

Preferences for Armed Actors and Responses to Civilian Victimization

Gabriella Levy

March 25, 2022

Abstract

How do civilians' relative preferences for one side of the conflict over the other shape their subsequent evaluations of violence against civilians? I argue that individuals characterize civilian targeting committed by the side of the conflict they prefer as less morally wrong and less worthy of punishment. Moral disengagement allows them to interpret this violence as serving a morally valuable cause; minimize the harmful consequences of the abuse; or displace responsibility for the violence from the group to individual perpetrators. To test this argument, I utilize an online survey experiment in Colombia with 1,500 respondents in which individuals read a news story about an allegation of violence against civilians perpetrated by either the state or guerrillas. The results suggest that judgements of appropriate punishment, but not evaluations of moral wrongfulness, are shaped by respondent armed group preferences. Furthermore, people justify reduced punishments for their preferred side by characterizing that side's violence as less severe and less systematic but not as less necessary.

Introduction

Results from the 2018 Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) survey in Colombia suggest that more than 40% of Colombian citizens have had a family member victimized in the conflict. While 45% of the victims in the survey identified guerrillas as responsible, 28% identified pro-state paramilitaries, the military, or the police as the perpetrators (Dugand, García and Sánchez 2018). Yet, in 2018, more than 42% of Colombians had confidence in the Armed Forces (Rivera, Plata Caviedes and Rodríguez Raga 2018). Indeed, former President Uribe, who was in power during much of the worst state abuse of civilians, remains a powerful force in Colombian politics (Pardo 2020; Espectador 2022). There are many other contexts in which individuals or armed groups implicated in violence against civilians remain popular. For example, Charles Taylor, who led the notoriously brutal National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), won 75 percent of the vote in 1997 elections after the NPFL took control of most of the country.¹ One of Taylor’s campaign slogans was “He killed my Ma, he killed my Pa, but I will vote for him” (Left 2003). I suggest that one explanation for why civilians continue to support armed actors which engage in violence against civilians is that individuals interpret violence against civilians more positively when they prefer the perpetrator’s side of the conflict. In other words, I suggest that people interpret and respond to violence in a biased manner.

How do civilians’ relative preferences for one side of the conflict over the other shape their subsequent evaluations of violence? I build on research concerning how moral judgement depends on the perceived character of the individual being judged (e.g. Hester and Gray 2020) to argue that individuals characterize violence against civilians committed by the side of the conflict they prefer as less morally wrong and less worthy of punishment. However, given that violence against civilians violates strong norms, such non-negative evaluations of civilian abuse introduce cognitive dissonance. Moral disengagement (e.g. Bandura 1999; Moore 2015) can help resolve this dissonance, thereby absolving individuals of their support

¹These elections were declared clean by a range of international institutions.

for violence against civilians. I argue that moral disengagement allows people to see the violence as serving the morally valuable cause of winning the war, minimize the harmful consequences of the violence by diminishing the perceived volume of victims, or displace responsibility for the violence from the armed group as a whole to individual perpetrators.

I test the implications of this theoretical framework with a factorial survey experiment fielded online in Colombia in which respondents are presented with a news article about a recent act of violence against civilians committed either by FARC dissidents or the Colombian Armed Forces. The results suggest that people justify lighter punishments for perpetrators on the side of the conflict they relatively prefer by characterizing the violence against civilians these groups commit as less severe and less organized but not as less militarily necessary. More precisely, respondents prefer less harsh punishments for the side they prefer. Further, they characterize violence by such armed actors as less severe and less likely to be the responsibility of the organization as a whole. Relatedly, they characterize less severe violence and violence which is not the responsibility of group leadership as less morally wrong and less deserving of harsh punishment. In contrast, they do not characterize violence committed by their preferred side as less morally wrong. Respondents also do not describe violence by their preferred side as more necessary for military gains.

These findings provide evidence that civilians do indeed have relative preferences for one side of the conflict over the other and, furthermore, that these preferences shape moral judgements of violence against civilians. This implies that informing the public of violence committed by armed actors may be insufficient to cut off perpetrators from their civilian supporters or build public support for transitional justice trials. Yet, the results suggests two possible avenues for persuading civilians that violence committed by their preferred side must be punished: portraying it as particularly harmful and detailing its systematic nature. Future research should draw further from psychology to consider more systematically the ways in which the public's biases can be overcome to achieve accountability and reconciliation following conflict.

Evaluations of Violence Against Civilians

A large literature suggests that indiscriminate civilian targeting increases support for opponents of the perpetrator, either because the violence makes it more dangerous for civilians to remain neutral or because it evokes and reinforces grievances (e.g. Mason and Krane 1989; Wood 2003; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Rozenas, Schutte and Zhukov 2017). Relatedly, individuals evaluating violence which does not directly affect them prefer attacks that minimize civilian casualties (Dill and Schubiger 2021). Yet, the public does not always respond to violence against civilians in a uniformly negative fashion.

For example, wartime abuse can have heterogeneous effects on segments of the public with different prior beliefs and experiences. Individuals' values shape their support for the use of nuclear weapons (Sagan and Valentino 2017; Rathbun and Stein 2020), and people who resent victims or trivialize the moral dilemmas of harsh violence are more likely to endorse it (Bloom et al. 2020). Gender and exposure to international law also shape the effects of violence (Wallace 2019; Hadzic and Tavits 2019). Additionally, characteristics of the violence against civilians shape the public's response to it. For example, Levy (2022) finds that individual perpetrators of civilian targeting are penalized less when they violate less strong norms, have less agency in committing the violence, or play a less clear causal role in the harm. Pechenkina, Bausch and Skinner (2019) also finds that individuals use nuanced understandings of causality in attributing blame for violence. Other factors, such as military utility and combatant mortality, also shape support public for violence which entails civilian casualties (Press, Sagan and Valentino 2013; Dill and Schubiger 2021).

Most importantly for the purposes of this project, people respond differently to violence against civilians depending on the perpetrator. For example, Lyall, Blair and Kosuke (2013) utilize an endorsement survey experiment in Afghanistan and find that, while violence against civilians inflicted by the ISAF results in increased support for the Taliban, Taliban violence does not prompt increased support for the ISAF. Similarly, Condra and Shapiro (2012) find that anti-insurgent reactions to civilian killings in Iraq are limited in Sunni areas, where the

insurgency is popular, and anti-Coalition reactions are limited in religiously mixed areas. Additionally, Balcells (2012) argues that familial victimization only leads to a rejection of the perpetrator along cleavages that were salient during the war. These three papers together provide strong evidence that violence against civilians has differential effects on support for armed groups depending on the perpetrator's armed group affiliation. While none directly focuses on perceptions of violence, perpetrator characteristics must shape people's perceptions of violence in order for perpetrator identity to moderate the impact of violence on these other outcomes. Indeed, Silverman (2019) finds, in a study of violence committed by American and Pakistani troops in Pakistan, that perpetrator identity affects approval of military strikes. I expand on these studies to examine the psychological foundations of moral judgements of civilian targeting as well as the ways in which prior attitudes toward armed actors affect these moral judgements.

Preferences, Moral Judgements, & Moral Disengagement in Evaluations of Violence

I argue that people's relative preferences for one side of the conflict over the other affect their evaluations of violence against civilians, meaning that individuals characterize violence committed by the side they prefer as less morally wrong and less worthy of punishment. Given strong norms against civilian targeting, however, these non-negative judgements of violence introduce cognitive dissonance which must be resolved via moral disengagement. I suggest that there are three possible ways moral disengagement could help individuals justify violence committed by the side of the conflict they prefer, relative to the other side. They can morally justify the violence, believing that it serves a military purpose or cause. They can minimize the consequences of the violence by characterizing the number of victims as smaller. Or, they can see the individual perpetrators rather than the armed group writ large as responsible for the abuse.

There are three important scope conditions for the theory elucidated below. First, I

exclude cases that indicate extreme intergroup animosity; in these cases, people might see civilian targeting as normatively valuable. Second, I focus on conflicts in which violence against civilians is common and publicized, meaning that neither armed groups nor civilians can plausibly deny that violence has occurred. Third, the war must feature two fundamentally opposing sides, the government and its opposition.

Civilian Preferences

When people make moral judgements, they do so not only on the basis of the acts which they judge but also on the basis of the perceived character of those whom they are judging (e.g. Uhlmann, Pizarro and Diermeier 2015; Helzer and Critcher 2018). As Hester and Gray (2020) write, “when people make moral judgements in everyday life, they usually know both what someone did (i.e., their act) and who they are (i.e., their identity) – and who often matters more than what.” In other words, moral judgements of a specific action differ on the basis of who is engaging in that action, meaning that moral judgements are biased. Decades of research into bias in the American criminal justice system provides one example of the ways in which moral judgements are shaped by prior beliefs about the individuals being evaluated (for summaries at the macro and micro level, see Bilotta et al. 2019; Hinton and Cook 2021). I argue that, in a civil war context, individuals carry pre-existing beliefs about armed actors on both sides of the conflict, and those beliefs shape the way that individuals evaluate the morality of violence against civilians.

I assume that individuals in intrastate conflicts have relative preferences for one side of the master cleavage over the other side; simplistically, this means that they prefer either the government or its opposition. This assumption entails three subsidiary ones. Firstly, I assume that people have attitudes toward each side of the armed conflict; in other words, they can like or dislike them to varying degrees. Civilians’ attitudes toward armed actors are endogenous to conflict, given that they are shaped by factors such as violence, governance, and ideology; however, the many reasons that an individual has these prior attitudes toward

armed actors is outside the scope of this project.² Second, I assume that individuals can rank these attitudes toward each side of the conflict as more or less positive. Third, I assume that relative preference is not a binary variable but rather a continuous one. For example, someone could strongly support side A and strongly oppose side B, and another person could have a moderately negative attitude toward side A but an extremely negative attitude toward side B. Both individuals would prefer group A, but one more strongly than the other. In a war of two fundamentally opposing sides, it is impossible for someone to actively support both sides, although it is possible them to not like either side. Importantly, I do not assume that individuals have preferences for some non-state actors over other ones. In the Colombian context, for example, I do not assume that people have preferences for the ELN over FARC dissidents or vice versa; it is probable that many people do not have sufficient information to have a such a preference. I thus focus on comparing armed actors on opposite sides of the conflict's macro cleavage.

There is limited evidence that many civilians do indeed have preferences over armed actors amidst intrastate conflict. It is likely that civilians frequently falsify their preferences out of fear of reprisal, so the most plausible way to establish the existence of civilian preferences is to consider whether there is evidence that civilians declare negative attitudes toward armed groups which have the power to punish them or, conversely, positive attitudes toward the opponents of such groups. In Colombia, even in guerrilla-controlled and coca-producing regions, where civilians have the most incentive to declare their support for the guerrillas, a significant number of civilians support the military. List experiments designed to minimize social desirability bias suggest that 4 percent of civilians support the military in rebel controlled areas, and 17 percent do in coca areas. Conversely, in areas controlled by the state, 64 percent of civilians do *not* support the military (Matanock and García-Sánchez 2018). In Afghanistan, even among respondents who are from the same Pashtun ethnic group as much of the Taliban, estimates produced by both list and endorsement experiments indicate that

²For a more detailed discussion of how civilians' attitudes toward armed groups are formed, see Levy (2021).

approximately one quarter of civilians supported the International Security Assistance Force (Blair, Imai and Lyall 2014). While this evidence is sparse, this project provides suggestive evidence of civilian preferences over armed actors.

Thus, I argue that civilians carry their pre-existing preferences about the conflict into their moral judgements of violence against civilians. They characterize violence by the side they prefer as less morally wrong than identical violence perpetrated by the other side. Importantly, the extent to which this preference for one side affects moral judgements about violence is correlated with the size of the individual's preference. Formally, I hypothesize:³

- *Moral Wrongfulness Hypothesis 1:* People are less likely to believe that violence against civilians is morally wrong when it is committed by their preferred side in comparison to when it is committed by the other side.
- *Moral Wrongfulness Hypothesis 2:* The stronger an individual's preferences are for one side, the larger the effect size hypothesized above will be.

The studies reviewed above suggest that people not only turn away from the perpetrator but also actively turn toward armed groups which oppose the perpetrator, for example by sharing more information with the other side. In doing so, people effectively punish the perpetrators of violence against civilians by engaging in behavior which imposes costs on the perpetrator and makes the group's defeat more likely. This retaliatory behavior is unsurprising in light of a broader literature on violence and punishment. For example, victims frequently support violence against those who have hurt them as a way not only to achieve peace but also to seek revenge (Vinck et al. 2007; Sonis et al. 2009). Similarly, psychological research suggests that people think that offenders ought to be punished as retribution for their crimes (Carlsmith 2006; Carlsmith and Darley 2008; Osgood 2017). People are even willing to punish out-group members who have not directly participated in the violence. For

³Note that, in the pre-analysis plan, the hypotheses were phrased with reference to armed groups rather than sides of the conflict. However, the substance of the hypotheses remains identical, as does my approach to testing them.

example, individuals react to threats of violence by supporting policies such as aggressive retaliation against out-groups (e.g. Gordon and Arian 2001; Skitka, Bauman and Mullen 2004), and exposure to violence hardens attitudes toward out-groups (for a summary, see Bauer et al. 2016). Therefore, if people think that violence committed by their preferred side is less morally wrong, they are likely also to think that the perpetrators should be less harshly punished. Among those who prefer a given side, those whose preference for that group is particularly strong will be even less likely to support harsh punishment for the perpetrators. This logic can be formalized as follows:

- *Punishment Hypothesis 1:* People are less likely to believe that the perpetrators should be harshly punished when violence against civilians is committed by their preferred side compared to when it is committed by the other side.
- *Punishment Hypothesis 2:* The stronger an individual's preferences are for one side, the larger the effect size hypothesized above will be.

Moral Disengagement

However, it is no easy task for individuals to characterize violence against civilians as neither immoral nor worthy of punishment. Violence against civilians is a valence issue, meaning that people have the same position on the issue and see it as negative (e.g. Stokes 1963; Congleton, Grofman and Voigt 2018). There is a wide range of literature about how civilians oppose violence against civilians (e.g. Wood 2003; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007) and have internalized many norms of international law, which includes prohibitions on direct targeting of civilians (e.g. Wallace 2019; Dill and Schubiger 2021). Indeed, according to a Red Cross 2016 survey, 78 percent of people living in countries affected by armed conflict believe that it is wrong to attack enemy combatants even “in populated villages or towns in order to weaken the enemy, knowing that many civilians would be killed” (ICRC 2016, p. 7). Disapproval of direct targeting of civilians is likely even higher. Given how broadly violence against civilians is seen as wrong, characterizing it in a non-negative light when it

is perpetrated by one's preferred side likely introduces a great deal of cognitive dissonance.

The theory of moral disengagement provides insight into how people resolve this cognitive dissonance; moral disengagement allows people engage in or support “bad” behavior while maintaining a positive view of themselves (e.g. Bandura 1999; Moore 2015).⁴ While moral disengagement is primarily used to explain how people justify their bad behavior, it has also been used to explore how people justify their support for others' wrongful actions, particularly in the study of the use of force in wartime (e.g. McAlister 2001; McAlister, Bandura and Owen 2006; Aquino et al. 2007). There are four broad ways that moral disengagement works: people can turn wrongful behavior into good behavior, for example by characterizing it as serving a worthy purpose; they can displace or obfuscate blame for the wrongful action; they can distort, deny, or disregard the harmful effects of the wrongful behavior; or they can blame the victim (Bandura 2015). I choose not to focus on victim-blaming given that the theory's scope conditions exclude conflicts with high levels of inter-group animosity. Thus, in the context of evaluating violence against civilians committed by others, I argue that moral disengagement can operate in the following three ways. First, people can justify the violence by characterizing it as militarily necessary rather than gratuitous. In doing so, they justify the violence with reference to its *cause*. Second, they can minimize the *consequences* of the violence by characterizing it as harming fewer people. Third, they can displace the *responsibility* for the violence from group leadership onto individual perpetrators.

First, in moral justification of wrongful behavior, “detrimental conduct is made personally and socially acceptable by portraying it as serving socially worthy or moral purposes” (Bandura 1999, p. 194). In other words, when engaging in moral justification, individuals interpret the *cause* of the wrongful behavior, i.e. the reason for engaging it, as more positive.

⁴This phenomenon is a form of motivated reasoning. Motivated reasoning occurs when an individual's goals or motives affect his or her reasoning. People can be motivated by either directional or accuracy goals; when people have directional goals, they are “motivated to arrive at a particular conclusion” (Kunda 1990, p. 482). Motivated reasoning has been shown to affect political attitudes (e.g. Taber and Lodge 2006; Fischle 2000). Note that, although the hypotheses remain the same, the pre-analysis plan emphasized motivated reasoning instead of moral disengagement.

Relatedly, actors are seen as less blameworthy when they have “valid” reasons for engaging in normatively wrong behavior (Monroe and Malle 2019). For example, people are more likely to support torture when it is portrayed as effective (Kearns and Young 2020). Indeed, Malle, Guglielmo and Monroe (2014) argue that not having an obligation to prevent wrongdoing mitigates moral blame. In the context of conflict, people could think that armed groups do not have an obligation to limit civilian targeting if engaging in such violence allows them to achieve a greater good, such as winning the war or defeating the enemy.

More specifically, I argue that, when evaluating violence against civilians, individuals engage in moral justification by characterizing the violence as necessary for victory. Lyall, Blair and Kosuke (2013) suggest but do not directly test a similar theory, building on a long-line of research into intergroup bias (e.g. Hewstone, Rubin and Willis 2002; Tajfel and Turner 1979). They argue that negative actions by one’s in-group are seen as situational, meaning that the actors were forced to be bad; they themselves are not inherently bad, like out-group members that engage in similar violence against civilians. In the context of conflict, the “situation” forcing a preferred armed group to engage in normatively objectionable behavior would be the need to win. Several studies have shown that people are more supportive of military attacks which offer military benefit (Press, Sagan and Valentino 2013; Dill and Schubiger 2021). While it is impossible to know if these respondents see military advantage as an ethical good, the logic of trading off civilian casualties for military gain is a fundamentally consequentialist one. Indeed, people are more likely to engage in consequentialist moral logic when it helps them reach their desired goals, including in the context of conflict (Ditto, Pizarro and Tannenbaum 2009; Uhlmann et al. 2009). Thus, I hypothesize that people’s preferences shape the degree to which they see the violence against civilians as helpful for military goals, and I argue that people who see violence against civilians as militarily necessary are less likely to think that it is morally wrong and worthy of harsh punishment.

- *Cause Bias Hypothesis 1*: People are more likely to believe that violence against

civilians is necessary for the achievement of military goals when it is committed by their preferred side compared to when it is committed by the other side.

- *Cause Bias Hypothesis 2:* The stronger an individual's preferences are for one side, the larger the effect size hypothesized above will be.
- *Cause Bias Hypothesis 3:* People who believe that violence against civilians is necessary for the achievement of military goals are less likely to believe that:
 - *a:* the violence is morally wrong
 - *b:* its perpetrators should be strongly punished

The second moral disengagement mechanism is minimizing, ignoring, or misconstruing the *consequences* of the wrongful behavior (Bandura 1999). Indeed, because wrongdoing is condemned proportionally to the perceived harm that is done to the victim (Gray, Waytz and Young 2012; Schein and Gray 2018), violence which causes less harm is seen as less wrong. Although there are a wide range of ways to measure the harm that violence inflicts on civilians, I argue that a simple heuristic for harm inflicted is the volume of people who are killed. Indeed, measuring deaths is one of the most prominent ways in which civilian casualties are measured by academics, militaries, and human rights groups alike (e.g. Seybolt, Aronson and Fischhoff 2013; Wilke and Naseemi 2022). Importantly, people can characterize the volume of casualties differently even if the number of victims is constant. For example, in a study of Americans' attitudes toward the war in Iraq under a Republican president, most people correctly identified the number of casualties. However, Democrats tended to interpret this number as "large" rather than "small," like Republicans (Gaines et al. 2007). Similarly, in a study of Pakistan, Silverman (2019) finds that military operations are seen as twenty-four percentage points more indiscriminate when they are carried out by the United States compared to when they are carried out by Pakistan; indiscriminate violence is likely seen as causing more harm than selective violence. Thus, even if the number of victims of violence is constant, people could think that the violence committed by their preferred armed

group is less wrong because it doesn't cause as much suffering or harm. I thus hypothesize the following:

- *Consequences Bias Hypothesis 1*: People are less likely to believe that violence against civilians causes extensive harm when it is committed by their preferred side compared to when it is committed by the other side.
- *Consequences Bias Hypothesis 2*: The stronger an individual's preferences are for one side, the larger the effect size hypothesized above will be.
- *Consequences Bias Hypothesis 3*: People who believe that violence against civilians causes more harm are more likely to believe that:
 - *a*: the violence is morally wrong
 - *b*: its perpetrators should be strongly punished

The last form of moral disengagement is the displacement of *responsibility*, in which people blame authority figures for their wrongful behavior (Bandura 1999). In other words, perpetrators can be absolved for “just following orders.” Indeed, individuals with a lot of control over a negative outcome are judged more harshly than those who have less control (Alicke 2000; Malle, Guglielmo and Monroe 2014). Those who lack control are seen as lacking intentionality (Quillien and German 2021), which also mitigates blame (for a summary, see Malle 2021). I argue, in contrast to existing work, that leadership's responsibility for violence exonerates individual perpetrators but simultaneously implicates the group's leadership in a more systematic form of violence which is ultimately more morally objectionable. While some wartime violence is merely tolerated by the leadership or occurs against the wishes of the group's leaders (Wood 2018; Hoover Green 2016), other violence against civilians results from a deliberate strategy of the armed group (e.g. Downes 2008; Balcells 2010; Cohen 2013). If so, then the violence against civilians is not an isolated incident committed by a rogue actor but rather only one example of a more systematic pattern. This widespread violence likely inflicts more harm than an isolated incident and is more intentional on the

part of leadership. Thus, individuals seeking to justify their judgement that violence against civilians is not immoral can dismiss it as an isolated incident, placing responsibility on the individual rather than on the group and its leadership. More formally, I hypothesize:

- *Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 1:* People are less likely to believe that the armed group as a whole is responsible for the violence when it is committed by their preferred side compared to when it is committed by the other side.
- *Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 2:* The stronger an individual's preferences are for one side, the larger the effect size hypothesized above will be.
- *Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 3:* People who believe that the armed group as a whole is responsible for the violence are more likely to believe that:
 - *a:* the violence is morally wrong
 - *b:* its perpetrators should be strongly punished

Research Design

Case Selection

Colombia has been affected by conflict involving leftist rebel groups, paramilitary groups, and criminal organizations since the mid 1960s. The country serves as an excellent case to test the theory because it is deeply divided over the conflict, in which many civilians have been killed. Civilian targeting continues and remains highly salient today despite a 2016 peace agreement between the government and the largest rebel group, the FARC.

A 2013 report from the National Center of Historic Memory concludes that over 81 percent of the fatalities of the armed conflict, more than 177,000 people, were civilians. All armed groups engaged in a deliberate strategy of indiscriminate violence (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013). The abuses continued after this report was published and even after the peace agreement was signed in 2016. For example, social leaders have continued to be assassinated at alarming rates since the peace accord (Indepaz 2020; Espectador 2020).

Furthermore, there were 91 massacres⁵ perpetrated in 2020, causing the deaths of 381 people (Indepaz 2021). One important reason for continuing abuses is that the war didn't end with the 2016 peace agreement. The ELN didn't demobilize with the FARC in 2016, and there are also FARC fighters who did not demobilize or have remobilized since the peace agreement. These combatants are commonly referred to as dissidents of the FARC. In addition to guerrillas, the largest paramilitary group operating today, the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, has several thousand fighters and a presence in more than two thirds of Colombia's departments (Casey and Jakes 2019; Posso, Palacios and Perafán 2020; Espectador 2021*c*; Posso et al. 2021). Even as these abuses of civilians continue, the country's history of violence against civilians plays a prominent role in national discourse. Transitional justice mechanisms, including trials and a truth and reconciliation commission, are ongoing and are prominently covered in news coverage (e.g. Institute 2019; Tiempo 2021; Transición 2021), as are hearings in international institutions concerning Colombian violence against civilians (e.g. Espectador 2021*a*).

Amidst this ongoing violence and continuing reckoning with past abuses, Colombians remain divided. For example, the Colombian public is very unsupportive of guerrilla groups; in 2018, less than 6 percent of all Colombians had confidence in the FARC, and fewer than a quarter of Colombians agreed that demobilized FARC fighters who were not commanders shouldn't have to go to jail if they confessed to their crimes (Dugand, García and Sánchez 2018). At the same time, supporters of the state are also divided over the conflict. The current president ran on a platform of modifying the peace agreement to ensure stricter punishment for FARC war criminals, and the founder of his political party, former President Uribe, has indicated that he would support a general amnesty in order to alleviate what he perceives as unfair punishment for paramilitaries and members of the armed forces (Grattan 2019; Espectador 2021*b*). In contrast, only 53 percent of Colombians had confidence in the armed forces in 2018 (Rivera, Plata Caviedes and Rodríguez Raga 2018), and less than

⁵Indepaz defines massacres as the intentional and simultaneous homicide of three or more people protected by international humanitarian law.

a third of Colombians in 2018 agreed that demobilized members of the armed forces who were not commanders shouldn't have to go to jail if they confessed their crimes (Dugand, García and Sánchez 2018). Thus, not only is the country divided between guerrilla and state supporters, but it is also divided between state supporters with different attitudes toward the armed forces.

Experimental Procedure

Methodologically, this project consists of an online survey experiment in Colombia with 1,587 respondents, of whom 1,511 finished the survey. The survey was fielded by the firm Dynata.⁶ The design was approved by Duke University's IRB with protocol number 2021-0609, and the survey was fielded July 28th, 2021. All hypotheses were pre-registered in a pre-analysis plan.⁷ In the survey, respondents are first asked a series of demographic questions as well as two questions designed to discern their attitudes toward the Colombian military. They are then presented with a vignette concerning an instance of violence against civilians; this vignette randomly varies whether the violence was committed by the Colombian Armed Forces or by FARC dissidents. Respondents then answer a series of questions about the violence described in the vignette. The order of these follow-up questions is randomized, and each outcome measure is designed to examine one or more hypotheses. Lastly, respondents answer a series of questions about their broader political attitudes.

I assume that, on average, the sample supports the Armed Forces more than FARC dissidents or other leftist guerrillas. If the theory is correct, the sample should on average think that violence committed by the Armed Forces violence is less morally wrong and merits less punishment compared to guerrilla violence. This is a reasonable assumption given Colombian politics and the nature of online samples in the country. In 2018, less

⁶Dynata recruited participants from their Colombian proprietary panel of respondents. The respondents from Dynata's pool who took this survey were randomly selected from among those Colombian respondents over the age of 18 who logged into the Dynata online system while the survey is being fielded. In order to continue to the survey, respondents had to consent and indicate that they were a Colombian citizen. Given the sensitive topic of the survey, respondents were able to skip any question.

⁷The pre-analysis plan is available at <https://osf.io/myktb>.

than 6 percent of all Colombians had confidence in the FARC (Dugand, García and Sánchez 2018). This public attitude is one explanation for the FARC’s resounding electoral defeats in 2019 and 2022 (Anadolu 2019; Tiempo 2022). Support for guerrillas is likely even lower within online survey samples because of limited internet penetration in rural areas, where the FARC have historically found support.⁸ Thus, the sample for this experiment is likely to have far more supporters of the state than supporters of the guerrillas.

Nonetheless, respondents likely have varied attitudes toward the armed actors in the conflict; I thus operationalize individuals’ armed group preference as their pro-military attitudes. To measure how pro-military respondents are, I ask two questions concerning respondents’ security-related policy preferences. First, I ask them, on a scale of 1 to 5, “to what degree do you have confidence in the Armed Forces?” This question comes from LAPOP. Second, I ask respondents, “what should happen to the budget of the Ministry of Defense?” Response range from “it should be decreased a lot” (1) to “it should be increased a lot” (5). NAs are coded as 3. I then create an additive index from both questions which ranges from 2 to 10; this variable is then rescaled from 0-1 for ease in interpreting the interactions.⁹ This index will be referred to as **Pro-Military**. A 0 indicates a low level of support for the armed forces, and a 1 indicates a high level of support. In robustness checks, I also run the models with each of the two original questions on a 0-1 scale rather than with the index (Tables A7, A8). These questions about preference for the state were asked before treatment to ensure that the experiment did not affect responses.

Hypothetically, I could more directly operationalize “preference” for armed actors if I were able to measure both support for the armed forces and support for the guerrillas, subtracting one from the other. However, I do not ask respondents about their attitudes

⁸43 percent of Colombians have access to the internet (DANE 2018), but internet penetration in rural areas is less than 10 percent (Tiempo 2020).

⁹Note that this rescaling was not discussed in the pre-analysis plan. The change does not affect the substance of results. Additionally, in the pre-analysis plan, this index included an additional question in which I asked how much they agree with the statement that “the peace accord was necessary to end the conflict with the FARC-EP,” on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This variable is now used in one of the extensions below which focuses on centrist attitudes.

toward guerrillas because the country is still beset by violence and because civilian supporters of the FARC's former political party were once violently targeted for supporting for the group (Steele 2017). Directly asking respondents about their attitudes toward the guerrillas could place them in danger if someone discerned their affirmative answers. Additionally, it is unlikely that respondents would provide an honest answer to such a question. Similarly, I chose not to use questions about ideology or vote choice because they are not precise enough; respondents could identify with an ideology or vote for a specific candidate for a wide range of reasons which are unrelated to their attitude toward the conflict. The two questions chosen instead provide a measure of the degree to which respondents are supportive of the state as an armed actor. Importantly, supporting decreasing the military budget or indicating a lack of confidence in the armed forces does not mark respondents as guerrilla supporters. Colombia is a multi-party state, and politicians regularly run on and express distinct perspectives on the armed forces (e.g. *Espectador* 2019, 2021 *a*). Additionally, Colombians feel comfortable expressing disapproval of the armed forces; from 2004 to 2018, 30 to 50 percent of all Colombians indicated that they did not have confidence in the armed forces (Rivera, Plata Caviedes and Rodríguez Raga 2018). Therefore, respondents can safely express their opinions on these topics, and the questions are sufficiently specific to capture attitudes toward the state as an armed actor.

Respondents next read a vignette simulating the first paragraph of a newspaper article about a recent instance of violence against civilians. The treatment is whether the violence was allegedly committed by the Colombian Armed Forces or FARC dissidents. The variable **Armed Forces Perp.** takes a value of 0 if FARC dissidents are the perpetrator and a value of 1 if the Colombian Armed Forces are the perpetrator. There are several design decisions to note about this vignette, the text of which can be found below. First, the text references a massacre, a form of violence in which multiple civilians are killed at the same time. A wide variety of armed actors have engaged in such violence, making it plausible that either FARC dissidents or the Armed Forces were responsible (e.g. Grupo de Memoria

Histórica 2013; Castellanos 2020; Justicia 2021). However, in order to limit social desirability bias, the vignette does not use the term “massacre.” Second, the vignette is set in the *El Tiempo* newspaper; it is the largest newspaper in the country and is relatively centrist. Third, Antioquia was chosen as the site of the violence because it is plausible that a range of victims and perpetrators could be involved in violence there. 25 municipalities in Antioquia are a part of the Program for Territorially Focused Development (PDET), meaning they have been prioritized by the Colombian government after the peace accord because of their history of conflict. Since the peace agreement, FARC dissidents have been active in the department (JEP 2021*b*). At the same time, Antioquia includes a large city with a robust state presence in comparison to the countryside: Medellín. Additionally, a range of massacres have occurred in Antioquia over the past few years (Indepaz 2021). Fourth, the vignette features four deaths because that is the average number of victims of massacres in both 2020 and in 2021 through April 27, as identified by the Indepaz think tank (Indepaz 2021). While these details have been chosen deliberately, the vignette says very little about the victims in order not to suggest a specific kind of perpetrator. For example, if the vignette noted that the victims were campesinos, respondents may infer that the violence occurred in a rural area in which non-state groups were fighting over territory. Last, the control condition is that FARC dissidents were the perpetrator. I did not include a control condition which did not name the perpetrator because it is likely that respondents would infer a perpetrator despite the vignette not naming one. The full text respondents see reads as follows:

Imagine a hypothetical article in the newspaper *El Tiempo*. After you read the first paragraph of the hypothetical article below, please answer several questions about the violence described in the article. Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.

“Four civilians, who were not fighting and were not a part of either a non-state armed group or the Colombian Armed Forces, were killed in Antioquia yesterday morning. According to initial reports, the victims were two men and two women; all were shot at close range. The local mayor alleges that the perpetrators were (*leftist dissidents of the FARC / members of the Colombian Armed Forces*).”

Respondents then answer a series of questions about the vignette, all of which are

presented to them in a random order. Variable names precede the questions below, but respondents do not see these labels. Note that the range of punishments are based off possible punishments established in the peace accord. The exceptions are pardon and life imprisonment, which are more lenient and more harsh, respectively, than those included in the accord (Roccatello and Rojas 2020; JEP 2021*a*).¹⁰ Note also that the phrasing in the **Responsibility** question refers to “the leaders of the organization” rather than to the “armed group as a whole,” as in the hypotheses. Given that leaders make the armed group’s policy and strategy, it is plausible to assert that the two are equivalent. But it is easier for respondents to understand what it means for leaders to be responsible than to understand what it means for an entire organization to be responsible. The full text of the relevant questions is below:

1. **Wrongfulness:** On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates “strongly disagree” and 5 indicates “strongly agree,” how much do you agree with the following statement: the violence described in the article above was morally wrong?
2. **Punishment:** What degree of punishment should the perpetrators of the violence described in the above article receive?
 - No punishment/pardon
 - 2 years of house arrest
 - 5 years of house arrest
 - 5 years of imprisonment
 - 15 years of imprisonment
 - Life imprisonment
3. **Necessary:** On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates “very unlikely” and 5 indicates “very likely,” how likely is it that the violence described in the article above was necessary to achieve military gains? Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.
4. **Severity:** Do you think that the number of victims of the violence described in the above article is very small, small, neither small nor large, large, or very large?
5. **Responsibility:** On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates “very unlikely” and 5 indicates “very likely,” how likely is it that the leadership of the organization that the perpetrators belonged to were responsible for the violence described in the article above? Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.

¹⁰Colombia does not allow the death penalty, so that is not included among the options.

Following the experiment, the survey includes a range of other questions about the degree of confidence respondents have in the national government, their ideology, whether they had family victimized in conflict and by which armed group(s), the quality of municipal services, their security from assault or robbery in their neighborhood, their vote in the second round of the 2018 presidential election, and their opinion about which armed group was primarily responsible for the violence. Full question wording can be found in Appendix H.

All regressions are OLS. **Armed Forces Perp.** takes a value of 0 if FARC dissidents are the perpetrator and a value of 1 if the Colombian Armed Forces are the perpetrator. Given that this is a randomized experiment and a balance table suggests that there are not significant demographic differences across individuals in the control and treatment group (Table A10), no control variables are used in the main analyses. Table 1 summarizes how each hypothesis will be tested and provides a preview of whether the evidence supports each hypothesis.

Table 1: Operationalized Predictions

Hypothesis	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Sign	Support
Moral Wrongfulness Hypothesis 1	Wrongfulness	Armed Forces Perp.	-	No
Moral Wrongfulness Hypothesis 2	Wrongfulness	Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military	-	No
Punishment Hypothesis 1	Punishment	Armed Forces Perp.	-	Yes
Punishment Hypothesis 2	Punishment	Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military	-	Yes
Cause Bias Hypothesis 1	Necessary	Armed Forces Perp.	+	No
Cause Bias Hypothesis 2	Necessary	Armed Forces Perp.x Pro-Military	+	No
Cause Bias Hypothesis 3a	Wrongfulness	Necessary	-	Yes
Cause Bias Hypothesis 3b	Punishment	Necessary	-	No
Consequences Bias Hypothesis 1	Severity	Armed Forces Perp.	-	No
Consequences Bias Hypothesis 2	Severity	Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military	-	Yes
Consequences Bias Hypothesis 3a	Wrongfulness	Severity	+	Yes
Consequences Bias Hypothesis 3b	Punishment	Severity	+	Yes
Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 1	Responsibility	Armed Forces Perp.	-	No
Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 2	Responsibility	Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military	-	Yes
Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 3a	Wrongfulness	Responsibility	+	Yes
Responsibility Bias Hypothesis 3b	Punishment	Responsibility	+	Yes

Results

The results visualized in Figures 1 through 4 suggest that citizens' preferences over armed actors affect their assessments of appropriate punishment for violence against civilians but not their evaluations of the moral wrongness of civilian targeting. In other words, people

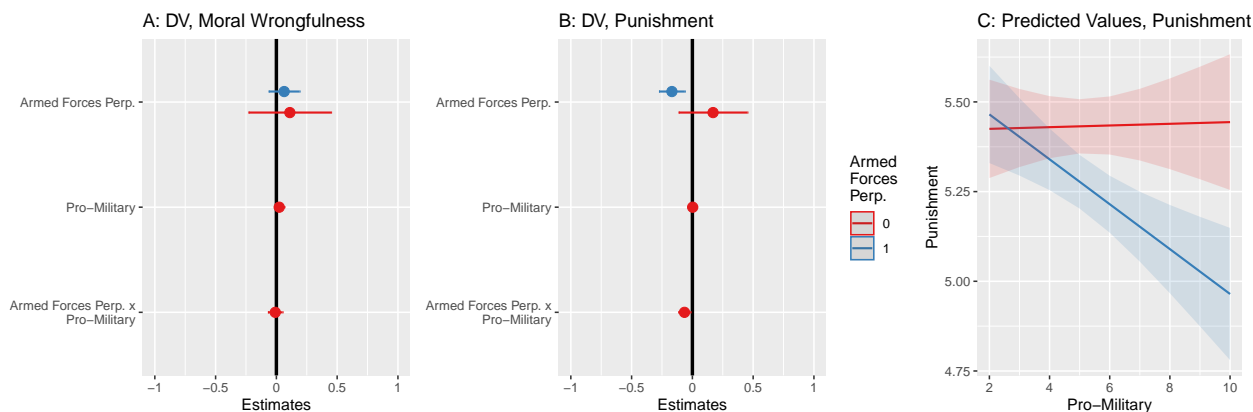
think less harsh punishments are appropriate for their preferred side, particularly when they have a particularly strong preference, but they do not judge violence by their preferred side as less morally wrong. These findings suggest that evaluations of morality may follow a different logic than assessments of appropriate punishment. Regarding mechanisms, the results indicate that people characterize violence by their preferred perpetrators as less severe and less likely to be the responsibility of the organization as a whole; the sizes of these effects depend on the strength of individuals' preference for one side over the other. Furthermore, less severe violence and violence which is not the responsibility of group leadership is characterized as less morally wrong and less deserving of punishment. This suggests that the *Consequences Hypotheses* and *Responsibility Hypotheses* are correct: people justify violence by their preferred side by characterizing it as less harmful and less organized. In contrast, there is not a correlation between preference and characterizations of how militarily necessary the violence was, contradicting the *Cause Hypotheses*.

Numerical results can be found in Tables [A1](#) and [A2](#). The results are robust to including controls (Tables [A3](#) and [A4](#)), to removing people who failed the attention check (Table [A5](#) and [A6](#)), and to using each of two the variables which make up the **Pro-Military** index rather than the index itself (Tables [A7](#) and [A8](#)). It is important to note that the correlation between these two questions which make up the index is high: .42.

As the first panel of Figure 1 indicates, people are no more or less likely to judge violence as morally wrong when it is perpetrated by the government compared to when it is perpetrated by guerrillas. More technically, the relationship between **Armed Forces Perp** and **Wrongfulness** is not statistically significant. Because the interaction between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Pro-Military** is similarly insignificant, this is true regardless of how intensely people prefer the state over the guerrillas or vice versa. In contrast, the second panel shows a negative and statistically significant correlation between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Punishment**; this finding indicates that people believe that state perpetrators should be less harshly punished than guerrilla perpetrators. Furthermore, the interaction between **Armed**

Forces Perp. and **Pro-Military** is negative in the regression about **Punishment**, as visualized in the third panel of Figure 1. This interaction suggests that strong supporters of the state have larger gaps in their punishment preferences between state and guerrilla perpetrators. Overall, these results do not provide support for the *Moral Wrongfulness Hypotheses* but do provide support for the *Punishment Hypotheses*.

Figure 1: Wrongfulness and Punishment

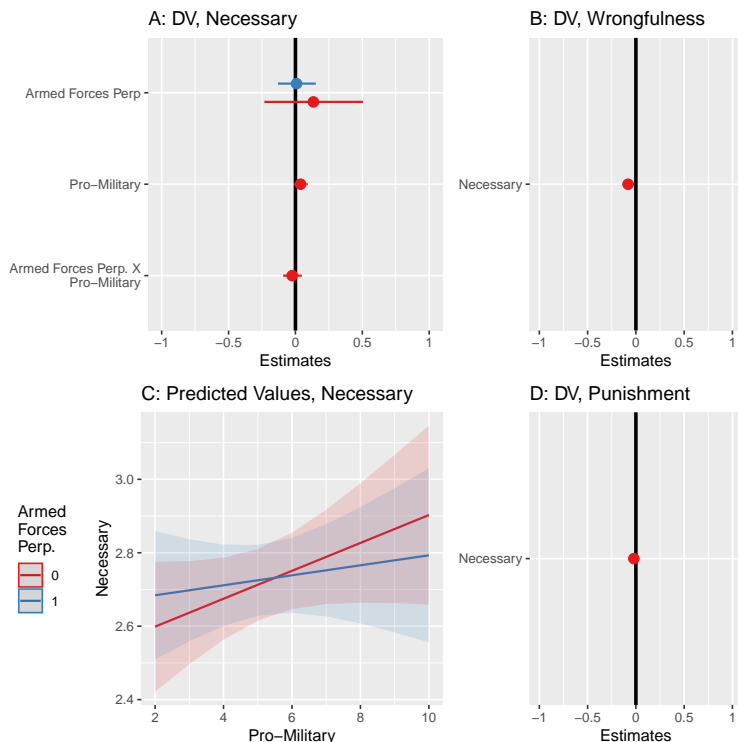


Note: No control variables are used in these regressions, and numeric results can be found in Table A1. The interaction visualized in panel 3 comes from model 4 in Table A1; the coefficients of this model are visualized in panel 2.

Next we will consider which of the three possible mechanisms discussed above could explain why people think their preferred armed actors deserve less harsh punishment (Figures 2, 3, and 4). As panel A of Figure 2 shows, the relationship between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Necessary** is not statistically significant. Similarly, there is no significant interaction between **Pro-Military** and **Armed Forces Perp.** in evaluations of how **Necessary** the violence was. In other words, people do not characterize violence by their preferred side as more militarily necessary, regardless of how strong their preference is. Panels B and D indicate that, while there is a substantively small negative correlation between estimates of how militarily **Necessary** the violence was and its moral **Wrongfulness**, there is no relationship between perceptions of military necessity (**Necessary**) and preferred severity of **Punishment** for the perpetrators. Overall, these results do not provide strong support for the *Cause Bias Hypotheses*; they suggest that people do not justify violence by their

preferred group by evaluating it as more militarily necessary and less gratuitous.

Figure 2: Cause

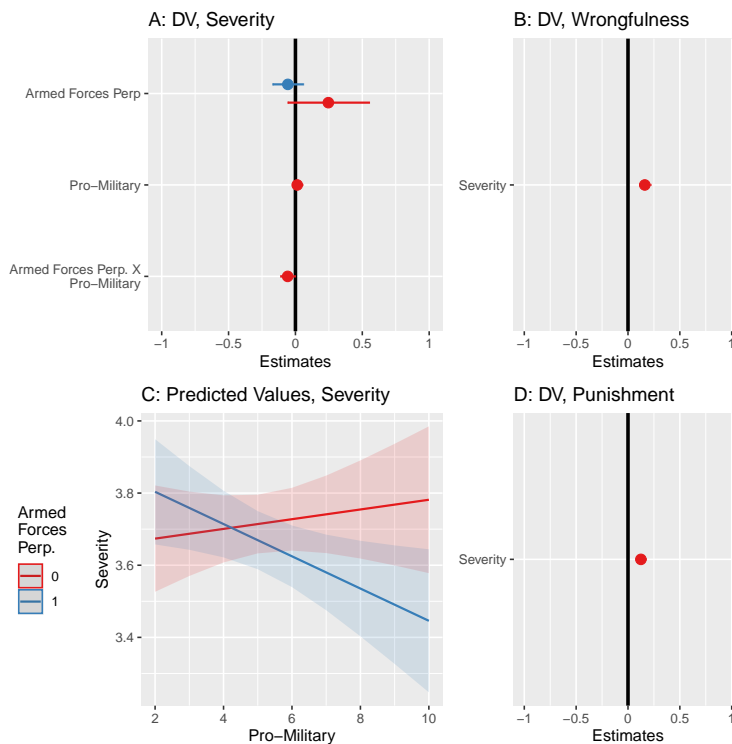


Note: No control variables are used in these regressions, and numeric results can be found in models 1-4 of Table A2.

In contrast, the evidence in Figure 3 suggests that people interpret the consequences of violence differently depending on the responsible armed group and, furthermore, that these altered evaluations of consequences shape differing perceptions of appropriate punishments for perpetrators. While the correlation between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Severity** is not significant, as seen in panel A of Figure 3, the interaction between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Pro-Military** is negative and statistically significant. This interaction is visualized in Panel C; it suggests that, when people are strong supporters of the military, they characterize violence by the state as harming fewer people than when the same violence is committed by guerrillas. At lower levels of support for the state, the difference in the perceived severity of violence when it is perpetrated by state and guerrilla forces is smaller. As panels B and D suggest, when people see violence as causing more harm, they characterize it as more morally wrong and its perpetrators as more deserving of punishment. In summary, the results provide

support for the *Consequence Hypotheses*; preferences shape attitudes toward the severity of violence, which in turns shapes attitudes toward wrongfulness and punishment.

Figure 3: Consequences

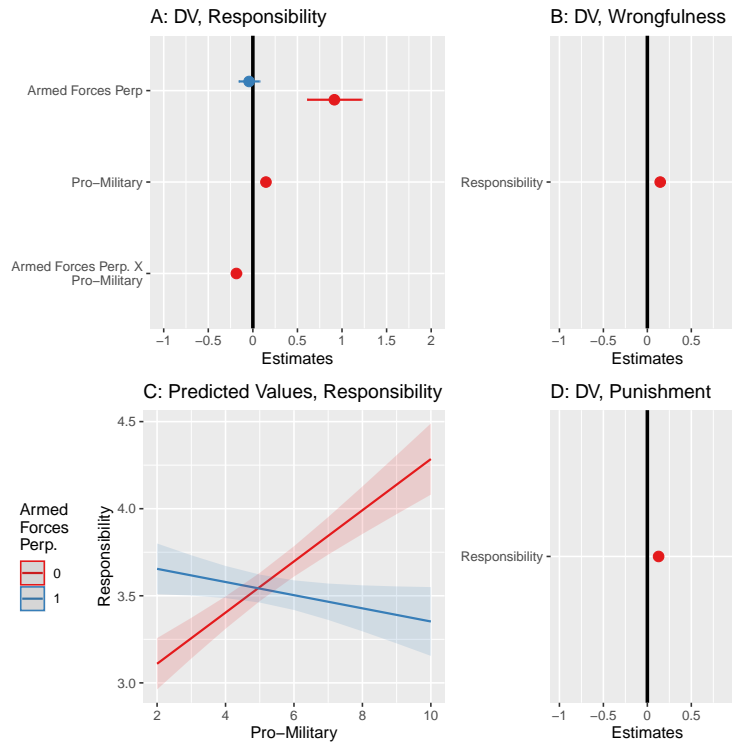


Note: No control variables are used in these regressions, and numeric results can be found in models 5-8 of Table A2.

The findings shown in Figures 4 provide support for the *Responsibility Hypotheses*. There is no statistically significant correlation between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Responsibility**, but the interaction between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Pro-Military** is negative and statistically significant as well as substantively large. This interaction is visualized in panel C and indicates that people who strongly support the military characterize state violence as less likely to be the responsibility of armed group leaders compared to guerrilla violence. On the other hand, people with the weakest support for the state characterize state violence as more rather than less likely to be the responsibility of armed group leaders. This could why **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Responsibility** are not correlated: the portion of the sample that doesn't prefer the state is too large. Furthermore, as panels B and D of Figure 4 indicate, higher levels of attribution of **Responsibility** to group leaders are correlated with increased

perceptions of moral **Wrongfulness** and increased severity of desired **Punishment** for perpetrators. Overall, these results indicate that people see violence committed by their preferred armed group as less organized and systematic than violence committed by armed groups they oppose; violence which is not organized by group leadership is viewed as requiring less punishment and is seen as less morally wrong.

Figure 4: Responsibility



Note: No control variables are used in these regressions, and numeric results can be found in models 9-12 of Table A2.

Exploratory Analyses

Wrongfulness

Given that neither of the *wrongfulness hypotheses* are supported, it is important to consider what is shaping perceptions of moral wrongfulness, if not armed group preference. Indeed, the correlation between **Wrongfulness** and **Punishment** is only .08, although these two variables should be highly correlated based on existing literature and the theory elucidated above. There are three possibilities: that different psychological processes govern beliefs about morality and punishment, that there is social desirability bias, or that other

variables are driving attributions of wrongfulness. See the section below for a discussion of why it is unlikely that social desirability bias affected responses.

As for the possibility that attributions of wrongfulness and blame are driven by distinct psychological processes, Cushman (2008) argues that evaluations of punishment are sensitive to the harm that an individual causes whereas judgements of wrongfulness are sensitive to what an individual intends. Malle (2021) also argues that wrongness judgements are distinct from blame judgements. However, he posits that wrongness judgements are causally prior to blame judgements, making it unclear how blame could occur without judgement of moral wrongfulness. Unfortunately, this study is unable to test the implications of these theories.

Regarding other variables shaping **Wrongfulness**, Table [A15](#) suggests that attitudes toward the peace accord shape beliefs about the moral **Wrongfulness** of the violence. It makes sense that individuals who believe that violence is a superior solution to the country's problems than a peace agreement see a specific act of violence as less unethical. Importantly, this suggests that understandings of the morality of violence could transcend preferences over conflict actors, even if understandings of appropriate punishment do not. It could also be the case that many individuals who oppose the peace accord are extremely conservative, given that the far-right current president ran on a platform of modifying the agreement. If so, the finding aligns with existing research suggesting that conservative Americans and Israelis are more supportive of torture and the use of force involving civilian casualties than liberal ones (Wallace 2013; Sagan and Valentino 2017; Kearns and Young 2020; Bloom et al. 2020). A few other demographic and attitudinal variables also affect **Wrongfulness**.

Social Desirability

It is necessary to briefly discuss whether respondents were comfortable indicating that perpetrators of violence against civilians shouldn't be punished or that the violence was not morally wrong. I took several steps to limit social desirability bias in the design of the survey. First, questions integrated uncertainty in order to give respondents more cover to express their opinions. For example, respondents did not have to say with surety that the

violence was militarily necessary; they could only indicate that it was “very likely” necessary. Additionally, several questions included the following language: “even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.” Second, the vignette did not include any graphic descriptions of violence. Nonetheless, there are two ways which social desirability bias could have affected the results: it could have prompted people to skip questions or to falsify their answers. However, a brief analysis of the data suggests that it is unlikely that either of these possibilities occurred to a significant degree.

Regarding missingness, the five dependent variables used in the analyses above have between 59 and 63 NAs each, out of 1,587 respondents. There were only 76 respondents who did not complete the survey, so most of these NAs come from dropoffs. Indeed, the correlation between NAs on various questions is extremely high (See Table [A11](#)). This suggests that there are not specific questions which make respondents particularly uncomfortable. However, there may be some kinds of respondents who are more unwilling to engage with the experiment writ large. Indeed, balance tables [A12](#) and [A13](#) suggest that demographics matter for who drops off. Higher income respondents are more likely to skip both the **Punishment** and **Necessary** questions. Additionally, more educated respondents are more likely to skip the **Punishment** question. However, they are no more likely to skip these questions if they have stronger **Pro-military** attitudes. Furthermore, respondents are not more likely to skip these two questions if they are in the **Armed Forces Perp.** treatment group or if they have been victimized in the conflict. Because victims could be more reluctant to answer questions which could make them recall their own victimization, and because people could be scared of expressing their opinions about an armed group which is in control of their area, these two sets of nulls indicate that missingness is unlikely the result of varying levels of social desirability bias. It is more likely the result of demographic differences between respondents.

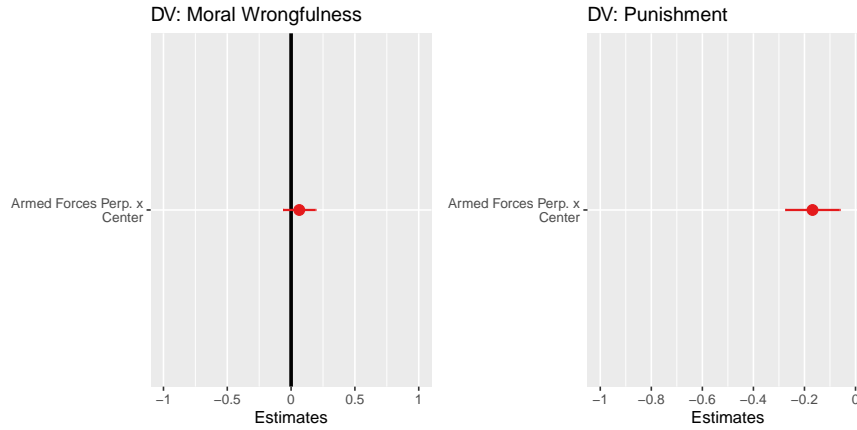
Social desirability bias may also have prompted respondents to falsify their answers. However, the mean response to **Punishment** was a 5.347 out of 6, and the mean response to **Wrongfulness** was a 3.482 out of 5. In other words, the average respondent indicated

that they neither agreed nor disagreed that the violence was morally wrong, and the average respondent supported a punishment of 15 years in prison for the perpetrators. 6 percent of respondents indicated that the perpetrators should receive no time in prison, and 24 percent of respondents indicated that disagreed that the violence was morally wrong. In other words, many respondents were clearly willing to express opinions about violence which might be considered distasteful. Additionally, respondents were more willing to express objectionable perspectives about moral wrongfulness than about punishment, suggesting that it is unlikely that **Wrongfulness** was subject to greater social desirability bias than **Punishment**.

Centrists

Thus far, I have operationalized armed group preference as pro-military attitudes. This implies that individuals who do not support the military are more likely to support leftist guerrillas. However, it is possible that there are individuals who dislike both the military and FARC dissidents. These individuals could be considered “centrists” and would not have a strong preference for either group, disliking both. In the Colombian context, where a center-right president negotiated the accord but a far-right president has criticized it, centrists would exhibit low levels of **Pro-Military** attitudes but high levels of support for the peace accord. Thus, I utilize a question which asks respondents, on a scale of 1 to 5, how much they agree that “the peace accord was necessary to end the conflict with the FARC-EP.” I dichotomize both **Pro-Military** and answers to this question, classifying respondents as **Center** if they have a value of less than .5 on the **Pro-Military** variable and a response of 4 or 5 on the question about how necessary the accord was. Centrists are approximately 30 percent of the sample. Importantly, the correlation between **Center** and 2018 vote choice, where 1 is a vote for the center-right dove and 0 is a vote for the far-right hawk, is high. .41, This correlation lends validity to the **Center** variable. I then rerun some of the main analyses, using the variable **Center** instead of **Pro-Military**. The results can be seen in Figure 5 and Table A14.

Figure 5: Wrongfulness and Punishment, Centrists



Note: No control variables are used in these regressions, and numeric results can be found in Table A14.

The results as visualized in Figure 5 suggest that centrists are more likely than the rest of the sample to say that violence is morally wrong, regardless of the perpetrator. More specifically, **Center** is statistically significant and positive, but the interaction between **Armed Forces Perp.** and **Center** is not statistically significant. This finding makes sense: if centrists don't support either armed actor, they will oppose violence regardless of who perpetrates it. Interestingly, centrists are no more or less likely to say that violence should be punished harshly, regardless of the perpetrator.

Conclusion

This study has examined the ways in which perpetrator identity shapes public responses to wartime violence against civilians. I have argued that people characterize violence by their preferred side as less morally wrong and deserving of less severe punishment. There are three possible mechanisms which may explain this. Depending on whether the perpetrator is affiliated with their preferred side, people may differentially evaluate the causes of the violence, i.e. whether it is militarily necessary; the consequences of the violence, i.e. whether a lot of people were victimized; and who bears responsibility of the violence, i.e. whether the armed group as a whole bears responsibility. An online survey in Colombia which

presents respondents with an instance of civilian targeting committed either by state armed forces or leftist guerrillas indicates that people justify lesser punishment for their preferred perpetrators by characterizing the violence as less severe and less organized but not as less militarily necessary. However, individuals' preferences are not correlated with their judgements about the moral wrongfulness of violence.

These results indicate that armed groups may be best able to persuade people to continue supporting them despite their violence against civilians by portraying the abuse as committed by rogue individuals within the organized or as harming relatively few civilians. On the other hand, portraying the abuse as necessary to win the war may not be convincing. Conversely, transitional justice institutions may be best able to convince civilian supporters of armed groups that punishment is necessary for its perpetrators by emphasizing the organized nature of the violence or the large numbers of victims. Further research should more directly examine how information or propoganda from armed groups, transitional justice institutions, and other actors about violence against civilians affects people's judgements about conflict-related abuse. Future research should also investigate why judgements of the moral wrongfulness of violence against civilians differ from assesments of appropriate punishments for perpetrators.

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Preferences for Armed Actors and Responses to Civilian Victimization

Supplementary Appendices

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A Main Results, Tables

Table A1: Main Results, Wrongfulness and Punishment

	1. Wrongfulness	2. Wrongfulness	3. Punishment	4. Punishment
Intercept	3.45*** (0.05)	3.37*** (0.08)	5.43*** (0.04)	5.42*** (0.07)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.06 (0.06)	0.09 (0.12)	-0.17** (0.05)	0.04 (0.10)
Pro-Military		0.19 (0.18)		0.02 (0.15)
Pro-Military x Armed Forces Perp.		-0.07 (0.25)		-0.52* (0.21)
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	0.01	0.01
Num. obs.	1527	1527	1527	1527
RMSE	1.27	1.27	1.06	1.06

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

Table A2: Main Results, Mechanisms

	1. Necessary	2. Necessary	3. Wrongfulness	4. Punishment	5. Severity	6. Severity	7. Wrongfulness	8. Punishment	9. Responsibility	10. Responsibility	11. Wrongfulness	12. Punishment
(Intercept)	2.72*** (0.05)	2.60*** (0.09)	3.70*** (0.07)	5.41*** (0.06)	3.72*** (0.04)	3.67*** (0.08)	2.89*** (0.11)	4.89*** (0.09)	3.58*** (0.04)	3.11*** (0.08)	2.96*** (0.10)	4.89*** (0.09)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.01 (0.07)	0.09 (0.13)			-0.06 (0.06)	0.13 (0.11)			-0.04 (0.06)	0.55*** (0.11)		
Pro-Military		0.30 (0.19)				0.11 (0.16)				1.18*** (0.16)		
Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military		-0.20 (0.26)				-0.47* (0.22)				-1.48*** (0.22)		
Necessary			-0.08*** (0.02)									
Severity				-0.02 (0.02)			0.16*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.02)				
Responsibility											0.15*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.02)
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.02
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	0.01	0.00	-0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	-0.00	0.04	0.02	0.02
Num. obs.	1525	1525	1523	1523	1528	1528	1525	1525	1524	1524	1522	1522
RMSE	1.36	1.36	1.26	1.06	1.14	1.14	1.25	1.05	1.15	1.13	1.26	1.05

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

B Main Results with Control Variables

Table A3: Main Results with Controls, Wrongfulness and Punishment

	1. Wrongfulness	2. Wrongfulness	3. Punishment	4. Punishment
(Intercept)	11.94 ^o (6.37)	11.74 ^o (6.55)	16.27** (5.25)	19.48*** (5.37)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.02 (0.07)	0.05 (0.12)	-0.17** (0.06)	0.06 (0.10)
Gender	0.08 (0.07)	0.08 (0.07)	0.11* (0.06)	0.10 ^o (0.06)
Education	0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01* (0.00)	-0.01** (0.00)
Income	0.02** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)
Rural	0.00 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Victimized Gov	-0.13 (0.15)	-0.13 (0.15)	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.21 ^o (0.13)
Victimized Guerrilla	0.04 (0.10)	0.04 (0.10)	0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)
Pro-Military		0.05 (0.19)		-0.04 (0.15)
Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military		-0.08 (0.26)		-0.57** (0.21)
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03
Num. obs.	1408	1408	1408	1408
RMSE	1.27	1.27	1.05	1.04

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ^o $p < 0.1$

Table A4: Main Results with Controls, Mechanisms

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
	Necessary	Necessary	Wrongfulness	Punishment	Severity	Severity	Wrongfulness	Punishment	Responsibility	Responsibility	Wrongfulness	Punishment
(Intercept)	-9.03 (6.85)	-12.62 ^o (7.04)	11.35 ^o (6.35)	15.86 ^{**} (5.27)	12.65 [*] (5.69)	14.83 [*] (5.84)	10.12 (6.32)	14.46 ^{**} (5.22)	8.55 (5.77)	3.53 (5.83)	12.05 ^o (6.33)	14.66 ^{**} (5.23)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.01 (0.07)	0.09 (0.13)			-0.09 (0.06)	0.08 (0.11)			-0.06 (0.06)	0.50 ^{**} (0.11)		
Gender	-0.14 ^o (0.07)	-0.13 ^o (0.07)	0.07 (0.07)	0.10 ^o (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	0.04 (0.06)	0.07 (0.07)	0.10 ^o (0.06)	0.07 (0.06)	0.09 (0.06)	0.07 (0.07)	0.10 ^o (0.06)
Education	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)	0.07 ^o (0.04)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)	-0.00 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.04)
Age ^e	0.01 ^o (0.00)	0.01 [*] (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 [*] (0.00)	-0.00 ^o (0.00)	-0.01 ^o (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 ^o (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 ^o (0.00)
Income	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 ^o (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.01 ^o (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	0.02 ^{**} (0.01)
Rural	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)
Victimized Gov	0.10 (0.17)	0.14 (0.17)	-0.10 (0.15)	-0.15 (0.13)	0.28 [*] (0.14)	0.25 ^o (0.14)	-0.15 (0.15)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.36 [*] (0.14)	-0.32 [*] (0.14)	-0.06 (0.15)	-0.10 (0.13)
Victimized Guerrilla	0.19 ^o (0.10)	0.17 (0.11)	0.05 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.01 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)	0.04 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.16 ^o (0.09)	0.12 (0.09)	0.02 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.08)
Intensity	0.41 [*] (0.20)	0.41 [*] (0.20)							1.07 ^{**} (0.17)	1.07 ^{**} (0.17)		
Armed Forces Perp x Pro-Military	-0.20 (0.28)	-0.20 (0.28)							-0.41 ^o (0.23)	-1.42 ^{**} (0.23)		
Necessary			-0.08 ^{**} (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)								
Severity							0.16 ^{**} (0.03)	0.13 ^{**} (0.02)			0.14 ^{**} (0.03)	0.13 ^{**} (0.02)
Responsibility												
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.03
Adj. R ²	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.03
Num. obs.	1405	1405	1404	1404	1409	1409	1407	1407	1404	1404	1403	1403
RMSE	1.37	1.36	1.26	1.05	1.14	1.13	1.26	1.04	1.15	1.13	1.26	1.04

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ^o $p < 0.1$

C Main Results Removing Respondents Who Failed the Attention Check

Table A5: Excluding People Who Failed Attention Check, Wrongfulness and Punishment

	1. Wrongfulness	2. Wrongfulness	3. Punishment	4. Punishment
Intercept	3.47*** (0.05)	3.41*** (0.09)	5.45*** (0.04)	5.49*** (0.08)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.06 (0.07)	0.12 (0.13)	-0.17** (0.06)	0.01 (0.11)
Pro-Military		0.16 (0.19)		-0.09 (0.16)
Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military		-0.16 (0.27)		-0.42 ^o (0.22)
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	0.01	0.01
Num. obs.	1278	1278	1278	1278
RMSE	1.27	1.27	1.04	1.04

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ^o $p < 0.1$

Table A6: Excluding People Who Failed Attention Check, Mechanisms

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
	Necessary	Necessary	Wrongfulness	Punishment	Severity	Severity	Wrongfulness	Punishment	Responsibility	Responsibility	Wrongfulness	Punishment
(Intercept)	2.72*** (0.05)	2.62*** (0.10)	3.72*** (0.08)	5.44*** (0.07)	3.74*** (0.04)	3.73*** (0.08)	2.73*** (0.12)	4.95*** (0.10)	3.58*** (0.05)	3.14*** (0.08)	2.93*** (0.11)	4.97*** (0.10)
Armed Forces Perp.	-0.02 (0.08)	0.04 (0.14)			-0.05 (0.06)	0.14 (0.11)			-0.01 (0.06)	0.63*** (0.12)		
Pro-Military		0.24 (0.21)				0.03 (0.17)				1.11*** (0.17)		
Armed Forces Perp. x Pro-Military		-0.16 (0.29)				-0.46 ^o (0.24)				-1.59*** (0.24)		
Necessary			-0.08** (0.03)	-0.03 (0.02)								
Severity							0.21*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)			0.16*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)
Responsibility												
R ²	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.01
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	0.01	0.00	-0.00	0.00	0.03	0.01	-0.00	0.03	0.02	0.01
Num. obs.	1277	1277	1276	1276	1278	1278	1277	1277	1276	1276	1275	1275
RMSE	1.36	1.36	1.26	1.05	1.12	1.12	1.24	1.03	1.15	1.13	1.25	1.04

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ^o $p < 0.1$

D Components of “Pro-Military” Index

Table A7: Confidence in the Military Instead of Preference Intensity

	1. Wrongfulness	2. Punishment	3. Necessary	4. Severity	5. Responsibility
(Intercept)	3.46***	5.42***	2.62***	3.67***	3.13***
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.01	0.02	0.06	0.12	0.50***
	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Confidence in Military	-0.02	0.02	0.21	0.10	0.91***
	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Armed Forces Perp. x Confidence in Military	0.12	-0.39*	-0.11	-0.35*	-1.10***
	(0.20)	(0.17)	(0.21)	(0.18)	(0.18)
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.03
Adj. R ²	-0.00	0.01	-0.00	0.00	0.03
Num. obs.	1527	1527	1525	1528	1524
RMSE	1.27	1.06	1.36	1.14	1.14

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

Table A8: Military Budget Increase Instead of Preference Intensity

	1. Wrongfulness	2. Punishment	3. Necessary	4. Severity	5. Responsibility
(Intercept)	3.35***	5.43***	2.65***	3.70***	3.34***
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.14	-0.06	0.06	0.04	0.26**
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Budget Increase	0.32*	0.00	0.23	0.05	0.77***
	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Armed Forces Perp. x Budget Increase	-0.27	-0.34°	-0.17	-0.30	-1.00***
	(0.22)	(0.18)	(0.24)	(0.20)	(0.20)
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02
Adj. R ²	0.00	0.01	-0.00	0.00	0.02
Num. obs.	1527	1527	1525	1528	1524
RMSE	1.27	1.06	1.36	1.14	1.14

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

E Data

Table A9: Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	N (1,587 total)	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Year Born	1,504	1,987.862	11.276	1,945.000	1,981.000	1,997.000	2,011.000
Woman (1/2)	1,538	1.501	0.500	1.000	1.000	2.000	2.000
Education (0-4)	1,553	3.199	0.827	0.000	3.000	4.000	4.000
Income (0-16)	1,497	10.656	4.937	0.000	8.000	15.000	16.000
Rural (1-5)	1,552	3.538	1.275	1.000	3.000	5.000	5.000
Accord Unnecessary (0-1)	1,587	0.405	0.317	0.000	0.250	0.500	1.000
Confidence Military (0-1)	1,587	0.486	0.323	0.000	0.250	0.750	1.000
Budget Ministry of Defense (0-1)	1,587	0.315	0.294	0.000	0.000	0.500	1.000
Pro-Military (0-1)	1,587	0.401	0.260	0.000	0.250	0.625	1.000
Wrongfulness (1-5)	1,527	3.482	1.267	1.000	3.000	5.000	5.000
Punishment (1-6)	1,527	5.347	1.063	1.000	5.000	6.000	6.000
Necessary (1-5)	1,525	2.724	1.360	1.000	1.000	4.000	5.000
Severity (1-5)	1,528	3.688	1.138	1.000	3.000	5.000	5.000
Responsibility (1-5)	1,524	3.554	1.155	1.000	3.000	4.000	5.000
Ideology (1-10)	1,505	5.439	2.310	1.000	4.000	6.000	10.000
Victimized (0/1)	1,437	0.315	0.465	0.000	0.000	1.000	1.000
Victimized by Government (0/1)	1,587	0.054	0.225	0	0	0	1
Victimized by Guerrilla (0/1)	1,587	0.141	0.348	0	0	0	1

Table A10: Balance Table, Treatment

Variable	Treatment=0	Treatment =1	Difference
	Guerrilla Perp	State Perp	
Education	3.21	3.19	-.02
Woman	1.49	1.51	.02
Income	10.5	10.8	.30
Rural	3.52	3.55	.03
Victimized	.303	.327	.024

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

Table A11: Correlation between Missingness in Dependent Variables

	Wrongfulness NA	Punishment NA	Necessary NA	Severity NA	Responsibility NA
Wrongfulness NA	1	0.965	0.949	0.956	0.941
Punishment NA	0.965	1	0.949	0.956	0.941
Necessary NA	0.949	0.949	1	0.957	0.942
Severity NA	0.956	0.956	0.957	1	0.949
Responsibility NA	0.941	0.941	0.942	0.949	1

Table A12: Balance Table, Punishment Missingness

Variable	Not NA	NA	Difference
Education	2.87	3.21	.34*
Woman	1.63	1.50	-.13
Income	8.42	10.7	2.28*
Rural	3.27	3.54	.27
Victimized	.5	.315	.185
Pro-Military	.421	.400	-.021
Armed Forces Perp.	.533	.506	-.027

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, $^{\circ}p < 0.1$

Table A13: Balance Table, Necessary Missingness

Variable	Not NA	NA	Difference
Education	2.91	3.21	.3
Woman	1.55	1.50	-.05
Income	8.18	10.7	2.52*
Rural	3.18	3.54	.36
Victimized	.667	.315	-.352
Pro-Military	.409	.400	-.009
Armed Forces Perp.	.532	.506	-.026

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, $^{\circ}p < 0.1$

F Exploratory Analysis: Centrists

Table A14: Replace Pro-Military with Centrist

	Wrongfulness	Punishments
Intercept	3.37*** (0.06)	5.43*** (0.05)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.09 (0.08)	-0.22*** (0.07)
Center	0.25* (0.10)	0.02 (0.08)
Center x Armed Forces Perp.	-0.08 (0.14)	0.16 (0.12)
R ²	0.01	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.00	0.01
Num. obs.	1525	1525
RMSE	1.26	1.06

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, $^{\circ}p < 0.1$

G Exploratory Analysis: Wrongfulness

Table A15: Determinants of Wrongfulness

	Wrongfulness	Wrongfulness
(Intercept)	15.85*	16.74*
	(6.56)	(6.74)
Armed Forces Perp.	0.04	0.10
	(0.07)	(0.12)
Gender	0.14*	0.14*
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Education	0.00	0.00
	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	-0.01*	-0.01*
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Income	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Rural	0.00	0.00
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Victimized Gov	-0.16	-0.17
	(0.15)	(0.16)
Victimized Guerrilla	0.05	0.05
	(0.10)	(0.10)
Vote 2018	-0.10	-0.10
	(0.08)	(0.08)
Municipal Services	0.08*	0.09*
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Security	0.07	0.07
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Accord Necessary	0.13***	0.12***
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Pro-Military		-0.02
		(0.19)
Armed Forces Perp x Pro-Military		-0.15
		(0.26)
R ²	0.04	0.04
Adj. R ²	0.03	0.03
Num. obs.	1384	1384
RMSE	1.25	1.26

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, ° $p < 0.1$

H Full Survey Text, English

- In what year were you born?
- What is your gender?
 1. Male
 2. Female
 3. Other gender
 99. Prefer not to answer
- In what municipality were you born (e.g. Cali)?
- In what municipality do you live (e.g. Medellín)
- What is the highest level of education you have finished?
 0. None
 1. Primary school
 2. Secondary school
 3. Associate degree
 4. University
- Can you tell me in which of these ranges is your monthly household income, including remittances from abroad and the income of all adults and children who work?
 0. No income
 1. Less than 205.000
 2. Between 205.001 and 325.000
 3. Between 325.001 and 440.000
 4. Between 440.001 and 565.000
 5. Between 565.001 and 650.000
 6. Between 650.001 and 710.000
 7. Between 710.001 and 750.000
 8. Between 750.001 and 810.000
 9. Between 810.001 and 915.000
 10. Between 915.001 and 1.000.000
 11. Between 1.000.001 and 1.250.000
 12. Between 1.250.001 and 1.365.000
 13. Between 1.365.001 and 1.600.000
 14. Between 1.600.001 and 2.000.000
 15. Between 2.000.001 and 3.150.000
 16. More than 3.150.000
 98. Inapplicable (no work or retired)

- What best describes the area in which you live?
 1. Rural area
 2. Small city
 3. Mid-sized city
 4. Large city
 5. National Capital (metropolitan area)
- On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statement: the peace accord was necessary to end the conflict with the FARC-EP?

1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree

- On this page we have a scale that goes from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest and signifies none and 5 is the highest and signifies a lot. To what degree do you have confidence in the Armed Forces?

1. None	2.	3.	4.	5. A lot

- What should happen to the budget of the Ministry of Defense?
 1. It should be decreased a lot
 2. It should be decreased a little
 3. It should stay the same
 4. It should be increased a little
 5. It should be increased a lot

Imagine a hypothetical article in the newspaper El Tiempo. Please read the first paragraph of the hypothetical article below, and then please answer several questions about the violence described in the article. Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.

Four civilians, who were not fighting and were not a part of either a non-state armed group or the Colombian Armed Forces, were killed in Antioquia yesterday morning. According to initial reports, the victims were two men and two women; all were shot at close range. The local mayor alleges that the perpetrators were (*leftist dissidents of the FARC / members of the Colombian Armed Forces*).

1. Strongly disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree

- On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statement: the violence described in the article above was morally wrong?
- What degree of punishment should the perpetrators of the violence described in the above article receive?

1. No punishment/pardon
2. 2 years of house arrest
3. 5 years of house arrest
4. 5 years of imprisonment
5. 15 years of imprisonment
6. Life imprisonment

- On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates very unlikely and 5 indicates very likely, how likely is it that the violence described in the article above was necessary to achieve military gains? Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.

1. Very unlikely	2. Unlikely	3. Neither likely nor unlikely	4. Likely	5. Very likely

- Do you think that the number of victims of the violence described in the above article is very small, small, neither small nor large, large, or very large?

1. Very small
2. Small
3. Neither small nor large
4. Large
5. Very large

- On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates very unlikely and 5 indicates very likely, how likely is it that the leadership of the organization that the perpetrators belonged to were responsible for the violence described in the article above? Even if you are unsure of your answer, please do your best to respond.

1. Very unlikely	2. Unlikely	3. Neither likely nor unlikely	4. Likely	5. Very likely

- On this page we have a scale that goes from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest and signifies none and 5 is the highest and signifies a lot. To what degree do you have confidence in the National Government?

1. None	2.	3.	4.	5. A lot

- On this page we have a scale from 1 to 10 that goes from left to right, in which 1 signifies left and 10 signifies right. Today when we talk about political tendency, many people talk about those that sympathize more with the left or the right. According to the meaning that the terms left and right have for you when you think about your political point of view, where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 Left	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Right

- Have you lost a family member or close relative as a consequence of the armed conflict, or do you have a relative who was disappeared in the conflict?

0. No
1. Yes

99. Prefer not to answer

if yes, proceed to following question; if not, skip

- Which type of actor or actors were responsible? Indicate all that apply.

1. Guerrillas
 2. Paramilitaries
 3. BACRIM (criminal bands)
 4. The army
 5. The police
 6. Other
98. Don't know
99. Prefer not to answer

- Would you say that the services the municipality is giving to the people are?

1. Very bad (awful)	2. Bad	3. Neither good nor bad (regular)	4. (Good)	5. Very good

- Speaking of the place or neighborhood where you live and thinking about the possibility of being a victim of assault or robbery, do you feel very insecure, somewhat insecure, somewhat secure, or very secure?

1. Very insecure	2. Somewhat insecure	3. Somewhat secure	4. Very secure

- Did you vote in the second round of presidential elections in June of 2018?

0. No
 1. Yes
99. Prefer not to Answer

if yes, proceed to following question; if not, skip

- Who did you vote for?

1. Iván Duque
2. Gustavo Petro

99. Prefer not to answer

- In your opinion, which is the principal actor responsible for the violence youve lived through in Colombia?

1. Guerrillas
2. Paramilitaries
3. BACRIM (criminal bands)
4. The army
5. The police
6. Other
7. All

99. Prefer not to answer

- What best describes the area in which you live?

5. National Capital (metropolitan area)
4. Large city
3. Mid-sized city
2. Small city
1. Rural area

- Imagine that *(no new information emerged about the false positives / the JEP found that former President Uribe ordered the false positives, but he continued to deny involvement / the JEP found that former President Uribe ordered the false positives, and he apologized for his involvement)*. What degree of punishment do you think former President Uribe should receive for the false positives?

1. No punishment/pardon
2. 2 years of house arrest
3. 5 years of house arrest
4. 5 years of imprisonment
5. 15 years of imprisonment
6. Life imprisonment