the (Northern) Irish Policing Experience*, *Police Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 395-426.

³⁵ Ashe, Fidelma. *Gendering the Holy Cross School Dispute: Women and Nationalism in Northern Ireland*. *Political Studies* 54 (2006): 147-64.

expulsion from Ireland, and viewed British rule as an occupation of sovereign territory. On the other side of the conflict were Unionists – Protestants who held a large political **majority** in Northern Ireland and favored a continued political union with the United Kingdom. While the conflict has often been framed as a religious one, it is important to recognize that religious identity had significant implications for access to resources like housing, education, employment, and public welfare.

Women & the Republican Cause

To understand women in the conflict in Northern Ireland, one must understand the conservative society in which they lived. Social and religious conservatism dictated strict gender roles that were implicit across both Protestant and Catholic communities. Ideals of motherhood, purity, and caregiving were embedded in community relations – they framed women’s political choices, and defined how they were permitted to engage in politics.^{36,37}

Though women participated in both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries, they were more operationally active in Republican groups.³⁸ When the Provisional IRA movement split from the IRA in 1970, Cumann na mBan, the IRA’s female auxiliary group aligned with the newly formed PIRA.³⁹ Cumann na mBan acted as combat support for the PIRA; women carried messages, smuggled weapons and explosives, gathered intelligence, and nursed wounded PIRA

³⁶ Ni Aolain, Fionnuala. *Situating Women in Counterterrorism Discourses: Undulating Masculinities and Luminal Femininities*. Boston University Law Review, 2013.

³⁷ Ni Aolain, Fionnuala. *Situating Women in Counterterrorism Discourses: Undulating Masculinities and Luminal Femininities*. Boston University Law Review, 2013.

³⁸ Alison, Miranda H. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-national Conflict*. London: Routledge, 2009.

³⁹ Bloom, Mia, Paul Gill, and John Horgan. *Tiocfaidh ár Mná: Women in the Provisional Irish Republican Army*. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Dec. 2011.

volunteers.⁴⁰ Membership in Cumann na mBan meant supporting the Republican cause, but did not always mean supporting PIRA violence.

In late 1960s, many younger women joining the Cumann na mBan began to argue for greater integration into the group.⁴¹ These women became more militarily active in the PIRA, and were accepted into the organization on an equal footing with the men; over time they became deeply embedded in tactical operations.^{42,43,44,45}

However, after the early 1980s, women essentially disappear from analyses of the PIRA.⁴⁶

Though research on female activism in the paramilitaries exists, there is a lack of research on the role of women in Republican political violence from 1969 to 1998.⁴⁷ The accounts detailed below serve as exemplars of women who actively participated in the violent political conflict in Northern Ireland. They were selected because collectively they exhibit the depth and breadth of the conflict with regard to personal pathology and background. Their stories support our research and personal hypothesis that women use violence as a political tool and serve to highlight the reasons women felt compelled to join the IRA.

⁴⁰ Bloom, Mia, Paul Gill, and John Horgan. *Tiocfaidh ár Mná: Women in the Provisional Irish Republican Army*. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Dec. 2011.

⁴¹ Alison, Miranda H. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-national Conflict*. London: Routledge, 2009.

⁴² Alison, Miranda H. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-national Conflict*. London: Routledge, 2009.

⁴³ Alison, Miranda H. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-national Conflict*. London: Routledge, 2009.

⁴⁴ Alison, Miranda H. *Women and Political Violence: Female Combatants in Ethno-national Conflict*. London: Routledge, 2009.

⁴⁵ Bloom, Mia, Paul Gill, and John Horgan. *Tiocfaidh ár Mná: Women in the Provisional Irish Republican Army*. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Dec. 2011.

⁴⁶ Bloom, Mia, Paul Gill, and John Horgan. *Tiocfaidh ár Mná: Women in the Provisional Irish Republican Army*. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Dec. 2011.

⁴⁷ Bloom, Mia, Paul Gill, and John Horgan. *Tiocfaidh ár Mná: Women in the Provisional Irish Republican Army*. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, Dec. 2011.

Mairéad Farrell

Mairéad Farrell was born to a middle class family in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1957. Farrell became a well-known member of the Provisional IRA during the 1970s and 1980s thanks in part to her political activism while imprisoned.⁴⁸ In uncovering Farrell's path to violence, we need not look far. Farrell herself discussed her motivation for joining the PIRA in a taped interview in July 1987; she comments that she was deeply affected by the presence of British soldiers in Belfast and the internment of Catholic populations in Northern Ireland.⁴⁹ Farrell explained that she became politically active simply because the violence of the conflict was so close to home and that it could not be ignored. Farrell goes on to say that "she had to become involved because she felt [British presence in Northern Ireland] just wasn't right." Furthermore, Farrell mentions that she viewed her participation in the PIRA as a way to further suffrage for women in Ireland. The narrative of passive, well-behaved Irish women was one that didn't resonate with fighters like Farrell, and ultimately contributed to her participation in violence as a way to establish political status for herself and other women.⁵⁰

Bridget Rose Dugdale

Rose Dugdale is the daughter of a London millionaire, professor of economics, and well known Provisional IRA operative. Before becoming an active member of the PIRA, Dugdale was an educated, popular, and a wealthy heiress with no political, familiar, or social connection to the conflict in Ireland. In her early twenties, Dugdale visited Northern Ireland to participate in

⁴⁸ Connor, John. *An IRA Member From Several Angles*; The New York Times, June 13, 1989.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/intern/intern.htm>

⁴⁹ CAIN Archive, University of Ulster. Internment – 1971-1975; Available online:

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/intern/intern.htm>

⁵⁰ Taped interview, July 1987 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33Kc-woTsto> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZUeCemzkt4>

demonstrations for civil rights, and described the experience as “eye opening.” Dugdale felt her family’s wealth alienated her from a ‘normal’ life and perpetuated a system of inequality.

Dugdale called exposés of wealth and status like her own debutante ball “pornographic” events where women were treated like commodities. She was touched by the political plight of the Irish, as well as the class system in Britain, particularly with regard to the status of women in society.

Dugdale felt the Irish were oppressed by the British under a system of state sanctioned persecution, inequality, and brutality. Speaking about her time in prison, Dugdale commented that the experience turned her “from an intellectual recalcitrant into a freedom fighter.”⁵¹ In the years that followed, Dugdale went on to become an active IRA fighter; she was released from prison in 1980, continues to have an active voice in Sinn Fein.⁵²

Maria Gatland (née McGuire)

In 2008, Maria Gatland, senior Conservative Party member on Croydon Council in Greater London was discovered to be a former Republican activist. Maria Gatland, formerly known as Maria McGuire, wrote the memoir *To Take Arms: My Year with the IRA Provisionals*, where she candidly depicts her involvement with the PIRA in the early 1970s.

McGuire was from an affluent Dublin family with no history of militant Republicanism and was not a practicing Catholic.^{53,54} She was determined to join the PIRA, whose agenda for a reformed, united Ireland appealed strongly to her.³⁵ In her book, McGuire writes that she agreed

⁵¹ Corless, Damian. No Regrets for Renegade IRA Art Robber Rose Dugdale; Independent Ireland, April 2014. <http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/no-regrets-for-renegade-ira-art-robber-rose-dugdale-30238446.html>

⁵² TG 4 Documentary, Mna na IRA. January 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=czIVSwwuLJc>

⁵³ Smith, Colin. "How I Brought the Provos' Girl with a Gun in from the Cold." The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, 06 Dec. 2008. Web.

⁵⁴ McKittrick, David. "Maria Gatland: From Terrorist to Tory." The Belfast Telegraph. N.p., 6 Dec. 2008. Web.

with the shooting of British soldiers, and believed “the more that were killed the better.”⁵⁵

McGuire admits to detonating car bombs and aiding in Republican arms-buying missions in Europe.⁵⁶ She eventually detached from the Provisionals after Bloody Friday, when bombs were detonated in Belfast, killing eleven and injuring 130.³⁵ Upon reflection, McGuire describes her involvement with the Provisionals as naiveté and has said she felt that she could change things, particularly politics when she was young.³⁵

Marian Price (Married: McGlinchey)

Marian McGlinchey, formerly known as Marian Price, is a prominent Irish Republican with a long history of involvement in the Republican cause and Cumann na mBan.⁵¹ Price grew up in a Catholic family in west Belfast. At seventeen, she decided to join the cause herself, attributing her participation to a fulfillment of beliefs she still holds dear.^{51,41} Price is known for having masterminded the PIRA’s first bombing mission in England with her sister Dolores, which injured over 200 civilians. She refers to the act as “doing what she believed in” and expresses regret, but says the injuries weren’t intentional.⁴⁰ To Price, the bombs were just a weapon of war. The Price sisters were sentenced to two life terms in England, where both sisters staged a hunger strike. Price was force-fed hundreds of times in her six months in English prison, and was finally moved to Armagh Women’s Prison after an incident nearly killed her.^{40,57} Price’s involvement in the Republican cause eventually led to a high-profile campaign for her release. Years after her medical release from prison, she remains active in the community and says her “principles and

⁵⁵ McGuire, Maria. *To Take Arms; My Year with the IRA Provisionals*. New York: Viking, 1973. Print.

⁵⁶ De Breadun, Deaglan. "How IRA Links Came Back to Haunt Tory." *The Irish Times*. N.p., 6 Dec. 2016. Web.

⁵⁷ *Woman Who Bombed the Old Bailey with Her Sister in 1973 IRA Attack Is to Be Freed from Prison following Republican Campaign*. Mail Online. Associated Newspapers, 30 May 2013.

ideals will never be crushed.”⁴¹ At 58, Price told a reporter that an armed struggle will always be justified as long as there is a British presence in Northern Ireland.⁴¹

Analysis

Methodology

This analysis synthesized existing radicalization models and integrated literature on the psychology of extremism with feminist theory to develop a comprehensive picture of female combatants. In addition to a thorough literature review of radicalization, the research team interviewed government officials from the United States government, Her Majesty's Government (HMG), academics at the University of Ulster, King's College London, Queen's University Belfast, and Dublin City University. Expert and practitioner interviews provided insight into the current standing of policy and helped guide qualitative interviews of former combatants and political prisoners from the Northern Irish Republican community.

The team used semi-structured qualitative interviews when speaking with former combatants to contextualize both the analysis and policy recommendations. Both interview subjects were women, aged 50-60 years, from the Ballymurphy area of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Both subjects were actively involved in supporting political violence during the Troubles, and remain active in the Republican community and Sinn Fein today. For their protection, names and identifiable details are withheld.

The qualitative interview technique relied on thinking aloud and verbal probing techniques for detail. Framework indices were drawn directly from the US Department of State countering violent extremism framework, which details factors the Department has identified as contributing to radicalization.

These include:

- Feelings of alienation and exclusion,
- Exposure to propaganda,
- A lack of critical thinking skill,
- Experience with state-sanctioned violence,
- Heavy-handed tactics by security services,
- And, the systematic denial of opportunity.

Interviews were semi-structured allowing the interview team to ask personal narrative style questions and use verbal probes to clarify if a framework indicator was mentioned, but careful attention was paid to avoid leading interviewees toward any specific conclusion.⁵⁸

Cognitive Analysis

The combatants we interviewed echoed many of the framework issues identified in our research and by the Department of State. Curiously, we expected gender equality to play a *more* significant role in their involvement with the Republican movement, but interviewees mentioned feelings of alienation, denial of opportunity based on faith, and deeply personal experiences with state sanctioned violence as equally important in their decision to join the Republican cause. This suggests that political status is indeed a major driving force in a woman's decision to join NSAGs, but bucketing women's agency to a gender specific cause provides an incomplete picture of their rationale. Cognitive analysis is best understood illustratively; therefore we offer a vignette of our interviews mapping radicalization models against the personal narratives shared with us by former combatants.

⁵⁸ Complete interview protocols and examples of consent paperwork are included in Appendix A.

Vignette

Both of the women interviewed described their experience growing up around violence. Each had lost close family members to the conflict, and expressed a normalization of violence and oppression throughout Catholic society in Belfast. There was an acceptance that occupation, bombings, raids on homes, even death were status quo from their earliest memory.

Psychologically speaking, this desensitization to a hostile environment mirrors Stockholm syndrome.⁵⁹ Both women recognized that their situation was poor but the only means of coping was to accept a sociological bond with their oppressor to survive.⁶⁰

As discussed in many radicalization models, this phase of radicalization builds grievance, attributes blame, and lays the groundwork for the justification of violence through distancing and devaluation i.e. building an us versus them mentality. In this stage, individuals are deeply disaffected though not necessarily activated to carry out violence themselves; Borum's four stage model is an instructive representation of this cognitive stage of radicalization.⁶¹

Our analysis however, bolstered by SME interviews with experts at King's College London, suggests that grievance, target attribution, and devaluation are not enough to propel an individual into violence. There is the need, as in other psychological studies, for an impetus to engage in risky behavior; the case is the same in propelling an individual into violence. A cognitive

⁵⁹ Stockholm syndrome is characterized by the American Psychological Society as a complex pattern of response to a traumatic situation. Often described as a means of coping, the Syndrome is characterized by hostages or prisoners accepting and even embracing their imprisonment. Many psychiatrists align Stockholm Syndrome with acute stress disorders or post-traumatic stress.

⁶⁰ Graham DL, Rawlings E, Rimini N. *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*, edited by Kersti Yllo and Michele Bograd. Newbury Park, California, Sage Publications, 1988. 217-33. - See more at:

⁶¹ Borum, Randy. *Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models*, Journal of Strategic Study, Vol 4, No 4, 2011.

opening or vulnerability is created through trauma.⁶² This opening represents an opportunity for influence, and in the case of violence, society, family, or situation may influence an individual to justify violence as a reaction to trauma.

One woman we spoke with candidly discussed her sister's sexual assault by British soldiers as her primary motivation for joining the Provisional IRA and for supporting violence, while the other described her brother's murder. In a psychological sense, these events created the requisite cognitive opening needed to propel these women from aggrieved and oppressed into active fighters. The trauma of a family member's assault and a brother's death opened the mental door to extreme behavior for each woman; and, thanks to situation, exposure to propaganda, and a strong Republican narrative justifying violence, these women chose violence as a tool to exercise personal and political demons.

An important take away from our interview of former combatants is that cognitively, these women are not mentally ill, and their actions are not wholly incomprehensible to the average person. Indeed violent sexual assault and murder qualify as trauma regardless of what faith, political party, or nationality to which one subscribes. Radicalization in this instance was not a linear process as Precht, Modgaddam, and Borum suggest. There is no systematic process that creates extremism; indeed "radicalization" mirrors more traditional psychologies like those of drug use, self-harm, and other risky behaviors. Violence is not a sickness, and ideology is not singularly responsible for extremism, though both are symptomatic of policies and societies that deny individuals safety, health, and well-being.

⁶² Neumann, Peter. Interview – March 2016.

Gender Analysis

As Catholic women, both subjects faced circumstances unique to their gendered identities—thus critically analyzing these circumstances further nuances our understandings of their motivations, involvement, and lived-experiences.

It was not uncommon for Catholic women to have more children than they could care for, and both women grew up in large families with five to 10 brothers and sisters – some of whom were killed or imprisoned during the conflict. The subjects recalled fearing for their brothers and other young Catholic boys and men whenever they left the “safe” space that was their home – often, they said their mothers would hide neighborhood boys in their houses and pass them off as their sons, fearing what might come for them from capture and internment by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) or British Army. Any boys or young men in the public sphere were viewed as a possible threat, whether they were known to be militant or not. To contrast, women were typically not expected to be combatants due to pervasive patriarchal norms.

Catholic homes were the “safest” space, and females were often confined to it. Both subjects expressed the systematic denial of opportunity for every Catholic, but women in particular, describing how they were confined to a private sphere. However, this did not limit their political involvement. Their mothers were political and sympathetic to the Republican cause, instilling fierce loyalties within the women at a young age. When they reached their late teens, both subjects participated in protests and became politically active. They were imprisoned at the age of 17 – one was interned after political demonstrations, and the other was arrested after she was discovered with a bomb.

To these women, living with conflict at their doorstep, engaging in violence against their “oppressors,” the British Army and RUC, was inherently justifiable. They were imprisoned among other Republican women who formed a community to protect one another, and carry out protests during their imprisonment. Both women vividly recalled being strip-searched regularly by male prison guards. They viewed the frequency and the manner in which the searches were conducted as an attempt to strip them of their dignity; one subject referenced her sister’s repeated sexual assault during imprisonment. Both described this treatment as a catalyst for their protest and fueled their determination to carry on.

The subjects implied that there was a hierarchy among the Republican women that was dependent on age and time in prison, and singled out Mairéad Farrell as a leader of sorts among the female Republican prisoners. The hunger strikes and cases of women covering their bodies in their own fecal and menstrual secretions were not discussed; however, the women gave accounts of destroying their cells in protest, flipping mattresses against cell doors and in one instance, organizing a successful break-out. Many of these forms of protest were carried out after women were denied political prisoner status. Ultimately, the women depicted their ex-prisoner status as a badge of honor, proving that they too could sacrifice and fight on alongside their Republican brothers.

The links between the Republican women were especially strong, as they found themselves dependent on one another for survival. One subject was widowed after her husband was shot and killed, which she described to be common among Republican women. With children to care for,

she relied heavily upon the Republican community for assistance. Her vivid account of the 1989 attack in Milltown Cemetery highlighted the fear women lived with during the Troubles – she recalled being pregnant with two young ones at home, grasping onto a gravestone to protect herself from the grenades and gunfire unleashed on the mourners by Michael Stone. Her fear of leaving her young boys behind is what she said kept her alive.

To these women, their involvement in the IRA was as necessary to the Nationalist cause because it was empowering and their “duty.” First-hand accounts like these by women are uncommon in the analysis of the IRA, but they further highlight that the lived-experiences of women throughout the conflict were often determined by their gendered identity.

Suggested Policy Recommendation

Reevaluate Policy Approaches to Radicalization

Part One: Address Underlying Social, Political and Economic Issues

The most important take away from our analysis of radicalization is not that an individual's participation or support of violence is predictable or even preventable. In fact, our analysis suggests that existing radicalization models lack legitimacy because they fail to account for the role trauma plays in creating the opportunity for influence. Radicalization is a misappropriation of psychology to suit a pervasive policy narrative that treats violence as an illness particularly when purported by women; the root causes of violence are genuinely reflected in the framework indicators laid out by the Department of State – state sanctioned violence, denial of opportunity, exposure to propaganda, et al. All of these factors combine to powerfully influence individuals, who facing trauma, are vulnerable, but the idea that ideology creates extremism is damaging. In fact counterterrorism experts would be better served by fighting the root causes of extremism rather than attempting to counter narratives or creating devaluing policies like those that profile terrorists two dimensionally.

Instead of treating non-state armed groups and women in those groups, as inconceivable when developing policy, counterterrorism policy may be more effective if it addressed underlying social, political, and economic issues rather than treating symptoms of unrest like political violence.

Addressing the root cause of social and political unrest is not a novel recommendation, however following this research and analysis, we urge policymakers to scrutinize policies that

disadvantage any segment of society along lines of race, gender, religion, or class. This includes policies that create or further inequity of the sexes, such as unequal pay and poor support for maternal health. Policies should integrate disparate populations into the greater fabric of society to build a stronger, more inclusive state. When developing CT and CVE policy, we urge policymakers to consider the reasons that individuals, both men and women, have chosen violence as their political voice instead of characterizing their decisions as emotional, ideological, or incomprehensible.

Part Two: Mainstream Gender into CT & CVE Policy

Through gender mainstreaming, policymakers will assess the implications for both men and women of any planned action or strategy, including legislation, policy or programming.⁶³ This will ensure that both men and women's lived-experiences are integral to creating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating CT and CVE efforts and ultimately confirm that strategies are reaching and benefiting them both equally. But why gender mainstreaming, and what is it? It is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality – mainstreaming is an approach that ensures gender perspectives are integral to the development of policy, research, legislation and programs, with an eventual target to achieve gender equality. It is not about just adding women or a gender component to the existing CT and CVE activity, but instead involves bringing the perceptions, experience, knowledge, and interests of women as well as men to bear on policymaking, planning and decision making.⁶⁴

⁶³ UN Women. Website, the United Nations. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>

⁶⁴ UN Women. The United Nations Website. Accessed 07 May 2016, Available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming>

Armed conflicts are not gender-neutral; therefore, policies crafted to address them cannot continue to ignore gender. When policy is created from the lens of a masculine combatant, or from the singular lens of the feminine victim, it contributes to the erasure of women's agency and active participation in NSAGs, creating potentially devastating implications for policy. It also fails to account for stark divisions in societies, like those in IS controlled territories, where the public and private spheres are continually divided along gender lines. When formulating and evaluating policies to combat IS, CVE and CT practitioners should:

- Reevaluate policies and programs that promote the segregation of society along lines of race, gender, class, or political status by offering assistance for refugees and disadvantaged, vulnerable populations;
- Remove the taboo surrounding political violence; consider the social, economic, and political drivers behind any individual's decision to use violence instead of treating perpetrators as incomprehensible;
- Include gender advisors during the formulation of counterterrorism policy, including doctrinal, strategic, tactical and operational planning;
- Consult with grassroots women's organizations in the theater of operation to better understand the impact CT or CVE tactical operations might have on communities.

Our research confirms that women's lived-experiences in NSAGs differ greatly from men's even though their motivations to participate are similar; thus it is critical to include gender advisors in security sectors of government, military and international organizations to account for these differences during the creation of policy. Recruiting and retaining gender advisors – including in operational roles within counterterrorism and CVE efforts, will ensure that gender is evaluated at the onset of CT and CVE programming. It is not enough to “add women and stir” – such

advisors will need extensive experience in gendered programming to identify and correct misconceptions, weaknesses, and instrumentalist approaches in policy.

Conclusions

Denying women's agency in politics and violence extends further to erasing their presence in counterterrorism and counter-radicalization operations. Currently, most counter-radicalization projects are delivered by men, treating men as the primary targets.⁶⁵ NSAGs exploit gender stereotypes, making women valuable weapons in conflict—a notion we confirmed in our case study of the Northern Ireland conflict.⁶⁶ As the number of women participating in operational roles within NSAGs grows, counterterrorism policy must evolve to target women as well as men in CVE and CT operations.

The expansion of women's involvement in political violence is growing for a number of reasons. First and foremost, domestic and international conflicts which create societal disruption are pushing women into NSAGs at an equal rate as NSAGs are recruiting them. Secondly, the breakdown of the home front/war theater boundary in contemporary conflict appears to be increasing numbers of female combatants in groups like IS and Al Qaeda.⁶⁷ As research on the topic grows, it is becoming clearer that NSAGs, like so many other businesses, innovate under pressure. Such external pressures often lead to the inclusion of new members, particularly women.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Brown, Katherine. *Gender and Counter-Radicalization: Women and Emerging Counter-Terrorism Measures*, Gender, National Security, and Counter-Terrorism: Human Rights Perspectives . ed. / Margaret Satterthwaite; Jayne Huckerby. Abingdon : Routledge, 2013. p. 36-59

⁶⁶ Bloom, Mia. *Death Becomes Her*, Political Science and Politics, July 2010. Volume 43, Issue 03, Pages 445-450.

⁶⁷ Alison, Miranda H. *Women as Agents of Political Violence: Gendering Security*; Security Dialogue 35.4 (2004): 447-63.

⁶⁸ Cunningham, Karla. *Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol 26, Issue 3, Pages 171-195

Through our field research and analysis, we support the common trends that the U.S. Department of State has laid out in its CVE framework and believe many of those factors propel women to participate in violence with NSAGs. These trends mirror drivers for men, with the addition of the pursuit of gender equality and equal political status for women. Ultimately, our findings suggest that both men and women perpetuate violence for social, emotional, and political reasons. Policy and future analysis will need to account for women's lived-experiences, and cease to associate their participation in violent extremism for solely social and emotional reasons. Our research validates the idea that women do participate in violence for political reasons, and sheds light on the fallacy that only men participate in NSAGs for such reasons.

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Appendix A. Cognitive Interview Protocol

Background: We are graduate students from the George Washington University in Washington DC. We're studying international affairs and researching a thesis project on female combatants and their involvement in paramilitary organizations. After doing some preliminary research, we realized that many women's stories have been left out of the academic research into paramilitary organizations, or they are characterized by stereotypes. We're really interested to hear these stories and correct the stereotypes or misconceptions of women's involvement in these organizations (and the notion that women typically have no involvement at all).

1. Confidentiality. The purpose is to protect subject's identity and their stories. Explain that the university will not have access to the transcripts. Explain data safeguarding standards.
2. Recording. Briefly explain that this will allow us to ensure we represent their stories correctly, and that we will not record any identifying information. If they don't feel comfortable, we ask if we can take down notes.

Indicators:

- Alienation and Exclusion
- Propaganda Exposure
- Education/Critical Thinking
- State Sanctioned Violence
- Heavy Handed Security Services
- Systematic Denial of Opportunity

Questions:

Background

Tell me about your childhood...What was it like?

What was your home environment like? (ex: strict, or lax)

Where did you grow up?

What was your community like?

Were any of your family members involved with the Republican or Loyalist paramilitaries?

Did you have many friends?

Did you like school growing up? How old were you when you finished school?

Tell us about the opportunities you had growing up...

Can you explain how it felt to be a woman in Northern Ireland at the time.

Interactions with Govt/Policing

Did you ever have interactions with the police? What were they like?

How did you feel about the police in your community?

As you may know, we're facing issues in the US with police brutality and heavy handed tactics.

Was this something that you or anyone in your community might have experienced?

Relationship with the Cause

Do you feel like it affected you, your proximity to the Provisionals/IRA or the Unionists?

Did you ever read the Republican newspapers/adverts/etc growing up?

Were the posters and adverts common in NI? If so, can you tell us a little bit more about things you remember from them--what were they like?

(If subject was directly involved...)

When did you get involved? How did it happen?

What were your motivations for getting involved?

Can you tell us a little bit more about the types of role you played? Is there a particular story about you that you'd like to tell us?

(If subject was indirectly involved...)

In your view, did the conflict impact women differently?

What do you remember about women's involvement in the conflict?

Did you decide not to get involved (as a conscious decision)?

Appendix B. Confidentiality and Consent to Participate

It is this research team's policy to safeguard private information generated by or provided by respondents in connection with its research. Private information means:

- a) Any information obtained about any person (1) under an expressed or implied consent, (2) or any information specifically authorized by a respondent to the person, group or organization. It is the respondent's expectation that individual identities or data linked to individuals be held in confidence, and that the research team make every effort to prevent the identification of such person or connection of any data with identified or identifiable persons, and
- b) Individual survey responses and survey results, survey schedules, questions and materials, and unpublished tabulations of survey results.

Both, Rebecca and Kathleen will follow the US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Subject Protections established procedures for the safeguarding of private information. Any private information to which we gain access during our association with _____ shall not be used, published, disclosed, or disseminated in any form to any person, agency (governmental or other), corporation, or other entity, except to the extent that such use or disclosure is (1) expressly consented to by the clause (a) above, (2) required by the associate's legal duties, or (3) otherwise required by law.

If Rebecca or Kathleen is subpoenaed, or has reason to believe that he/she may otherwise be called upon to make a disclosure of private information to any court or governmental agency, such associate, before making any such disclosure, shall immediately notify the individuals effected, and shall cooperate in all lawful efforts to protect private information.

These restrictions on use and disclosures of private information continue to apply after termination of the project to which any such information relates and after termination of my association or involvement with any such project or associate with George Washington University.

By signing below, I, _____, am granting my express and written consent to participate in Rebecca and Kathleen's research. I grant permission for both, Kathleen and Rebecca to use my insights and responses. I expect that every effort be made to safeguard my personally identifiable information and that all comments, responses, and insights given are not for attribution, as described above.

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

RD: _____

KF: _____