Rising Threat
The Forces behind Drone Warfare in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, 2008-2013

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Chapter One: Introduction

“By the start of the twenty-first century, technology was starting to mature, each year getting better and easier to use. In turn, whether it was UAV’s in the Kosovo war or NASA sending out robotic explorers to Mars, unmanned systems were collecting a portfolio of success stories to show that they could be useful.”

-Peter Singer 2009

The Obama Administration has been criticized for the “Covert Drone War” in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, while the Military also faces scrutiny for drone activity in Afghanistan. Since September 11, 2001, drones have evolved into the primary weapon for combatting terrorists within and out of war arenas. Less than a week after the attacks on September 11, Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), which “authorizes the use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States”. This Joint Resolution gives the President Constitutional Authority to take action and deter against all international terrorist threats to the United States\(^1\). Furthermore this resolution gives the executive branch immense freedom\(^2\) to take preemptive action against terrorists all over the world. The targets of these strikes are primarily Al Qaeda and the Taliban along with their affiliates.

There are currently two United States drone programs: one run by the Central Intelligence Agency and the other by the Department of Defense. Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), a branch of U.S. Special Operations Command, also plays a vital role in intelligence gathering and strike operation.

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Data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, a non-profit organization that collects data on drone strikes, indicates first, an overall increase in drone strikes, and then, variation and fluctuation of strike number in Pakistan and Yemen. In Pakistan, drone numbers surged from 38 strikes in 2008 to 128 strikes in 2010, before dropping back down to 26 strikes in 2013. Yemen strike numbers illustrate a similar pattern with strikes escalating from 13-29 in 2011 to 27-87 in 2012 before dropping to 12-28 strikes in 2013. The UMASS Drone Targeted Killing Database found eight strikes in Somalia in 2011, with a subsequent annual decrease in strike in number. A declassified document from the Department of Defense reveals a constant escalation in Afghanistan strikes carried out by Joint Special Operations Command, which is a semi-covert arm of the military. The strike numbers in Afghanistan annually increased from the initial 195 strikes in 2008 to 333 strikes in 2012.

Previous literature on drone strikes focuses on the effectiveness, morality, and legality of drone policy. Furthermore, any attempt to examine the driving forces behind strikes is usually focused on U.S. strikes in a single state. Very few authors have attempted to examine the motivations behind drone strikes across arenas (Metz 2013). My paper will attempt to decipher the main factors behind drone strikes across and within specific arenas in order to, first, discover the forces that led to initial escalation and then to determine what has led to a fluctuation of strikes. As Figure 1 shows us, escalation and de-escalation can occur simultaneously in different arenas, but each arena experiences either an annual increase or decrease in strikes.

Drone warfare is a relatively novel phenomenon.

The debates pertaining to the legality, morality, and effectiveness of this new technology are important and necessary in examining the international structure and in

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4 Figure 1: The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
shaping the future of state foreign policy. However, this paper focuses on the propulsive factors behind drone strikes in an attempt to develop theories for why drone strikes have escalated and de-escalated from 2008-2013.

The evolution of technology in combat is essential to the future of combat operations. Peter Singer states, “one could even argue that the rise of these digital warriors is more significant, in that robotics alters not merely the lethality of war, but the very identity of who fights it” (Singer 10). This statement indicates a paradigm shift in combat, caused by technology-altering warfare, as it has done for centuries. Unmanned systems are the most recent shift and discovering the forces behind that shift serves a significant purpose in international relations and security.

This technological paradigm shift to drone warfare, indicated by the emergence of use and proliferation of drone technology, demands attention. The history of warfare and combat has shown that technology plays a pivotal role in strategizing and over-powering the enemy. Whether it is the invention of the Greek catapult, the development of aircraft, or the harnessing of nuclear capabilities, technology has been used as a major tool in determining the outcomes of almost every war.

The application of technological advancements in war, particularly drones, both yields intended results and unintended consequences. Drones have been examined with scrutiny for a variety of reasons, but all of those fields, along with increased media coverage, reveal the indefinite and uncertain nature of drone technology.

Many scholars criticize the covert nature of the CIA drone program. Strike records from the DOD were only recently reported in 2013, but strike recordings were
discontinued very quickly after the declassified reports were released. The CIA does not release strike data, which is why investigative organizations such as The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, The New America Foundation, and Umassdrone.org individually report drone strikes and fatalities. Secrecy can be an essential tool for combat operations, but the lack transparency by President Obama has attracted more attention to the controversial subject of targeted killings.

In the first chapter I provide a historical overview of drone combat, while specifically examining the historical evolution of the MQ-IB Predator and MQ-9 Reaper drones. The following chapter surveys the literature on the American drone use. I will examine the possible motives behind drone strike increase and decrease. On its face, many would believe that drone strike variation should correlate with threat level variation, but I argue that other avenues demand further exploration. Chapter three constructs a research design, which will outline my methodology, dependent, and independent variables. Chapter four tests hypotheses found in my research with case studies. Finally, there is a concluding chapter, which ties in the individual testing in the case study section to examine if there are patterns across arenas for drone strike motivation.

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The History of Drones

In 2013, the CIA reported that 87 nations possess drones and the U.S. has been widely cited as setting precedent for this new technological weapon. Furthermore, there are hundreds of types of drones within those 87 countries that serve various functions. Most drones are used for surveillance, while many have combat equipped weaponry.

The term “drone” can refer to a variety of unmanned vehicles or machines. The word can be relative in application, but for the sake of this paper drones are unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Today, most strikes are carried out by either the MQ-1B Predator drone, or the devastating MQ-9 Reaper. A brief history on the evolution of drones and UAV technology will help us understand why drones have become the primary weapon in U.S. counterterrorism strategy.

The first recorded use of unmanned aerial warfare occurred on August 22, 1849 when Austria launched 200 pilotless balloons mounted with bombs against the city of Venice. The origins of the modern drone, or “target drones,” can be traced to the early twentieth century when Elmer Sperry began construction on the radio controlled “Aerial Torpedo” or “Flying Bomb.” The Aerial torpedo was able to fly 50 miles while carrying a 300-pound bomb.

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9 Ibid
10 Ibid
There was a, “rush of military interest in remotely controlled vehicles” (Dickson 181) in the 1930’s, which eventually led to the development of a radio-controlled glide bomb that was used towards the end of the Second World War\textsuperscript{11}. The U.S., in “Operation Anvil”, used these devices to target German bunkers\textsuperscript{12}.

After World War II, the U.S. decided to develop cruise missiles, which in their own way were like little, unmanned airplanes\textsuperscript{13}. These missiles maintain airplane like “lift,” whereas ballistic missiles, “move through a long curve of flight comprising of a lunch and rise followed by a guided fall”\textsuperscript{14}. Sifton and Shaw, among others, see cruise missiles as the proto-type to drones. Cruise missiles could be dispatched and guided in flight and some had cameras and the ability to change target midflight. However, Cruise missiles lacked the ability to fly over a battlefield in a holding pattern and they were unable to return to base. For all these reasons Air Force engineers continued to expand unmanned aircraft projects in the 1960’s and 70’s\textsuperscript{15}.

In the 1960’s and 1970’s, the U.S. launched over 34,000 surveillance flights with the AQM-34 Ryan Firebee\textsuperscript{16}. The Firebee is a jet-propelled drone that is launched and operated from a host plane with operators on board\textsuperscript{17}. By 1970, the military, “saw the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item Ibid
  \item Ibid
  \item Ibid
  \item Ibid
  \item Ibid
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
promise of the drone” (Shaw 3), and in 1971, a drone “humiliated” manned systems in a simulated dogfight over the Pacific Test Range\(^\text{18}\).

At the same time, Israel developed the Scout and Pioneer drones which were lighter and more glide oriented compared to their predecessors\(^\text{19}\). The Scout was known for its ability to transmit a 360-degree video live feed and its small size made it inexpensive and difficult to shoot down\(^\text{20}\).

The U.S. bought Pioneer drones from Israel to use them in the Gulf War (1990-1991) where they were used for surveillance and reconnaissance purposes.

The history that led to the modern Predator drone began in the 1980’s. In 1980, Israeli inventor, Abraham Kareem, built an aircraft called “Albatros,” “that would change the face of warfare forever” (Sifton 5). This surveillance-specific, unmanned aircraft was able to stay in flight for 56 hours, shattering the two-hour flying limit of previous drones. Once he received funding from DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency), Kareem developed a drone called “Amber.” The Amber had some success, but was ultimately unable to provide prolonged surveillance and carry large amounts for fuel or equipment\(^\text{21}\). Eventually, the GNAT-750 was born in 1985, but budget cuts slowed program development. The Bosnian War from 1992 to 1995 provided the GNAT the

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\(^{20}\) Ibid

\(^{21}\) Ibid
opportunity to show its value, which it did by providing surveillance for NATO convoys and for spotting Serbian artillery.\(^{22}\)

Before the war, Congress had blocked UAV development by anyone outside of the Pentagon’s Joint Project Office. But, the urgent need for surveillance during the Bosnian War allowed for the CIA to circumvent the Congressional block on UAV’s – because the CIA operated outside of military jurisdiction.\(^{23}\) The decision by the CIA to acquire drones began in 1993, but the GNAT faced some technical issues that exposed its surveillance deficiencies. General Atomics, the company that bought out Karem, responded to these issues with the Predator. The first Predators were flown in 1994 in Operation Nomad Vigil and in 1995 during Operation Deliberate Force.\(^{24}\)

The Predator greatly extended the surveillance and operation range in comparison to the GNAT. One of the later GNAT models had a limited operating range of 150 miles, whereas the Predator could operate up to 770 miles out.\(^{25}\) The Air Force was very impressed with the Predator, so the AF established its own UAV squadron- the 11\(^{th}\) Reconnaissance Squadron at Indian Springs Auxiliary Airfield in Nevada (Now known as Creech Air Force Base).\(^{26}\) Creech is currently the, “hub of American drone operations in Afghanistan” (Shaw 7). The Air Force Base in the middle of the Nevada Desert trains and supports air crewmembers who conduct sortie across the world.\(^{27}\)

\(^{22}\) Ibid
\(^{23}\) Ibid
\(^{24}\) Ibid
\(^{26}\) Ibid
Nonetheless, a CIA drone that supposedly spotted Osama Bin Laden in the Fall of 2000 has been widely cited as the basis for equipping the surveillance-designed Predator with weapons\(^28\). In 2004, Former CIA director, George J. Tenet, was quoted saying,

“During two missions the Predator may have observed Osama Bin Laden…it imaged a tall man dressed in white robes with a physical and operational signature fitting Bin Laden” (Tenet 1).

The CIA and Air Force recognized that Drones were only able to detect high-value targets, but lacked the capability to attack these imminent threats. Even before September 11, both bodies began talks in regard to arming the Predator\(^29\). Military Officers and CIA leaders reasoned,

“if we could develop the capability to reliably hit a target with a Hellfire missile and could develop the enabling policy and legal framework, we would have a capability to accurately and promptly respond to future sightings of high value targets” (Tenet 1).

The Hellfire missile is, “a 100-pound antitank missile, designed to destroy and armored vehicle” (Bowden 2013). There were initial legal questions, but days after September 11, 2001 the armed Predator program began. In October 2001, the U.S. military was said to possess 54 drones, but by 2011 the military accumulated more than 6,000 UAVs\(^30\). The beginning of this shift in 2001 was noted by U.S. Air Force Chief Scientist Mark Maybury who stated, “one of the most significant things that has occurred since 9/11 is the shift from, if you will, peer-to-peer warfare to a focus on irregular


\(^{29}\) Ibid

warfare”. President Bush signed a directive that created a secret list of High Value Targets (HVTs) that gave the CIA authorization to kill without further Presidential approval\textsuperscript{31}.

Today we see two active drone programs: One controlled by the C.I.A. and the other by the Department of Defense. To the CIA, drones are the primary tool for surveying and combatting terrorism in non-war arenas such as Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya. The Military uses drones to supplement combat operations in the war arenas of Afghanistan and Iraq, and drones are used in addition to other weapons and tactics employed by the U.S. Armed Forces.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The evolution of drones can be attributed to the desire for enhanced strategic weaponry. The primary presumption is that strike numbers correspond to security threat levels. This may be the case, but the recent criticism of drone implementation unveils other possible factors for drone strike number explanation.

To best answer the question of why do we see fluctuation in strike number in within and across arenas we must first investigate the conditions that initially led to an increase in strike number in 2008. Figure 2 shows us the drastic increase in CIA strikes after President Obama’s inauguration in 2009. We can clearly see that strike increase occurred at different years in different arenas, but numbers were relatively greater in comparison to the Bush Administration drone program (2002-2008).

Figure 2:

![Figure 2](http://www.democraticunderground.com/)

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For a reference point, there were 751 strikes at the pinnacle of the drone campaign in Pakistan in 2010.

Drone strikes in Afghanistan have demonstrated consistent annual growth since 2008 according to Figure 3.

*Figure 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Total armed drone sorties</th>
<th>Total missiles fired by drones</th>
<th>Total drone strikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3,240</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6,126</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9,182</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10,321</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7,612*</td>
<td>333*</td>
<td>245*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36,481</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,358</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,015</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Year to October 31, 2012

The “Total missiles fired by drones” column indicates the number of strikes carried out each year in Afghanistan.

The literature suggests several possible explanations for the fluctuation in strike number in strike number. I will first discuss explanations for the initial increase in U.S. drone strikes 2008, followed by an examination of factors that could contribute to fluctuation in strike number.

Initial Increase

As stated in the previous section, the efficacy and necessity of drone warfare can explain the initial expansion of the program, but what factors caused the increase in use beginning in 2008? This section aims to explore the economic and strategic factors that led to an increase in drone use in 2008.

The Advantages of Technology:

“As anyone who has ever been in combat will tell you, the last thing you want is a fair fight. Technology has been tilting the battle since Goliath fell” - Mark Bowden 2013

Technology occupies a very important role in everyday life, but the advantages that technologies create in battle are immeasurable. This section of the literature will aim to explain how drones are operationally and economically desirable. Drones innately yield benefits; keeping soldiers out of harm’s way and limiting the economic and human costs and casualties of conflict.

Operations

It is simple to understand why drones are initially appealing to the U.S. in their efforts to combat terrorists in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. Drone technology greatly enhances combat operations.

Strategically, “drones are relatively cheap, can be deployed quickly in inhospitable terrain over vast distances”, and drones also “keep troops and airmen out of
harm’s way” (Arbour 1). The drone is a weapon that has been praised for its utility in combatting terrorists. Its precision is regarded as an “advance in humanitarian warfare” (Bowden 2). More so, drones are able to identify targets with exquisite discrimination, but drones are also only as good as the intelligence guiding them. For tough operational terrains, drones are a huge advantage, yet they would likely be ineffective in the airspaces of relatively stable countries since drones are fairly easy to shoot down. Drone equipment is continuously improving. Targets can be seen more clearly, missiles are becoming more precise (and can be diverted at the last second if needed), and drones are able to stay in the air for longer periods of time.

If technology is constantly improving, then we can presume that drone technology also should improve and lead to more strikes. This is because operational enhancements allow for more accurate strikes. Improved surveillance and weapons should become more suited to destroy terrorists while reducing collateral damage. Basically, we should expect to see the capacity of drones improve in every way possible.

We can discern this trend by looking at the transition from the MQ-1B Predator to the MQ-9 Reaper drone. Figure 4 juxtaposes the two machines.

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Clearly, the Reaper is a much more devastating aircraft with greater capabilities compared to the Reaper. Whereas the Predator was originally designed for reconnaissance, the Reaper was created with one purpose - "seek and destroy."

Finally, drones provide an unprecedented capacity to engage in targeted killing at almost anytime, but we should only see an increase in drone strikes if drones are effective at combating terrorists. The evolution of technology may be linear, or more likely exponential, which could explain why there is a drastic increase in drone strikes in 2008. But, if this technology is not aiding counterterrorist efforts then we can conclude that technology is not a sole driving force for the continuous increase in strikes. Also,

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increases in strikes occurred at different years in different arenas so technological increases may only be able to explain the initial ramping up of strikes in 2008 in comparison to other types of less technologically inclined combat (i.e. boots on the ground).

Recent research on drone strikes has reached different conclusions on the effectiveness of drone strikes in Pakistan and Afghanistan. David Jaeger and Zahra Siddique find strong negative impacts with respect to unsuccessful drone strikes on Taliban Violence, showing strong deterrent effects, while the incapacitation (effective) effects appear to be weak or non-existent. Retired General James Cartwright, who many called “Obama’s General,” believes that drones are counterproductive to counterterrorist and counterinsurgency efforts. Cartwright thinks that drones will cause anger, resentment, and bitterness among Muslim populations that are hit in attacks. Cartwright states,

“We’re seeing that blowback. If you’re trying to kill your way to a solution, no matter how precise you are, you’re going to upset people even if they’re not targeted.” (Dreyfus 1).

In this case, drones may not only be counter-effective in combatting terrorists in Pakistan, but drones may also incite regional and international violence, rendering drones counterproductive as well. This is one example of research on effectiveness and the effectiveness of drones can be a major factor in examining the fluctuation of drone strikes

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within and across territories to determine if the technological means are achieving
counterterrorist ends.

Some authors do argue that technology can drive and determine wars and policy
objectives. Strike number could be the result of technological innovation because
technology pervades the events before, during, and after war.

According to Peter Singer, technological developments coincide with changing
political winds. Singer states, “as the cold war ended, the U.S. military was getting
smaller, shrinking by more than 30 percent in the 1990s” (Singer 59). With a smaller
military one can see the usefulness of drone technology. The development of greater
technological needs met the demand of the military, thus explaining why we could expect
an increase in drone use, as long as drones were the tools to appropriately engage
combatants. Whether it is the mountainous regions of Pakistan, or the coast of Somalia,
we can see that drones allow for greater strategic advantage.

Most works can point to reasons why states or actors may use technology as a
means to achieve the goals of said state or actor. Michael Horowitz believes states will
attempt to adopt new technologies if they have the resource mobilization and
organizational ability to do so. In other words, if a state has the financial and
organizational capacity to acquire new military technology, then the state will adopt, and
possibly implement, that object or system. But, adoption does not explain why we should
expect to see the escalated use of this technology in war. However, Horowitz’s adoption-
capacity theory can explain how the proliferation of drones by the U.S. demonstrates a

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40 P.W. Singer. *Wired for war: the robotics revolution and conflict in the twenty-first
41 Michael Horowitz. *The diffusion of military power causes and consequences for
military shift in strategy. Horowitz’s theory also provides predictions on how the “information age” may predict the future of U.S. warfare. Strategically, incremental precision warfare will allow militaries to carry out an aggressive strategy\textsuperscript{42}. This is because the organizational capital required to adopt precision warfare (as practiced by the U.S. military) is not especially high\textsuperscript{43}. Transitioning a pilot from a fighter jet program to a drone program will not require a great deal of change because precision airstrikes by drones still use existing or upcoming weapons platforms and organizational structures\textsuperscript{44}. This is an example of a general strategic prediction derived from \textit{adoption-capacity theory}.

These theories of technology see drones as a tool that continuously functions more precisely to achieve the desired goals of the U.S. In this sense, drones meet the strategic demands of the U.S. in combatting terrorists abroad. But, Martin Van Creveld suggests that technology shapes policy from the onset. The capability of technology pervades the entire structure of combat operations shaping policy and ultimately working in favor of that policy. That does not mean that states are going to war strictly because of technology. Rather, the conduct of war is constantly changing- while the causes of armed conflict remain static\textsuperscript{45}

Martin Van Creveld, the author of \textit{Technology and War: From 2000 B.C. to The Present} articulates this argument:

\begin{quote}
“war is permeated by technology to the point that every single element is either governed by or at least linked to it. The causes that lead to wars and the goals for
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid
\textsuperscript{44}Ibid
\textsuperscript{45}Ibid
which they are fought; the blows with which campaigns open and victories with which they (sometimes) end; the relationship between armed forces and societies that they serve; planning and preparation and execution and evaluation; operations and intelligence and organization and supply; objectives and methods and capabilities and missions; command and leadership and strategy and tactics; and even the very conceptual framework adopted by our brains in order to think about war and its conduct- all are and will be affected by technology” (Van Creveld 311).

Most of the works on the impact of technology focus on the role that technology plays in the development and transformation of war, but Van Creveld argues that, “War is impacted by technology in all its forms” (Van Creveld 1). Drones may ultimately shape the conceptions and objectives of foreign policy decision-makers. Van Creveld notes that technology is oftentimes not the sole driver of policy and war.

Van Creveld argues that new technologies govern, and may even constitute, what he calls, “the infrastructure of war”. This infrastructure eventually dictates the character of organization, logistics, intelligence, strategy, and the concept of battle itself. War is not just a question of technology to Creveld because war does not always merit the greatest possible force response that greater technology provides. Instead, there are occasions where, “military effectiveness is not only compatible with diminished efficiency but positively demands it be sacrificed”( Creveld 318). Therefore, an increase in strike number cannot be solely attributed to the technological advancements of drones. Instead, technology relates to increased operational capability.

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48 Ibid
In war, sometimes the best strategies to achieve victory do not rely solely on technological capability, but rather on one’s ability to cheat and deceive the enemy.\footnote{Ibid} War is still a contest between two belligerents, which results in a great deal of uncertainty, trickery, and one’s ability to cope with those facets. Here, there needs to be a balance between technological efficiency and military effectiveness to lead to efficient outcomes such as victory.\footnote{Ibid} For example, if we look at the Reaper drone we can see that it comprises of much more forceful weaponry compared to the previous Predator model. Also, Reapers are larger and more expensive allowing for fewer of them to be deployed. It is possible to say that this advancement in technology could hurt military tactics and effectiveness because there are fewer drones in a given airspace at a time. There is only so much capital that can be spent on drones and putting more eggs into fewer baskets creates vulnerability. As Creveld points out, “it was not the technical sophistication of the Swiss pike that defeated the Burgundian knights, but rather the way it meshed with the weapons used by the knights” (Creveld 319). The technology of drones may not determine success, but the use of drones to emphasize identifying targets and reducing collateral damage may be critical to that goal.

As we can see, technology can provide immense strategic benefits to combat, but the evolution of technology is linear. There is little doubt that drone technology continues to improve, while increasingly becoming more specified for combat objectives. Van Creveld suggests that those objectives are shaped by technology and that oftentimes technology works counterproductively to military effectiveness. We can clearly see that strategic, technological capabilities could be a significant reason for an increase in strikes.
overtimes, but this still fails to account for fluctuation. Only in the war arena of Afghanistan do we see a constant increase in the number of drone strikes, but most likely technology can only account for an initial ramp up in strike number in 2008.

**Economics**

The U.S. has the financial and technological capital to develop drones and some theorize that the U.S. employs these superior resources to build the best technology and arm its military simply because it is possible to do so\(^{51}\). Drones are much cheaper than alternative vehicles and tactics. First off, alternative air vehicles require a pilot on board, which means that a great deal of money must be spent to ensure space, safety, and controls for the pilot. More so, each Predator costs around $4.5 million dollars\(^{52}\). Accordingly, you can purchase 85 Predators for the price of a single F-22\(^{53}\). Wars can be monetarily costly to states and the longer a war lasts, the more money a state will spend. Drones can be seen as a cost-effective alternative to allow for the U.S. to remain globally secure while reducing economic spending on warfare\(^{54}\). To compound this, the global recession of 2008, exactly when strikes began to escalate, could have led to an increase in seeking cost effective warfare.

The material costs to make a drone are much cheaper in comparison to a fighter jet, but what about the costs associated with training pilots and deploying soldiers?

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\(^{53}\) Ibid

Drones use very little fuel (comparatively) and do not require that much space for take off and landing\(^{55}\). Fighter pilots require years of training and are almost always officers\(^{56}\), while, “military drone pilots are often lower-grade or enlisted officers or civilian members of the CIA who can operate out of Langley, Virginia or a standing military base at minimal cost” (Metz 14).

Some argue that drones will conclusively cost more than alternative tactics. Nadeem Shad cites reasons why drones and the concept of drones being “cheaper than alternatives,” is false. First, there are 9.31 accidents every 100,000 hours of flying yielding 129 accidents involving Predators and Reapers over the last 15 years- most of which can be attributed to malfunctions or operator errors\(^{57}\). Shad also argues, “using drones or any air strikes for that matter will just prolong the conflict,” because, “the use of drones continues to give credence to the narrative of extremist groups who employ political, economic, and religious pretext as a means to recruit members” (Shad 5). Finally, Shad agrees that drones are cheaper than other aircraft, but not conventional Special Forces operations. Even though special forces teams are becoming better trained and more equipped, they are slightly more expensive than drones\(^{58}\). However, the lack of collateral damage from SF units should remove legitimacy of certain terror groups in their efforts to recruit future terrorists\(^{59}\).

\(^{55}\) Ibid

\(^{56}\) Ibid


\(^{58}\) Ibid

\(^{59}\) Ibid
By 2013, the U.S. had already spent $2 trillion on military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. These wars are predicted to cost $4 to $6 trillion dollars\(^{60}\). President Bush greatly increased the debt to fight these wars and to bail out banks, while we see an even greater increase in debt under President Obama. With these wars declining, we began to see a decline in U.S. defense spending beginning in 2009\(^{61}\). With intense debate on the national debt, the recent recession, and “the Obama administration’s desire to scale back military spending while still pursuing the aggressive goals outline in the *National Security Strategy*,” (Metz 16) we should expect investments in cheaper technology\(^{62}\). I do not mean that technology is cheap, but technology compensates for the cuts that were made, while allowing for security levels to remain high.

On its face, the economic benefits of drone technology seem to point to the initial increase in strikes, especially with the economic constraints of 2008. However, this can only explain the choice of drones over alternative tactics and vehicles. It cannot explain the fluctuation in strikes in different arenas.

However, drone technology not only provides economic relief, but drones also remove troops from battle. Proponents of unmanned systems note that UAVs minimize casualties among one’s own troops\(^{63}\). In modern democracies, the insistent domestic

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demand to limit soldier casualties forces armies to employ maximum force while reducing the exposure of a state’s troops. This casualty aversion theory is supported by Justin Metz’s research. Metz found, “strong evidence supporting my expectation that increased costs of traditional warfare (American casualties) does indeed lead to subsequent increases in strikes”. This theory requires further testing in evaluating the initial ramp up of strikes.

The previous section can only speculate what caused an initial increase in drone strikes. What is puzzling is that we see a constant increase in strikes in Afghanistan, fluctuation in Pakistan and Yemen, and a decrease in strikes in Somalia after the initial escalation in drone activity beginning in 2008. What factors could cause both an increase and a subsequent (or only) decrease in strikes? This section aims to outline different schools of thought to conceptualize different forces that may be causing this phenomenon.

Security Factors:

This section vires the external environment as the determining factor in deciding U.S. drone policy. The previous section discussed the operational advantages of drone-warfare. These advantages include increased surveillance, precision, and the removal of troops from harm’s way. Ultimately, we can assume that the drones will continue to create combat-specific, strategy advantages due to the linear development of technology. Whether that technology is effective politically requires further exploration, but these

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operational advantages are expected to increase. To determine the implementation of these strategically advanced weapons we must further examine the security environment of the United States. Covert drone strikes have been stated to be, “President Obama’s key national security policy” (Bergen 1). We can presume that a heightened security environment should lead to increased use of drone strikes. This section aims to elaborate on the how drones lead to increased security and why those causes should lead to an increase in strikes. Since September 11, 2001, the greatest security threat to the United States has remained Al Qaeda and their affiliates. While the Bush Administration sought to decapitate the leadership ranks of Al Qaeda, Obama seems more set on collapsing the entire network of Al Qaeda and their allied groups65. Drones have become the United States’ main tool in combatting this threat.

**Threat**

The most basic and supported notion assumes that the number drone strikes directly relates to threat levels. An increase or decrease in strikes depends on the amount of imminent threats the U.S. perceives.

In a realist- approach, the lack of a global, centralized authority means states are often left to their own accord in ensuring their own security, inflicting costs upon other states for unwanted behavior66. Violent Non-State Actors like Al Qaeda, do not operate in the same fashion as other states and often act without fearing the same state-bound penalties. Therefore, Al Qaeda remains a threat that the U.S. wants neutralized for

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security purposes. Al Qaeda and its affiliates continue to “evolve and morph as a direct reaction the policies implemented by the U.S. and its allies” (Romaniuk 151).

We should expect fluctuation in operations and strikes depending on the U.S. assessment of threat levels in different locations. An increase in threat level in a given arena should lead to an increase in strikes.

**Protocol Shifts**

Selecting targets is generally regarded as a rigorous process. Anonymous comments from administration officials, coupled with reports from Columbia Law School and from the Council of Foreign Relations provide details on this insider process. It is reported that the CIA and military maintain overlapping “kill lists”\(^67\). The military independently develops its list during inter-agency meetings at the Pentagon, with the White House and President Obama ultimately approving of proposed targets\(^68\). This process has changed over time and it dictates if threats will be vanquished.

One of the most controversial aspects of the covert drone program is the “signature strikes” approach. Signature strikes began under the Bush administration and the exact number of strikes that were “signature” remains unknown\(^69\). A signature strike allows for the U.S. to carry out attacks on suspected militants that are not part of the “kill list”. Oftentimes, these militants are suspects because they appear to drone operators as men of military age in groups. When signature strikes are permitted we should expect an


\(^68\) Ibid

\(^69\) Ibid
increase in strikes. Signature strikes allow for a greater level of targets resulting in higher threat levels followed by increased strike number. Curbing these procedures should result in a decrease in strikes. Procedures are relative to time and arena space, so we can expect different levels of procedural rigidity to influence strike number independently in different arenas.

Host State – Harboring Terrorists

Sovereignty is an important principle in determining state functionality within the international state environment. Liberal interdependence theorists define sovereignty in terms of the state’s ability to control actors within and across its borders, while realists define sovereignty by the state’s ability to make authoritative decisions. Regardless, Waltz’s essence of sovereignty is that the state, “decides for itself how it will cope with its internal and external problems” (Waltz 96). To Waltz, the emphasis of sovereignty relies on state capability.

Janice Thomson posits a minimum threshold for sovereignty- building the minimal police, military, and political institutions necessary for self-government. Conversely, “at an identifiable point, loss of control would mean loss of sovereignty” (Thomson 224). A state has supreme jurisdiction to enforce and prosecute criminals and terrorists. A state must effectively patrol territory to have its sovereignty recognized.

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71 Ibid
72 Ibid
States that are deemed “weak” typically have weak law enforcement forces. A lack of policing power provides terrorist cells with land to operate and plan future attacks. Fearon and Laitin note, “insurgents are better able to survive and prosper if the government and military they oppose are relatively weak” (Fearon and Laitin 80). An example of this would be the lawless, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan where we see the greatest increase in strike number. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter states that the use of force against Al Qaeda is justifiable as self-defense, and a form of consent of each member of the United Nations already exists. Therefore, the weaker the state, the more likely we should see an increase in strikes due to lack of policing power.

Still, the principles of sovereignty should also prevent intervention from states like the U.S. unless the intervened state approves of U.S. action. A state should be able to authorize U.S. drone use over their territories. A principle facet of sovereignty links political authority with territory and states, “mutually recognize one another’s exclusive authority over what is contained in that space” (Thomson 22).

Generally, the U.S. respects territorial sovereignty it in its pursuit of Al Qaeda members and their affiliates. For example, Pakistani officials publicly condemn strikes, but a Wikileaks article suggests that officials requested a greater drone presence and possible solider support in FATA. With suspects abroad questions arise: which country

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is the suspect in? Is the suspect is in a country where the government will reliably
monitor and arrest him? Is the government functional enough to pull off an arrest, or does
its lack control and authority in the region where the suspect may be? The answers to
these questions vary. The issue is complex when the suspect is in the tribal areas of
Pakistan or the ungoverned areas of Yemen, a “country with a history of failure to
prevent Al Qaeda jail breaks” (Byman and Wittes 3). The U.S. seeks cooperation with
states where it operates drones, but the U.S. will violate state sovereignty to kill or
capture suspected terrorists that are imminent threats to U.S. security, as exemplified by
the raid in Abbottabad, Pakistan that killed Osama Bin Laden.

Not only does state instability allow for terrorists to operate in a given territory,
but also weaker states may allow for terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons or overthrow
U.S. supported governments. The term “weak” is somewhat subjective, but weaker states
tend to have pressing domestic issues and/or a significant amounts of social and political
turmoil that divert their attention and limits their resources from combatting violent non-
state actors.\textsuperscript{76}

Therefore, we expect the number of strikes to be directly proportional to the
weakness of the striked state.

\textbf{Drone Blowback}

According to balance of power principles, the over-expansive drone program
should result in blowback from the international community who feels that their security

is lowered as the U.S. aims to increase its own security. This “security dilemma” should result in balancing against the U.S. from states and limit U.S. drone strikes. Historically, states that pursue aggressive unilateral military policies faced major international and regional costs. States have either a direct or indirect interest in balancing against a hegemon like the U.S. for security purposes. Why haven’t we seen balancing against the U.S.? Robert Pape argues that states will not balance against the U.S. in the traditional sense (militarily).

Pape suggests a few reasons why we have not yet seen balancing against the U.S. First, states balance against aggressive states that pose a threat, but the U.S. is acting with benign intentions. The U.S. is responding to the threat of attack demonstrated on September 11, 2001, not with imperialist ideas of conquering these nations. Secondly, as Waltz suggests, balancing is an uneven and slow process. Finally, the U.S. pursues a foreign policy grand strategy of “offshore balancing”. The history of U.S. grand strategy focused on preventing other strong states from dominating important regions of the world. This strategy has reassured other nations, like China and Japan, that the U.S. is not a threat. The constant increase in drone strikes in Afghanistan indicates that there has been no “hard-balancing” and that “soft-balancing,” or lack thereof, has had little effect on the escalation of strikes.

78 Ibid
79 Ibid
80 Ibid
81 Ibid
82 Ibid
Also, striked states that normally assist in drone strikes, such as Pakistan, have recently issued outcries against these strikes due to possible civilian deaths, resulting in blowback from states experiencing drone strikes. The governments of these states are put in a tough position- allow the U.S. to violate their sovereignty and possibly kill their civilians or allow for the U.S. to attack its enemy who resides in their territory. Pakistan and the U.S. share intelligence since they both have an interest in eliminating terrorists in FATA. But there are still instances where Pakistan demonstrates anti-U.S. operation sentiment. A Peshwar High Court in Pakistan ruled drone strikes illegal in 2013, possibly resulting in a decrease in strikes\(^{83}\). In the same sense, the overpowering American operations may create a response that yields, “a perpetual spiral of authoritarianism, decay, violence, insurgency- and indeed terrorism” (Boggs 10).

The governments can oppose or support drones, give full access or set boundaries to drone operations, and they can also help through cooperating with other means to fight terrorist threats. Pushback from striked state should decrease strike number. Still, the significance lies in the U.S. ability to abide by the striked states rules for U.S. drone operations. If the threat is imminent, the U.S. may break these rules to kill or capture a high-level threat, but an increase in strikes relies on the U.S. ability to cooperate with the striked state.

Domestic Factors:

Generally, the external environment is viewed as the primary driving factor behind foreign policy decisions, but the internal environment may play an important role in determining drone use. Ultimately, the President dictates U.S. foreign policy objectives. The President is the Commander-in-Chief, with control of the nation’s military forces. When the AUMF was passed after September 11, 2001 the President was given more power to execute his authority as Commander-in-Chief. But, the President was elected by the public with at least some understanding that he shall take into account public preferences while doing his job.

There has recently been heightened media attention to the controversial use of drone warfare to combat terrorists. The number of civilians killed by drones is ambiguous, with many organizations concerned about human rights violations. This, in turn, diverts more media attention towards drone implementation. With the public’s growing concerns we must ask: does public opinion shape drone policy and subsequently lead to an increase or decrease in strikes?

There is a great debate on whether public opinion actually affects matters of national security. Realist principles downplay the role of public opinion in shaping foreign policy, and instead rely on national security and balance of power principles to determine public policy. Sometimes politicians need to act contrary to public sentiment in order to ensure national security. To realists, the public may be decently informed and engaged in domestic issues, but much less informed in international security issues. However, President Wilson exemplified a presidency that cared for public opinion, even in wartime. President Wilson undertook nationwide speaking tours to go directly to the
people and, “throughout his career he had looked to the public as the court of final appeal for his most important projects” (Holsti 8). We are still left with the question: “does public opinion matter in shaping foreign policy?”

Many scholars support a “bottom-up” approach that assumes the general public has a measureable and distinct impact on the foreign policy-making process (Page and Shapiro, 1983). Ole Holsti argues that the public will be a more potent force in shaping foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. The public may play a relatively insignificant role in shaping foreign policy in earlier periods, but Holsti believes that role is increasing, for better or for worse. Public opinion could hamper some foreign policy efforts that require secrecy, speed, and flexibility. Even non-realists understand the importance of these tools for effectively negotiating with other countries, meeting challenges, taking advantage of opportunities, maneuvering adroitly in a rapidly changing global system, and avoiding war. Holsti believes the post-Cold War era allows for more public engagement. He states

“such post-Cold Wear events as conflicts in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti have also brought forth a flurry of op-ed articles and rejoinders in mass circulation newspapers, lamenting or defending the impact of the public in shaping foreign policies and the rejoinders to them in ‘letters to the editor’ columns” (Holsti 211)

Holsti believes we are entering into a period where the public will be increasingly vocal in expressing its policy preferences, “especially on a growing agenda of issues that fall at the intersection of domestic and foreign affairs” (Holsti 215). This hypothesizes that modern presidents are more highly responsive to the public compared to previous

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85 Ibid
86 Ibid
presidents. This is due to heightened electoral and public pressure for presidents to maintain an elevated public stature for the short-term purposes of bargaining with Congress, navigating the media, and responding to the dramatic rise of interest groups\textsuperscript{87}. So, in an era characterized by gross economic stratification and immense poverty we can assume that the public will care about the possible deaths of innocent civilians from drones. Presidents have been shown to be at least symbolically responsive- that is responsive to the concern over the issue rather than directly responsive to public opinion\textsuperscript{88} (Cohen 1999).

Brandice Canes-Wrone and Kenneth W. Shorts find that presidential responsiveness to public opinion is mostly conditional. They find that presidents are neither universally responsive nor universally non-responsive to public opinion\textsuperscript{89}. Instead, the president’s conditional response depends on two political variables. First, presidents “are more responsive to public opinion when the next election is imminent” (Canes-Wrone and Shorts 1). Secondly, the effect of presidential popularity is “non-monotonic”\textsuperscript{90}. This suggests that presidents with average approval ratings are more likely to adopt policy opinions congruent with public opinion\textsuperscript{91}. Figure 5 depicts President Obama’s approval ratings since taking office:

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid
The trend clearly depicts a presidency with average approval ratings with an average pollster trend of 51.6% disapproval and 43.9% approval for President Obama’s tenure. Approval numbers peaked when Obama was first elected with a 71.0% approval rate, but Obama did not face re-election until 2012, where we can see approval and disapproval numbers more closely related. Coincidentally, the first public acknowledgement of the drone program occurred on April 30, 2012 when soon-to-be CIA director, John Brennan, addressed the public. From this date forward, we can assume that the public had knowledge of targeted killing policy. Therefore, public opinion can be measured from 2012 to 2013 to see if it has any impact on drone strikes.

Thomas Risse-Kappen suggests the comparatively open and decentralized American political system and its society dominated policy network should provide public opinion with ample opportunity to affect policy outcomes. He further argues, “the

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policy impact of public opinion does not depend so much on the specific issues involved or on the particular pattern of public attitudes as on the *domestic structure* and the *coalition-building processes* in the respective country” (Risse-Kappen 480). Risse-Kappen analyzed four liberal democracies with distinct domestic structure—The United States, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Japan—in order to show that differences in political institutions, policy networks, and societal structures account for different foreign policy. His comparative analysis of domestic structures among the U.S., France, Germany, and Japan reveals some insight into public influence in dictating U.S. foreign policy. He first notes that Congress has more authority over the conduct of foreign policy due to the (1) weaknesses in the American Party system limit the power of the executive over congressional decisions and (2) institutional provisions (2/3 majority). He classifies the U.S. as having a decentralized political system with a society that consists of heterogeneous weak organizations. Furthermore, the U.S. policy network is “society-dominated”. Risse-Kappen’s comparative analysis concluded:

“the comparatively open and decentralized American political system and its society dominate policy network should provide public opinion with ample opportunity to affect policy outcomes…the interaction of public opinion and elites in the decision-making process is expected to come comparatively close to the bottom-up model” (Risse-Kappen 493).

On these principles we can assume that public opinion influences decision-makers, including the President.

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94 Ibid
95 Ibid
There are many critiques of this “bottom-up” approach, especially when it comes to matters of national security. Many cite empirical evidence of the U.S. and other states acting without public consensus:

“Examples are the U.S. decisions in favor of an active international role in the postwar world and of becoming permanently involved in European security affairs; the West German decisions to rearm and join NATO in the early 1950’s and to pursue an active Ostpolitik in the late 1960’s; the French decisions to build an independent nuclear force in the 1950’s and to leave NATO’s military institutions in the mid-1960’s” (Chomsky and Herman 1989).

In fact, the public could be a hindrance to implementing foreign policy that the President and other decision-makers may believe is necessary for security. Immanuel Kant thinks that the public, which bares most of the costs of war, may be more cautious about engaging in war⁹⁶. A leader may have to get public consent before resulting to war, even though war may be inevitable for security purposes.

Furthermore, a leader needs flexibility to look after a nation’s self interest in a realist, balance of power environment. The public will be interested in, “nationality, justice, or traditional friendships or enmities,” so selling the concept that yesterday’s friend is today’s enemy, and vice versa, may not be easy⁹⁷ (Wright 1965). Under certain circumstances, leaders may look for public approval or they may neglect the public for security purposes.

Regardless, Justin Metz (2013) finds research suggesting a positive relationship between causality numbers and drone strikes⁹⁸. His qualitative and quantitative analysis

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suggests that when causalities rise, American policy makers will increasingly turn to drones in order to refrain from incurring more hostility from the public. Due to anti-war sentiment from the public beginning after the Vietnam War, which continued as the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq moved forward, policy-makers embrace the notion of gaining public support while maintaining a security stance in these instable regions. For these purposes we must further examine public rhetoric to determine if it has any influence or relationship to drone strike policy.

Aversion theory suggests that the public would support policies that pull troops out of harm’s way, while allowing for continued combat against suspected terrorists. Afghanistan is the only arena tested here with troops actively combatting terrorists and the public did not have adequate knowledge of drone combat in 2008 when there was a sharp escalation of strikes in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the public favors troop withdrawal, so public opinions on the War in Afghanistan must be examined.

In terms of determining the public’s opinions on drones specifically, we can look at polls from April 30, 2012 and onwards to see if there is any possible effect on drones across and within all arenas. President Obama was facing an election when drones were first declassified and approval ratings remained “average” from 2012 to 2013.

**Bureaucratic Factors:**

Our previous sections examine possible reasons for seeing an increase in drone strikes and we have concluded that public opinion needs to be examined in its...
relationship to drone strike number. But, if we only examine the public then we neglect the agencies and departments that are actually a part of the government structure. These bodies either compete or cooperate over limited resources to remain relevant and autonomous. These bodies were originally created to act to preserve national security but human nature dictates that these agencies may act out of their own self-interest to gain resources (financial costs to operate and to earn a living) while trying to also remain autonomous.

Halperin and Clapp refer to the bureaucracy as “civilian officials and political appointees, as well as military officers” (Halperin and Clapp 4). In determining the national interest of the U.S., Halperin and Clapp ask: “Who is involved? What interests do they have? How do these interests affect their stands on particular issues?” (Halperin and Clapp 4). All of these questions are essential in asking how these members of bureaucratic institutions interact with the President on matters of national interest. Bureaucratic influences can play a substantial role in determining what action the U.S. takes, although the motives behind bureaucratic influence can be suspect. Leaders may be victims of a system that ultimately makes the decision for them, reducing their influence as “decision-makers.”

After 9/11 there was a need for the CIA and FBI to coordinate on intelligence, but both resisted because they were struggling to expand their roles autonomously. The military supports foreign policies that justify maintaining the forces that it believes are necessary to preserve the essence of the service. They also favor strategies that presume

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that precisely those forces will be used in that even of hostilities\textsuperscript{102}. These are examples of bureaucratic actors influencing decision-makers to allocate resources and/or indirectly influencing decision-maker capabilities. If the President is given information from an agency that may be acting for self-preservation how can the President know the information is accurate?

Graham Allison and Phillip Zelikow explore the decisions made behind the Cuban Missile Crisis and develop three incompatible models for examining bureaucratic influences. These three models include the (1) Rational Action Model, (2) Organizational Politics Model, and (3) Government Politics Model. Their point is to prove the different ways that leaders are victims of long chains or circumstances beyond their control and prisoners or a system they are supposed to master\textsuperscript{103}.

The Rational Action Model assumes that the government acts in terms of the means that a rational man would adopt to achieve his ends\textsuperscript{104}. There exists a single, national actor or agent who is anthromorphized as if it were an individual with one set of preferences, choices, and a single estimate of consequences\textsuperscript{105}. In this model, action is taken as a response to what that the actor faces and the response includes clear objectives, options, consequences, and choice. These all support the notion that the agent will choose this policy because it has the greatest maximum value compared to alternatives\textsuperscript{106}. The RAM assumes that all parts of the government act with the same notion of rationality and national interest. Furthermore, there are routines according to the roles that these officials

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid
reside in and the RAM downplays how those roles influence and socializes individuals. The RAM is basically a threat explanation in bureaucratic form, therefore it will not require a bureaucratic hypotheses.

The RAM still is broken down into individuals forming one agent, but the government consists of, “a vast conglomerate of loosely allied organizations, each with a substantial life of its own” (Graham and Zelikow 143). In this sense, governments are less understood as making deliberate choices, and more as outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior\textsuperscript{107}. Governments consist of many specialized bodies, which serve specific functions. Each of these bodies processes information and the output that results is a coordinated effort by government leaders\textsuperscript{108}. Coordination requires standard operating procedures, which tells these specialized forces the rules as to how things should be done. Governments can sometimes influence, but rarely control, the specific behavior of these organizations\textsuperscript{109}. From there, organizations create policies, which are part of a narrow perspective, and they follow orders that they are accustomed to follow. The Organizational Process Model (OPM) is able to create capabilities that individuals alone could not- “divide and conquer”\textsuperscript{110}. According to the CIA’s website, the CIA is supposed to “conduct covert action at the direction of the President to preempt threats or achieve US policy objectives”\textsuperscript{111}. The DOD mission is “is

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid
to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country.”\textsuperscript{112}

The RAM model would focus on how “Obama” deployed drones, or how the “United States,” authorized strikes, but the OPM never names individuals or entire governments. Instead, the OPM explains foreign policy decisions in terms of organizational purposes and practices common to the members of the organization\textsuperscript{113}.

Organizational processes would emphasize the different organizations within the U.S. government and how they have led to either an increase or decrease in drone strike number. The CIA could be gathering information on targets, while the Department of Defense could be tracking national security levels of the U.S. These agencies may also work together to share information, as they do with the “kill list”. Their influence, position, and customs allow them to dictate U.S. foreign policy. However, success in policy management requires extraordinary effort from leaders to create a balance between their purposes and the accumulated weight of an organizations predisposition\textsuperscript{114}. The culture and roles of the Executive and Legislative branches, along with the CIA and DOD, lead to policy implementation- the information or misinformation from these agencies can explain an increase or decrease in strike number. The intricacies of this model make it difficult to relate to annual strike number. Cooperation is very hard to measure because these agencies supposedly coordinate often to benefit national security. However, it is important to examine these agencies in order to determine if the CIA or

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid
DOD is acting according to their respective purposes. The next model will examine a more competitive bureaucratic approach. Infighting, in the next model, can more accurately explain variation in strike numbers, but coordination remains a baseline and is the exception to competition.

**Government Politics Model**

The Governmental Politics Model takes a more competitive approach than the previous two models. In this model, officials are players in a central competitive game\textsuperscript{115}. The name of the game is, “bargaining along regular circuits among players positioned hierarchically within the government” (Allison and Zelikow 255). In this model, there are many competing actors focused on intranational problems, not just a single issue\textsuperscript{116}. Most players are representatives of their positions or departments and they feel a special responsibility to represent the values of the position that they occupy. This model supports the notion that individuals within the government have differing ideas of how to solve the complexities of foreign policy issues. Agencies, like the CIA and DOD, compete for limited resources and influence to remain autonomous and relevant.

The initial armament period of the drone in 2001 demonstrates bureaucratic infighting between the CIA and the DOD. The plan was created to arm Predators, but the plan, “got quickly mired in bureaucratic politics, as the CIA and Air Force argued over who would have control over the now-armed drones, and most important, whose budget would be stuck with the $2 million in costs” (Singer 35). In this instance, terrorism and

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid
threat levels were not at the top of the agenda for either agency. September 11, 2001 changed all of this as both agencies decided they wanted armed Predators for the impending conflict\textsuperscript{117}. Instead, we see the CIA and Air Force competing for control over a new, powerful technology. This model has the potential to explain drone strike escalation and fluctuation. If an agency allocates more resources, or acts with greater influence and autonomy, than we should expect an increase in strikes. If we apply the GPM model to this assumption then we should see that the military and CIA continuously attempt to lobby for more resources while trying to influence the President to continue strikes. Halperin and Clapp state:

“each military service supports foreign policies that justify maintaining the forces that it believes are necessary to maintain the essence of the service and favors strategies that presume that precisely those forces will be used in the event of hostilities” (Halperin and Clapp 58)

The same principles apply to the CIA as it strives to remain relevant and autonomous;

“The CIA frequently collides with the military services over the conduct of relatively large-scale operations and intelligence gathering programs. Those operations lie at the heart of the CIA mission as conceived by many of its career personnel, and yet they arouse the misgivings of the Pentagon about creating an alternate military capability” (Halperin and Clapp 47)

In the GPM, the infighting within the U.S. government determines U.S. foreign policy. The President is also a player in this game and sometimes competes with these agencies over foreign policy disputes. We can assume that the initial increase in drone strikes and the variation in Pakistan and Yemen, and decrease in Somalia, are a result of competing actors influencing leaders who ultimately command decision-making. The CIA has shown instances of escalating and de-escalating strikes in different arenas at the same time.

time. If the CIA is fighting for resource allocation and influence, how can we see a simultaneous decrease and increase in strikes across arenas? This may be a reason why the bureaucratic infighting from the GPM model cannot establish causality with strike number. Still, the GPM model merits further research since one is able to examine the actions of unitary actors such as “The CIA Director,” or “The United States,” in relation to their influence on drone strikes. The GPM model will account for the competitive aspects of bureaucracies, while the OPM can explain cooperation among bureaucratic agencies. Cooperation should also lead to an increase in strikes as both the CIA and the DOD reinforce each other’s purpose and values to decision-makers and elites.

Critics of bureaucratic models point to the inconsistencies of applying a bureaucratic model. In government structures there are changing patterns of group interactions and, “various theorists seem often to have mistaken the superficialities of the moment for the essence of process” (Freedman 445). Inherently, case studies about bureaucratic models will focus on instances where there was a great deal of ‘pulling and hauling,’ but this does not necessarily mean that the bureaucracy is truly at a rift\textsuperscript{118}. Behind bureaucratic politics is the foundation of shared assumptions about basic values and facts\textsuperscript{119}. Along the same lines there are differences between services, branches of the same service, different cliques within branches, and between in-house and field officers. This may make it difficult to assume that agencies are unitary and competing with the same motivations because a policy is not chosen as a solution to the problem but results

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid
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from compromise conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interest and unequal influences.

Protocol shifts also become important when examining bureaucratic influence. Changes in procedure and autonomous decision-making capability could drastically impact strike number. If a figure like Brennan can make targeting calls without White House approval, than we should expect that his autonomy led to an increase in strikes.

Still, we should test to see if infighting and resource allocation, as well as cooperation have influenced strike number in any way, specifically between the CIA and DOD. Leaders like President Obama are the ultimate decision-makers so we should aim to see how these agencies compete to influence and respond to the President. The greater the competition, the more strikes we should expect. Periods with less competition should lead to fewer strikes.

**Cultural Factors:**

The previous sections covered traditional organizational explanations that possibly relate to strike number, but culture has something else to add to these explanations. The cultures of the CIA and DOD can tell us what differences we should expect between agencies as we test hypotheses. The CIA and DOD were created with separate purposes. The CIA is regarded as a civilian agency, whereas the military was created with the ability to use lethal force to protect the country. Organizational culture depends on specific actors and cultures of the DOD and CIA may affect the way actors see the use of drones in particular and dissimilar ways.
Jeffery Legro defines organizational culture as, “collectively held assumptions, ideas, and beliefs that prescribe how a group should adapt to its external environment and manage its internal structure” (Legro 121). Organizational culture affects the behavior of actors who work for a specific agency by shaping that individual’s perspectives. This shaping can change an individual’s beliefs, languages, visions, norms, values, symbols, etc. This leads to organizations as a whole to seek collective goals- which are agreed upon due to the cultural climate of the organization. Those goals are critical in discovering the goals of both the CIA and DOD as collective, individual cultures. As they either compete or cooperate over resources, we must note their goals to see if competition or cooperation works towards those ends.

Jeffery Legro notes that the beliefs and customs embedded in national bureaucracies can determine national aims. In the military, escalation is expected because restraint conflicts with the very nature of autonomy seeking, offense oriented, war-winning military organizations\(^{120}\). Legro focuses on the cultural influences on bureaucratic actors. Military organizations can be expected to use data and information to produce a “security” environment in order to gain necessary resources\(^{121}\). He argues that preference formation is primarily driven by a domestic social and bureaucratic influence, namely organizational culture\(^{122}\). The cultures of military services, “oriented around specific modes of battle” (Legro 119), become particularly influential during wartime\(^{123}\). Legro presumes that militaries will seek escalation-strategies during conflict even if these

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\(^{121}\) Ibid

\(^{122}\) Ibid

\(^{123}\) Ibid
war-fighting strategies are not suited for a given strategic circumstance\textsuperscript{124}. An interesting point that Legro posits is,

“when one organization has all the expertise and no competitors, there is less pressure to change, and the organizational biases are not checked” (Legro 122)

In our study, we find that the CIA claims to have similar expertise to the DOD in terms of drone use. Military opinions would normally prevail over civilian opinion in the midst of combat, but the CIA program gives the CIA “expertise” that the military normally has sole power over. There has been a “crossing over” between the CIA and the DOD since the War on Terror began\textsuperscript{125}. Some believe that the CIA acts like a military body, amalgamating their cultural perspectives. Title 50 of the United States National Security Code outlines the role of war and national defense for the United States. Under this title, the CIA is able to legally carry out covert attacks with approval from the President\textsuperscript{126}. Still, major players like current CIA director, John Brennan, have sought more oversight on the drone program. This oversight would lead to a de-escalation of strikes as the criterion for targeted killings becomes stricter. This action runs contrary to Legro’s claims – compounded with the assumption that the CIA should be expected to seek more autonomy and relevance. Elizabeth Kier offers a unique perspective that may be able to explain this phenomenon.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid
Kier thinks that civilians can and do intervene infrequently to override military prevalence, even during times of war. This interference should prevent military cultures from seeking offensive strategies. More so, Kier suggests that military organizations will not always seek an increase in size, autonomy, and prestige. Counter to Legro’s claims, Kier believes that militaries, “often forfeit the attainment of these goals” (Kier 66). She supports her presumptions with two culturally relevant arguments. First, military doctrine (offensive or defensive) is rarely a calculated response to the external environment. Instead,

“civilian policymakers have beliefs about the military’s role in society and these beliefs guide civilian decisions about the organizational form of the military” (Kier 66).

Secondly, military organizations “do not inherently prefer offensive doctrines” (Kier 66). Military preference cannot be deduced from a functional understanding. Organizations (DOD and CIA) differ in how they perceive the world and the proper conduct of their mission and organizational culture constrains choices between offensive and defensive military doctrines. Organizations essentially respond to constraints set by policy makers like President Obama. This means that the organizational response that fits best with policy-makers’ decisions should yield the best response for the organization. Kier emphasizes this by stating, “culture provides means, not ends” (Kier 79). Basically, culture dictates the roadmap by which militaries will seek their stated goals. Military cultures remain relatively static. There, “must be some change in the external

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128 Ibid

129 Ibid

130 Ibid
environment of the organization to which the organizational culture reacts” (Kier 81). This could be a change in threat levels, or domestic opinion, but the change influences the goals and means of the organization. With this assumption, we cannot draw a causality between culture and strike number. The military will do whatever is necessary (increased offense or increased defense) in order to protect the country. Policy-maker statements should give us an understanding of the importance of the cultural aspects of the military, but culture may affect the DOD and CIA’s ideas of drone use.

As previously stated, the goals of the CIA, stated on their website are,

“Preempt threats and further US national security objectives by collecting intelligence that matters, producing objective all-source analysis, conducting effective covert action as directed by the President, and safeguarding the secrets that help keep our Nation safe”131.

The CIA fought with the DOD for drone control in 2002. Still, there has been resistance on the part of CIA officials. John Brennan has signaled that he wants to restore the CIA to its roots as an espionage factory, instead of a paramilitary organization132. There is strong evidence that the CIA is “better” at carrying out drone strikes compared to the DOD133. The CIA enlists a “long intelligence tail”. This tail means that greater intelligence gathering goes into determining when and where to strike a target. The CIA must justify its actions to congress under Title 50 of the National Security Act134.

133 Ibid
134 Ibid
The goals of the military are listed on the DOD website. They state: “The mission of the Department of Defense is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country”\(^{135}\). The DOD is focused more broadly on its “traditional mission of force protection” (Hirsh 2). They do not have to respond to Congress like the CIA and they have looser rules of engagement\(^ {136}\). In the same sense, the DOD is cited as more “proactive” in targeting and killing, as indicated by the massive scale in strikes compared to the CIA.

Culture should drive these forces to achieve the goals stated in these mission statements. Deviations from those goals can be attributed to other factors. This may not be able to explain strike number, but it necessary to examine DOD and CIA actors at specific shifts (i.e. escalation to de-escalation of strikes). The beliefs organizational leaders can hint at given cultural stances.

Summary

The previous literature discussed the possible driving forces behind the initial increase in drone strikes in 2008 and annual, subsequent variation across and within specific arenas. The application of this research was motivated primarily by security, domestic, bureaucratic, and cultural factors. The initial increase is supposedly caused by the operational and economic advantages offered by drone technology. In the next section is this paper’s data followed by a descriptive research methodology that will develop


specific hypotheses that require testing the causes for fluctuation in strike number. That testing will use empirical data in an effort to establish any causality between independent variables and annual number of drone strikes.
Chapter Three: Research Design:

Having discussed relevant political science research and works that may explain the initial ramping up of drone strikes in 2008 followed by variation within and across specific arenas, this section aims to formulate and establish testing of my hypotheses. First, I will explain what data I am using and why I chose this specific empirical data. Next, I plan on explaining my methodology, which incorporates a qualitative case study approach. Then, I will define my dependent variable before identifying the independent variables which aim to explain variation on the dependent variable. Finally, my hypotheses will be formulated within the independent variable sub-sections.

Data

I am examining drone strikes that were carried out by both the Department of Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency. Neither of these agencies explicitly release drone strike data to the public.

I rely on declassified data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism that reveals the annual number of drone strikes in Afghanistan. These releases are carried out by any number of military bodies, whether it is the Navy, Air Force, or JSOC. These strikes are from coalition forces, so it is unclear whether U.S. or British forces specifically execute the strikes. However, the Bureau states, “The majority are by the US Air Force, with the remainder by the British military and – possibly – US Special Forces.”
The CIA drone program in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia is covert. Due to its covert nature, drone strike tallies have been approximated by a few non-government organizations. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, the Long War Journal, The New America Foundation, and Umassdrone.org. Many of these institutions use different methodologies to collect drone data and track high-value target, militant, and civilian deaths, along with strike location. I will be using data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism to track strikes in Pakistan and Yemen, and I will use data from Umassdrone.org to track strikes in Somalia.

I plan on using data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) instead of other organizations for a variety of reasons. As Justin Metz noted, “their data seems to be the most complete, easiest to access, and best cited” (Metz 37). TBIJ notes:

“Every strike or event covered in our datasets contains active links to all news reports, statements, documents and press releases which we have used as our sources. We also incorporate images and video clips relating to specific events. The Bureau’s dataset is active: both the timelines and casualty counts change according to our best present understanding” (TBIJ 1).

Comparatively, TBIJ seems to use the most news outlet sources from both the U.S. and the stricked state to discern the greatest amount of information from a single strike. Furthermore, Columbia Law School found that their count on civilian and militant deaths matched closely with TBIJ while the Long War Journal and the New America Foundation greatly understated the number of fatalities. These indicators are not specifically relevant to strike number, but they indicate the detailed approach of TBIJ.

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For Somalia data, I use Umassdrone.org, a research project that provides “detailed analytical breakdowns” of news reports on each incident. Other organizations hardly report on Somalia strikes, probably due to the novelty of strikes in Somalia. But, Umassdrone.org only publishes confirmed strikes in their statistical accounts. They also provide low-high ranges on strike number to account for a possibly greater amount of strikes. Figure 6 illustrates data from both TBIJ and Umassdrone.org on annual strike number:

\[\text{Figure 6:}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Yemen</th>
<th>Somalia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: There is not data available for Afghanistan strike number in 2013)

Also, I include confirmed strikes for Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia even though there may be a greater number of strikes that are yet to be confirmed.

\[\text{Figure 6 constructed by author and based on data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and Umassdrone.org}\]
Method: Comparing Case Studies

This paper will use qualitative analysis between the U.S. and individual arenas to find the conclusive driving forces behind increases and fluctuation in drone strike number within and across the arenas of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Furthermore, this paper focuses on strikes from 2008-2013 in an attempt to examine the cause for initial increase in 2008 and fluctuation thereafter. I have four case studies that total 19 years in time, which may lend itself to a quantitative study, but that will not be useful given my divergence of sources. A qualitative approach intimately explores the why and how questions surrounding drone policy, given my small dataset.

The research question is, “why do we see an initial increase in drone strikes beginning in 2008 followed by a constant increase in Afghanistan, subsequent variation in Pakistan and Yemen, and subsequent decrease in Somalia?” Once again, the “initial increase in 2008” focuses on the shift that occurred from relatively little drone use for combat to rampant use beginning in 2008. However, arenas such as Somalia may not have seen strike increase until periods after 2008 when there was need for strikes. The increase in each individual arena will be explored in the Case Studies/Testing the Hypotheses section.

The first case study will explore the DOD drone increase in Afghanistan beginning in 2008. The data that I collected for this arena ranges from 2008-2012. The initial War in Afghanistan is part of the “Global War on Terror” declared by the U.S. The
campaign coined “Operation Enduring Freedom” was officially launched on October 7, 2001 with a bombing campaign carried out by both the U.S. and Great Britain. I do not have access to data on drone strikes in Afghanistan from 2001-2007, so I cannot assume there was not drone activity before 2008. However, for the purpose of this paper, and the constant escalation of strikes beginning in 2008, we will assume that there was a spike- or at least increase in drone strikes beginning in 2008. Furthermore, the “initial increase,” really refers to the heightened drone use by the U.S. compared to the previous era post-9/11 (2001-2007).

The other three cases mostly consist of covert drone strikes by the Central Intelligence Agency beginning in 2008. The first official CIA strike occurred in Yemen in 2002, but that strike will be considered an outlier to the trend that we are trying to examine. Pakistan strikes escalated in 2008, but we see a drastic increase beginning in 2009 after President Obama was sworn into office. Until recently, the U.S. denied the scope and extent of their activities in Pakistan, but enough outcry forced the U.S. to admit its drone activities in Pakistan.

After the outlier strike in 2002, strikes in Yemen ceased for a period of time, but counterterrorism operations by the U.S. military in Yemen began to incorporate drones beginning in 2009139. With assistance from the CIA, the military operated strikes in addition to other counterterrorist efforts, but the strikes carried out from 2011 to 2013 are

said to be CIA strikes. This assumption is based on the New America Foundation’s *CIA Drone Strikes in Yemen Database*, which claims strikes are carried out by the CIA.\(^{140}\)

Drone strikes in Somalia have been primarily aimed at Al-Shabab, an Al Qaeda affiliate and Islamic terrorist organization that primarily operates in Somalia. Umassdrone.org reports, “The United States’ drone campaign in Somalia began in June of 2011 with the failed attempt to kill Ibrahim al-Afghani”\(^{141}\).

Drones also played a major role in the War in Iraq, but there has not been data released on strikes in Iraq. Also U.S. drones were used in the Libya during the Arab Spring against Qadhafi forces, but it seems that strike numbers have been very small. However, there is not enough information on drones in these other arenas to merit further examination.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is the annual number of drone strikes. I rely on data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Umassdrone.org, and declassified documents from the DOD to investigate strike number. To best conceptualize these separate databases of drone strikes, I will examine drone strike number at annual increments. There may be specific attacks or strikes on certain dates that are significant, but those incidents will be viewed as part of the annual trend of strike number. For each year from

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2008-2013 there will be an estimated number of drone strikes in the arenas of Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Afghanistan.

A strike will not take into account the number of missiles released. Also, strikes will not evaluate who was killed- high value target (hvt), militant, or civilian.

Independent Variables

The previous literature will allow us to define clear schools of thought that will be developed in this section. Each school of thought considers a factor or factors that may be the driving forces behind increased or decreased drone strikes. Therefore, each school should develop independent variable(s) that dictate an outcome on the dependent variable-annual drone strike number.

Aversion theory will be the only school of thought tested developed in order to explain initial drone strike increase.

(Note: Any direct relationship between independent and dependent variables that illustrates an increase on both variables also can be inversed. For instance:

If an increase in X (↑) predicts an increase in Y (↑) than the same relationship occurs inversely- X (↓) – Y (↓))

Aversion Theory (Casualty and Economic):

The technological benefits of drones allow for increased combat capabilities, while reducing the costs compared to alternative tactics and machines. Also, these
unmanned aerial vehicles remove troops from harm’s way while allowing for the U.S. to maintain a global security position. Democracies will want to maintain maximum security while reducing domestic resentment for troop casualties. This, in turn, creates a balancing act between force and casualty counts where democracies will try to reduce avert troop casualties while maintaining or increasing security. The public and statesman have a strong interest in reducing the costs of war and will seek policies that reduce war spending while maintaining or increasing security. This leads to the first two hypotheses for measuring initial drone strike increase:

**H1: As public animus towards troop causalities grows, we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa**

**H2: As public animus towards the monetary costs of war grows, we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa**

There may be a debate on public relevance in influencing decision-makers on matters of security and strategy, but drones accommodate both the public and decision-makers’ desires. Public disenchantment over the casualties in the War in Vietnam forced the U.S. government to rethink combat strategies in order to reduce the human death toll. Drones provide the perfect tool for pulling troops far from harm’s way, while allowing for operations that even increase strategy and security. To test this, I will examine public polls and compare them to annual strike number to see if there is a significant relationship.
In the same sense, drones are much cheaper to create and operate comparatively to other tactics and machines. An F-22 fighter jet costs $150 million and an F-35 costs $90 million. A special force team costs slightly more than building a drone, but the risk of fatalities makes special force use more costly. Therefore, avoiding casualties and excessive costs may have led the U.S. to increase drone strikes. This will only be tested in the combat arena of Afghanistan because this is the only arena where troops were on the ground and where drones were not necessarily the primary tool to combat terrorists. Aversion refers to the averting the costs of U.S. war operations in Afghanistan.

**Security Factors:**

Threat levels are presumed to be the primary forced behind strikes. General realist principles assert that states are self-preserving and self-interested in maintaining power in an anarchical state system. After the attacks on September 11, 2001, the U.S. realized its weaknesses in protecting its own territory from outside threats. Obama’s National Security strategy in 2011 suggests that the threat remains imminent. Obama states, “Despite our success, we continue to face an security threat from Al Qaeda, its affiliates, and its adherents” (Obama 2011). This rhetoric implies that Al Qaeda’s presence has created elevated threat levels that the U.S. must combat in order to remain secure. Hypothesis three focuses on general security principles in relation to drone strike number:
H3: As the threat level the U.S. increases we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa

To measure threat levels I will use data on insurgent attacks in Afghanistan from the Brookings Institute to compare with drone strike numbers. To measure threat levels in the other arenas, I rely on comments based on the “Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence.” These unclassified reports provide detailed threat assessments from intelligence officials to assess the direction of U.S. foreign policy.

Even with heightened security risks, the use of drones has been controversial in international law and for moral and ethical reasons. In particular, the controversial use of “signature strikes” has received a great deal of attention. Protocol shifts within and across agencies that have been implemented for a variety of reasons should have an effect on drone strikes. If we see these protocol shifts creating greater criteria to authorize strikes than we can conclude that strike number should decrease. On the contrary, fewer limitations should lead to an increase in strikes.

H4: As limitations on drone strike authorization and procedure increase we should expect a decrease in drone strikes

I plan or examining newspaper articles and reports to determine if/when procedural changes have occurred in order to discover if there is a relationship with strike number.
Article 51 of the United Nations Charter permits the use of major military force on the territory of another state if that state presents the threat of an armed attack\textsuperscript{142}. Therefore the use of force in Afghanistan is justifiable under international law. However, the CIA drone program has been criticized as extrajudicial killing. Proponents of the CIA program argue that the U.S. could treat persons far from any battlefield as combatants if they could be tied in some way to Al Qaeda\textsuperscript{143}. Oftentimes, the U.S. has worked with countries like Pakistan to share intelligence and combat Al Qaeda and Taliban groups together. However, recent outcry from these states has forced the U.S. to reduce drone strikes as weaker governments threaten them. As the global hegemon, the U.S. will continue to increase strikes regardless of struck state approval in order to combat high-value targets, where cooperation is not pivotal. Still, with militant targets, the U.S. will try to maintain diplomatic relations with struck states in order to maintain good ties for when a HVT strike is necessary. Cooperation could result in other means to face the threat.

\textbf{H5: Drone strikes increase as cooperation between strucked state and striker state develop and vice versa}

\textbf{H6: Drone strikes decrease when strong outcry from struck state increases}

To test this, I will look at news articles, expert opinions, and the DOD website. Each examines the relationship between the U.S. and strucked state.


\textsuperscript{143} Ibid
If the struck states do not have the policing power and capabilities to arrest, prosecute, remove, or eliminate terrorists in their territory then drones can be used by an outside force to aid the struck state’s effort. Weaker states may not have the means to deal with terrorists as they focus on domestic issues or direct all resources in a defensive manner. Therefore we should see an increase in strikes in weaker states. To define “weak” states I will be using data from the Failed States Index. Hypothesis 7 states:

**H7: The weaker a state is the more likely we should expect an increase in drone strikes**

I will compare annual drone strike number with annual reports of state ranking on the failed state index. Failing or failed states pose a threat to themselves and the international community as a whole. After the Cold War, a number of states that rank high on the Failed States Index have erupted into mass violence. The higher ranking a state is on the index, the more likely we should see an increase in drone strikes.

**Domestic Factors:**

We have decided that for the sake of this paper, public opinion’s influence on decision makers must be examined. Especially in the U.S. democratic system, the public

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has encompassed a much greater role since the end of the Cold War\textsuperscript{145}. This could be due to increased polling or because of the growth of the media and Internet access. All of these means give the public the ability to voice their opinions in both formal and informal fashions. Justin Metz’s research has also shown that American policy makers will increasingly turn to drones in order to refrain from incurring hostility from the public\textsuperscript{146}. Therefore public opinion may have a great effect on annual drone strike number. Drones were publically acknowledged in 2012, so we will examine poll data from that date on to determine the impact on strike number.

\textbf{H8: As public animus towards drones increase we should expect a decrease in strikes and vice versa}

\textbf{Bureaucratic Factors:}

The U.S. government consists of many members that belong to various agencies with varying agendas and interests. The President relies on data and opinions provided by these agencies in order to determine foreign policy objectives. We have concluded that Graham Allison’s \textit{Government Politics Model} requires further testing. This model accounts for competitive aspects of bureaucracies as they seek resources to remain relevant and autonomous. Protocol shifts and news sources will help us understand the influence of bureaucratic actors at a given time. The final hypothesis states:


**H9: If the DOD and CIA are better able to allocate resources, funding, and influence then we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa**

To test this, I will look at funding allocated to each department in comparison to the previous year. Also, I will look at newspaper articles and reports that cite major shifts at certain dates towards one agency or another. Looking at newspaper articles, which discuss this this confidential information, can assess cooperation and competition.

**Cultural Factors:**

Cultural factors can help explain the goals that agencies like the DOD and CIA aim for. They cannot establish a causality of strikes, but they can discuss important differences between the CIA and DOD. Jeffery Legro believes that military culture demands escalation of military activity, especially during periods of war. Elizabeth Kier contradicts this claim and determines that militaries do not always pursue escalatory means. Examination of actors and significant events can help determine the culture of an agency at a particular period of time.

*Do we expect a difference between the CIA and DOD?*

Aversion theory only applies to the military because the War in Afghanistan had high level of soldiers in the field of battle and war is extremely costly. Numbers on CIA agents on the ground are covert and the public does not know where CIA agents are located.

Security concerns should remain similar. Both agencies act on behalf of preserving the national security of the United States. Also, agencies will carry out strikes
in the arena where each has jurisdiction. Noting cooperative strikes is out of the scope of this paper.

Bureaucratic factors should be similar for both agencies. Each agency acts in its own interest to either compete or cooperate.

Summary

The last section outlined different schools of thought in an attempt to explain why we see variation on annual drone strike number within specific arenas. Each hypothesis should illustrate a reason or part of a reason for an increase or decrease in annual drone strike number.

This chapter explained my qualitative case study approach, which will test individual hypotheses within individual arenas to determine the driving forces behind drones increase and fluctuation within and across arenas. The next pages consist of a table that lists all the hypotheses and schools of interest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Hypotheses #</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Test for Causality (Y/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aversion Theory</td>
<td>H1</td>
<td>As public animus towards troop casualties grows, we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>As public animus towards the monetary costs of war grows, we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Factors</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>As the threat level of the U.S. increases we should expect an increase in drone strikes and vice versa</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H4</td>
<td>As limitations on drone strike authorization and procedure increase we should expect a decrease in drone strikes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Drone strikes increase as cooperation between striked state and striker state develop and vice versa</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Drone strikes decrease when strong outcry from stricken state increases</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>The weaker a state is the more likely we should expect an increase in drone strikes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Factors</td>
<td>H8</td>
<td>As public animus towards drones increases we should expect an increase in strikes</td>
<td>Yes (mid-2012-2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucratic Factors</td>
<td>H9</td>
<td>If the DOD and CIA are better able to allocate resources, funding, and influence then we should expect an increase in drone strikes</td>
<td>Yes – but cannot establish direct causality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Actor behavior at periods of change (escalation to de-escalation and vice versa) can tell us if the culture is shifting goals, thus affecting strike number</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four: Case Studies/ Testing the Hypotheses

This chapter will provide background on the arenas that I have selected for testing. These four arenas (1) experienced drone strikes and (2) provide empirical data on annual strike number. This chapter aims to elaborate on why the U.S. is engaged with these states, while also examining conditions of U.S. relations with these states. A basic historic framework should provide information on the given circumstances before drone strike escalation and/or increase, fluctuation, and decrease. The historic framework should touch on events that are important to relations between the state and U.S.

I plan on testing appropriate hypotheses within specific arenas. Only Afghanistan will require testing for initial drone strike escalation because it was the first state to experience strike increases and to have soldiers in active combat, combined with the costs of war. The goal of these tests is to establish which forces had the greatest impact on drone strike number across and within arenas. For each case, the dependent variable will be annual number of drone strikes.
Case 1- Afghanistan

Figure 7: Afghanistan is located in South Asia. U.S.- Afghanistan relations remained strong throughout the Cold War. After the 1978 Sauer Revolution in Afghanistan, which brought the Soviet backed Khalq faction to power, relations between the two countries began to deteriorate.

First, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Adolph Dubs, was killed in a botched kidnapping attempt. Afghan police ignored American orders to wait, and instead followed Soviet orders to attack the armed men who held Dubs hostage at a nearby hotel. The Carter administration was very disappointed in the Afghan governments deliberate disobedience to U.S. requests of restraint. This led to a decrease in U.S. bilateral assistance and the termination of a small military training program. All programs and

\[147\text{Figure 7: "Afghanistan." Operation World. N.p., n.d. http://www.operationworld.org/afgh>}.\]
assistance from the U.S. ceased after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979.

The Soviet War in Afghanistan lasted from December 1979 to February 1989. The war was fought between the Soviet-led Afghan forces and the Mujahideen—a group comprised of guerrilla units. The United States continued to fund these freedom fighters throughout the war. Eventually the soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989.

After the Soviet departure, the communist Afghan government was left to fend for themselves in the Afghan Civil War. The Taliban seized the Afghanistan capital of Kabul in 1996, and controlled 2/3 of Afghanistan in 1997.

The U.S. believed that Al Qaeda leader, Osama Bin Laden, was responsible for the attacks of September 11, 2001. Osama Bin Laden was under asylum in Afghanistan at the time of the attacks. “Operation Enduring Freedom’s” objectives were to kill or capture Osama Bin Laden and remove the Taliban government from power. Eventually, coalition forces overthrew the Taliban, and the U.S. supported a new government headed by new Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The United States continues to assist Afghan forces in combatting Taliban insurgencies and in 2005, the U.S. and Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership ensuring long-term relations between the two countries.

Testing

I have established the motivations behind U.S. counter-insurgency efforts in Afghanistan after September 11, 2001. The U.S. believed that the Taliban was harboring
Osama Bin Laden, who was responsible for the Al Qaeda attacks on American soil. Figure 10 shows the annual number of strikes from 2008-2012. I do not have access to data from 2013.

Figure 8:

![Afghanistan Annual Strike Number](image)

In Afghanistan, we can clearly see a constant, annual increase in drone strike number.

Aversion Theory

At first, public opinion polls seem to support the theory that the public wants to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. Figure 9 shows a Gallup Poll that asks the public whether they thought the United States made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, or not. Cleary we can see that from 2008-2012 a generally larger percentage of people thought that the U.S. made a mistake. However, looking closely at the data, we can see that this trend is not precisely linear (Note: Polling did not occur at even time increments). For instance, in August 2008 34% of the public thought it was a mistake,

148 Figure 8 constructed by author and based on data from TBIJ
whereas in January 2009, 30% thought it was a mistake. However, the trend indicates that more and more people saw military intervention as a mistake from 2008-2012. Drones provide continuous security, even with troop reduction in combat arenas.

**Figure 9:**

_Thinking now about U.S. military action in Afghanistan that began in October 2001, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, or not?_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes, a mistake</th>
<th>No, not a mistake</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014 Feb 6-9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013 March 7-10 ^</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 May 5-8</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Mar 25-27</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Nov 19-21</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010 Jul 27-Aug 1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Jul 8-11 †</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Nov 20-22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Aug 31-Sep 2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Jul 10-12 †</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Jan 30-Feb 1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Aug 21-23 †</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Jul 25-27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Aug 3-5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004 Jul 19-21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 Jan 7-9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 Nov 8-11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ Asked in rotation with Iraq war and Vietnam War.
† Asked of a half sample

Another Gallup Poll asked the public if they would like to see troop withdraw occur at a faster-than-planned rate. Exactly half (50%) of the respondents said yes, with

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149 Figure 9: "Afghanistan." Gallup.Com. N.p., n.d.
<http://www.gallup.com/poll/116233/afghanist>
24% wanting to stick to the timetable, 21% wanting the troops their until the “goals accomplished,” and 4% with no opinion. This poll supports the notion that the American public wants troops out of Afghanistan as soon as possible and that the public grew weary of troop casualties abroad. H1 appears to be supported.

H2 focuses more on public animus towards the monetary costs of war. As the public grows more disgruntled with the costs of war, decision-makers should become more inclined to divert money away from defense spending, and back towards the domestic domain. The longer a war lasts, the more costly it becomes. Presumably, the greater the length of the War in Afghanistan, the more likely the public grew animus towards the costs of war. Gallup polled the public in 2009 and 2011 asking if the costs of war in Afghanistan will make it more difficult for the government to address the problems facing the United States at home. In 2009 32% said they were “very worried,” compared to 26% in 2011. This does not seem very significant, but it indicates that the public is becoming less concerned with the cost of war. The public could have known that the war was coming to an end making this hypothesis inconclusive.

Security Factors

Before drones strikes ramped up in 2008, the military began to harness technologies for intelligence gathering. They were able to download the contents of thumb drives, cellphones, and locked or damaged computers to extract names, phone numbers, and other intelligence.

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numbers, messages, and images of suspected terrorists\textsuperscript{151}. This resulted in a greater number of targets and it could explain why we see greater levels of strikes in Afghanistan compared to other arenas.

General realist principles emphasize state autonomy and states are left to their own accord to maintain and establish security. Assessing threat levels to the U.S. is pivotal in determining if drone strikes increased due to threat level. Data from the Brookings institute can give us insight into threat levels posited by Al Qaeda and its affiliates in Afghanistan.

\textit{Figure 10:}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure10.png}
\caption{Year-to-Date change Jan-Aug 2012 vs. 2011: 5%}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{151} Ibid
Figure 10 reports the number of weekly insurgent attacks in Afghanistan. We can see an escalation of violence from 2008-2010, with subsequent de-escalation in 2011, and resurgence in 2012. This does not appear to be congruent with annual drone strike numbers in Afghanistan, which demonstrates a constant increase from 2008-2012. However, one could argue that drones suppressed the threat, before the threat returned in 2011, only to be suppressed again, and so on and so forth. In that situation, threat level could remain high, although number of insurgent attacks varies due to the success of drone attacks. However, David Jaeger and Zahra Siddique found that drone strikes had no effect on both incidence and levels of both lethal and suicide attacks in Afghanistan\textsuperscript{153}.

An interesting, but small, statistic is the number of, “Insider Attacks” formerly referred to as Green-on-Blue incidents. These attacks are a combination of infiltration, impersonation, co-option, post-traumatic stress, inter-personal disputes and extremist views\textsuperscript{154}. Insurgents have adopted this technique where they portray themselves as either ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces) or ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) members to, “knowingly attack and/or help facilitate an attack against the Coalition with the intent to maim or kill Coalition personnel” (DOD Report 34). Both attacks on ISAF and ANSF Personnel have significantly increased from 2008-2012 as indicated by Figures 11 and 12. Drone Strikes cannot solve these kinds of attacks, but


drones may act as a response to the intimate threat created by this unique and devastating technique used by Al Qaeda.

Figure 12: ISAF

![Insider Attacks Per Year](image)

The graph depicts an escalation that positively corresponds with drone strike numbers in

![Insider Attacks Per Year](image)


156 Figure 12: Ibid
Afghanistan (2008-2012). This indicates that threat levels, in regards to insider attacks, were elevated allowing for greater strike number. However, such attacks could be a response to an increase in drone strikes as well.

Although these attacks are numerically smaller than insurgent attack numbers illustrated in Figure 11, we should not downplay their significance. In August 2012, Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar praised ANSF members who conducted insider attacks and urged others to “do as your brave friends have done” (DOD Report 35). The very nature of the attacks threatens to undermine U.S. security efforts as the U.S. attempts to pull back troops giving Afghanistan independent security responsibilities.

I do not have access to specific DOD drone protocol. H4 examines the process for identifying and orchestrating strikes. We do know that the CIA and DOD cooperate in determining the “kill list” a list of high-value targets sought by both agencies. On September 16, 2003, Donald Rumsfeld signed an executive order that gave the DOD, and its elite JSOC force, permission to pursue lethal action against Al Qaeda in Iraq and Afghanistan without additional approval. In other countries, JSOC needed, “the tacit approval from the country involved or a least a sign-off from higher up on the American chain of command” (Priest and Arkin 3). The freedom from constraint allows for an increase in strike number. In 2012, JSOC established a secret targeting center across the Potomac River. The center was created so the DOD, “could be more directly involved

\[159\] Ibid
in deliberations about Al Qaeda lists” (Priest and Arkin 3). This trend appears to have been unchecked through 2014. If the military, “sees a threat over the horizon, they’re going to whack it” (Hirsh 2). A “matrix” is being developed to create stricter targeting guidelines for the DOD and CIA.

H5 hypothesized that drone strikes increase as cooperation between struck state and striker state develop. In this case, cooperation between the U.S. and Afghanistan would continue to remain favorable, or continuously grow stronger. Examining key events chronologically indicates continuously favorable relations between the two countries.

On August 22, 2008 Afghan and UN investigators concluded that errant fire from a U.S. gunship killed dozens of Afghan civilians in the Shindand District of Western Heart Province. This drew condemnation from President Karzai as U.S. military officials disputed the death toll. However, in 2009 President Obama also launched new strategy for the war effort in Afghanistan, committing more troops to the arena. The strategy aimed to defeat Al Qaeda, and prevent Al Qaeda from returning to Pakistan or Afghanistan. Furthermore, the strategy urged increased aid to Afghanistan and President Karzai welcomed the strategy saying it would bring Afghanistan and the international community closer together.

161 Ibid
162 Ibid
163 Ibid
In 2009, “US President Obama decided to boost US troop numbers in Afghanistan by 30,000, bringing the total to 100,000. He says US will begin withdrawing its forces by 2011”¹⁶⁴

In 2010, the U.S. exported $2.2 billion worth of goods to Afghanistan, more than 10 times greater than exports in 2004¹⁶⁵.

In 2012, Afghanistan was declared a major Non-NATO ally to the U.S. and in both countries signed an enduring strategic partnership agreement. However,

“At least 30 people are killed in protests about the burning of copies of the Koran at the US Bagram airbase. US officials believed Taliban prisoners were using the books to pass messages, and that they were extremist texts not Korans. Two soldiers are also killed in reprisal attacks.”¹⁶⁶

All of these events illustrate continuously positive relations between the two countries after 2008 and through 2012. The incident in 2012 is an event that worsened relations, but the general pattern is positive. Therefore H5 seems to be supported-increased relations between the U.S. and Afghanistan allowed for the U.S. to increase strikes as they began troop withdrawal.

H6 focuses on how increased outcry from the struck state should lead to a decrease in drone strikes, unless the security threat is great enough that the stronger striking state. In Afghanistan’s case, we can see there were positive-bilateral relations between the U.S. and Afghanistan from 2008-2012 as proven in H5. Still, outcry levels


were significant in 2011, after a UN report was released claiming 3,000 civilians have
died in the War\textsuperscript{167}. This should result in a decrease in strikes, but we saw escalation. H6
is partially supported.

H7 aims more at determining strike number in relation to state weakness. The
hypothesis supports the notion that a weaker state will see an increase in strike number
due to its lack of policing power within its own state. I use data from the \textit{Failed States
Index} to examine this claim. The higher the rank of a state on the index the greater chance
that drone strikes will escalate in that state if there is a significant threat. We have
established that there is a significant threat in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was ranked either
\textit{7}th or \textit{6}th on the Index from 2008 through 2013. It’s continuous ranking as either \textit{6}th of \textit{7}th
indicates a high level of state weakness, so we can presume H7 is confirmed.

\textit{Domestic Factors}

H8 can only emphasize public opinion of drones from mid-2012 onward, when
the public knew of drone campaigns. I have data for strikes in Afghanistan from 2008-
2012. Therefore, we can conclude that public opinion of strikes does not require testing.

\textit{Bureaucratic Factors}

With the recession of 2008, we should expect budgetary constraints to limit
resources for various government agencies. The DOD and CIA are both expected to

\textsuperscript{167} "Outcry Over Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan." - \textit{AOL}. N.p., n.d.
compete for resources to remain relevant and autonomous. Based on our findings we should be able to see if whether the DOD or CIA received more money and was therefore able to build and implement drones. We established that the military is in control of operations in Afghanistan; hence I will examine military budgetary statistics and rhetoric, along with possible influencing factors.

When Obama came into office, “he cottoned to the organization immediately” (Priest and Arkin 7). At the same time, the organization was given a new 30,000-square-foot office building turned command center.\(^{168}\)

The Department of Defense released the “Unmanned Systems Integrated Roadmap FY2012-2038” to outline the future plans for military reliance on unmanned vehicles. In this “roadmap,” the DOD outlines “Trends and Characteristics” that will dictate the future of unmanned systems. The first trend listed states:

“Pressure for reductions in federal budgets (and thus reduced military department budgets) will continue to increase; therefore, DOD cannot afford to acquire capabilities exceeding military needs. This increased pressure will further drive the need to be interoperable and better share information across the joint force” (DOD 10).

Not only does this focus limited resources, but it also hints that the DOD is looking to be more cooperative with other agencies like the CIA in order to maintain a security posture with dwindling funds.

The plan describes a situation where the DOD understands that budgetary constraints are going to limit expenditure, but they still see the importance of developing unmanned systems. The DOD believes that they must meet operational demands in the

context of budgetary constraints. Figure 13 illustrates an increase in budgetary constraints beginning in 2008.

Figure 14:

A decrease in funding indicates that the military is either not competing for resources, or the military understands that cuts are necessary and they have shifted towards a more

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cooperative model. The roadmap indicates that the DOD was not competing strongly to gain resources. The plan lays out both short and long term goals for the future of the DOD and interoperability seems to play a major role. The nature of technologically advanced systems requires interoperability according to the DOD. They state:

“As more and more unmanned systems are fielded...government owned data rights, and standard IOPs will be required to further enable a broader net-centric environment that is truly interoperable, open, and scalable” (DOD 31).

This indicates that the DOD is preparing for downsizing, while attempting to maintain globally secure.

There are leaked sources that claim the DOD has a “black budget”. This budget is classified and funds projects that the DOD wants to keep in-house. There are estimates on black budget funding to the DOD that hint an overall increase in funding beginning in 2008. In 2008, it is estimated that the DOD received $32 billion from the black budget\textsuperscript{171}. The budget is estimated to have grown to over $50 billion in 2009\textsuperscript{172} and $52.6 billion in 2012\textsuperscript{173}. If these numbers are correct than the DOD may actually be competing rather well in allocating funds towards their operations.


In this instance, H9 cannot overtly explain an increase in strike number. However, the DODs ability to adapt and thrive with less funding indicates that the DOD is attempting to remain relevant, even with less autonomy.

*Cultural Factors*

General Stanley A. McChrystal assumed control of military on June 15, 2009. During his previous tenure as Director of Operations on the Join Staff, McChrystal emphasized interagency cooperation and he made meetings bigger and longer. He “won the loyalty” of other intelligence agencies by providing intelligence access to the CIA, NSA, FBI, and others. Still, in 2010,

“As part of his counterinsurgency strategy, McChrystal implemented stringent rules of engagement that some critics have described as imperiling his own troops in the field.” (King 1).

This appears to disprove Legro’s claims, while supporting Kier’s notion that militaries act with constraint under specific domestic situations.

The next significant commanding general nominated by Obama was soon-to-be CIA director, General David H. Patraeus, on July 4, 2010. Patraeus assumed command of the International Security Assistance Force and listed his goals publically, because he would feel more obligated to meet those goals. These goals included committing, “to the same counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy implemented in Afghanistan by

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175 Ibid

McChrystal”\textsuperscript{177}. The first facet of this strategy requires that enemies be removed from the target area\textsuperscript{178}. In 2012, Joint Cheifs chairman, General Martin Dempsey focused on downsizing the military as the Afghan War winded down\textsuperscript{179}. Under these premises, escalation could be favored, as threat levels remained significant- supporting Legro’s claim. Still, downsizing hints at de-escalation characteristics.

\textit{Summary- Case #1 Afghanistan}

In the case of Afghanistan we can see some major forces behind drone strike increase from 2008-2012. H1 appears to be confirmed, while H2 merits further examination. Where the public may not be concerned with the costs of war, they may still be worried about domestic economics while realizing the war was coming to an end. H3 is partially confirmed with Insider Attacks correlating directly with an increase in strike number. H4 appears supported. H5 is supported, while H6 appears partially supported. H7 appears supported, even though there is limited variation in Afghanistan state ranking. H8 is not applicable. H9 is partially confirmed as the DOD has demonstrated a continuous ability to remain necessary.

Culturally, there are indicators that could support escalation and de-escalation in strike number.

\textsuperscript{177} Ibid
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid
Case 2 - Pakistan

On the other side of the Durand Line, and also part of Southern Asia, lies Pakistan. Many refugees crossed over into Pakistan during the Afghan Civil War.

In 1974, the U.S. enforced embargos and restrictions on Pakistan with concerns of nuclear weapons proliferation. In the 1980’s, President Reagan supported Pakistan in developing nuclear weapons capabilities and in 1986 both countries agreed on a second-multi-years security and economic assistance program worth $4 billion.

Beginning in 1998, both countries have continued to discuss nuclear non-proliferation and security concerns.

Pakistan vowed to support the U.S. in its efforts to combat terrorism in 2001, and Pakistan supported the new Karzai backed government. Previously, Pakistan backed the Taliban government in Afghanistan, but their policy shift in 2001 indicated stronger ties between the U.S. and Pakistan.

Pakistan continued to honor this shift by handing over many Al Qaeda leaders to the U.S. and the U.S. responded by lifting sanctions and providing $10 billion in aid. Still, the United States was very weary of President Pervez Musharraf and his handling of controversial nuclear weapons policies that possibly involved ties with the Taliban. The U.S. suspected double play and was suspicious that the Pakistani government was working with the Taliban as well. This, coupled with domestic turmoil, eventually forced Musharraf out of office in 2008.

**Testing**

Pakistan has experienced the second largest number of drone strikes since 2008, but unlike Afghanistan, Pakistan is not an open war arena. Figure 15 demonstrates the number of drone strikes in Pakistan from 2008-2013.
For the sake of this paper, we assume that all of these strikes are carried out by the Central Intelligence Agency. It is important to note the geographical significance of Pakistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan are next to each other, with Pakistan’s northern border touching Afghanistan’s southern border, as illustrated in Figure 7.

**Security Factors**

To test H3 we must look at threat assessments in Pakistan beginning in 2008. In 2008, American and Pakistani officials began to acknowledge the threat of Al Qaeda in Pakistan. On the day before 9/11, Al Qaeda had a band of terrorist camps in the lawless regions of Pakistan known as FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Area)\(^\text{182}\). Figure 16 depicts the region’s unique position, right next to Afghanistan.

\(^{181}\) Figure 15 constructed by author and based on Data from TBIJ

This region is semi-autonomous and the Pakistani government allows for tribal elders and effective political agents to run the region, rather than the Pakistani Government\textsuperscript{184}. If we look at a map of drone strike since 2008, we can see that most of the strikes have occurred in FATA regions. Figure 17 illustrates the increased number of strikes in North Waziristan, which is said to be a hub for Al Qaeda and other foreign groups\textsuperscript{185}.

Figure 17:

In 2008, there were more terrorist training camps in this region. Official’s state, “the creation of Al Qaeda…in the tribal areas was in many ways inevitable—that the lawless badlands here ethnic Pushtan tribes have resisted government control for centuries were a natural place for a disputed terrorism network to find refuge” (Huffington Post 1).

We can clearly see that threat levels are initially heightened at this period in time.

As I stated earlier I will be using Annual Threat Assessments provided by the intelligence community to gauge threat levels in various arenas. In 2008, the assessment first discusses “Pakistan Nuclear Security,” in which it states that Pakistani nuclear security “has not been degraded by Pakistan’s political crises” (ATA 15). Here, we can see that the nuclear threat in Pakistan is relatively low. However, the assessment further discusses an “unparalleled level of suicide attacks ordered by Pakistan-based militants, many of whom are allied with Al Qaeda” (ATA 24) in 2007. This indicates a high level of threat, which would be followed by an increased level of drone strikes. Figure 15 shows us that there were 38 drone strikes in 2008. In the 2009 report, it states, “In Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Al Qaeda lost significant parts of its command structure since 2008 in a succession of blows as damaging to the group as any since the fall of the Taliban in 2001” (ATA 4).

This shows a reduction in threat level, even though strike number increased in 2009. Still, the report mentions sustained pressure is necessary to continue to dismantle Al Qaeda in FATA. Therefore, an increase in strike in 2009 should be accepted as a means to continuously battle the threat. The 2010 assessment opens up with: “Pakistan-based militant groups and Al Qaeda are coordinating their attacks inside Pakistan despite their historical differences regarding ethnicity, sectarian differences, and strategic priorities…probably is increasing and is an important factor in the increase in terrorist attacks in Pakistan” (ATA 18)

Clearly, the coordinated effort by militant groups and Al Qaeda in Pakistan has led to an increase in strikes in the region. Therefore we can expect an increase in strikes, which is what occurred with 128 strikes in 2010. After 2010 there was a decrease in strikes from 128 strikes to 75 strikes. The 2011 threat assessment touches on what the U.S. predicts will occur- that, “Pakistani extremists an Al Qaeda will try to conduct additional costly terrorist attacks against the Pakistan Government and US and other foreign interests throughout the country” (ATA 9). This does not appear to portray an increase in threat level. Instead, it seems as though threat levels are diminishing. That prediction is coupled with U.S. noting that Islamabad demonstrated increased determination and persistence in battling terrorists in FATA\textsuperscript{188}. The threat may still be imminent, but increased Pakistani force further decreases the necessity for U.S. drone intervention. The death of Osama Bin Laden in 2011 also decapitates Al Qaeda leadership, as noted in the 2012 assessment. The losses to Al Qaeda are so substantial that any new leader, “would have difficulty integrating into the organization and compensating for mounting losses” (ATA 2). Strikes decreased to 48 in 2012, and the report emphasizes Al Qaeda’s growing reliance on ideological and operational alliances with Pakistani militant factions to accomplish its goals within Pakistan and to conduct transnational attacks\textsuperscript{189}. Finally, in 2013 the report discusses Pakistan’s progress. We can see that Pakistan is preparing for elections, and


that the military continues to conduct operations in FATA. All indicators point to a decreased threat level in 2013. Therefore, H3 seems supported. Strike numbers increased with an increased threat, and vice versa.

H4 examines procedural shifts in drone strike authorization and implementation. This presumes that changes in procedure may constrain strike number, or allow for greater strikes. From 2008-2009 signature strikes gave the CIA the authority to strike anyone who is acting suspiciously in a terrorist fashion. This controversial procedure was not in question until 2009 when a mistaken strike that killed innocent Pakistanis drew President Obama’s attention. CIA Director, John Brennan (2009-2013), defends the signature strike protocol, emphasizing that the CIA has Pakistan-specific expertise that fosters greater intelligence before strikes. In 2011, the same protocol is was in place for the CIA’s covert operations in Pakistan. Only in late 2012 do we see curbs imposed on the CIA’s signature strike technique. President Obama states that the signature strike technique is no longer acceptable and that the CIA must show there is an “continuing imminent threat” (Dilanian 1). This information corresponds with the decrease in strikes in 2013 compared to 2012, but standard protocol was still in place when the strikes decreased from 2010-2012. Therefore H4 is only partially supported.

H5 predicts that drone strikes will increase as cooperation between struck state and striking state develops. After 9/11, Pakistan and the U.S. agreed to coordinate to

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192 Ibid
ensure security and stability in South Asia and in 2004, Pakistan was named a major Non-NATO ally. A recent report suggests that Islamabad has supported drone strikes, even when publically condemning operations. Pakistan’s approval is necessary for operations and support is implied- in part because of the CIA’s ability to land drones on Pakistani military strips.

In 2009, both Pakistan’s Prime Minister and its Foreign Ministry publically praised a drone strike that killed Baitullah Mehsud. All signals point to cooperative relations between the U.S. and Pakistan until 2011, when an accidental incident between NATO forces and Pakistani soldiers resulted in the deaths of 24 Pakistani soldiers.

Two other events created outcry from the Pakistani public: the shooting of two men by CIA agent, Raymond Davis, and the raid on Osama Bin Laden’s compound. This forced Pakistan to close ground lines of communication to U.S. and NATO cargo for a period of eight months, slowing down U.S. security assistance. More so, there was a great deal of outcry from Pakistan when the U.S. violated Pakistani sovereignty by putting a Seal Team on the ground that eventually killed Osama Bin Laden. U.S. officials questioned Pakistan’s honesty and security with some believing that Pakistan kept vital information from the United States. Furthermore, in 2012 Pakistani officials condemned

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195 Ibid
197 Ibid
198 Ibid
199 Ibid
drone strikes calling the acts “illegal” and a violation of Pakistani sovereignty. The events of 2011 and 2012 correspond with the decrease in strikes as U.S.-Pakistani relations temporarily deteriorate. It appears that this non-cooperative sentiment persisted through 2013, while strike numbers continued to drop. The U.S. remains Pakistan’s greatest financial donor, but often the U.S. will cut funding if Pakistan acts out against U.S. action in Pakistan. Late in 2013, the U.S. and Pakistan agreed to reestablish a “new partnership” moving forward, but strikes were still down in Pakistan. It appears that H5 is supported in the case of Pakistan. Strikes decreased as soon as tensions began to rise between the U.S. and Pakistan. The outcry from Pakistan also supports H6, which emphasizes how direct outcry from a state should result in a decrease in strike number.

H7 looks to state weakness to determine strike number. The weaker a state is the greater increase in strikes we should expect. Pakistan was ranked 9th on the Failed States Index in 2008. That rank dropped to 10th, 10th, 12th, 13th, and 13th in subsequent years (2009-2013). We can see that Pakistan is consistently ranking lower on the Failed State Index each year, while there is variation in strike number. In this case, Pakistan’s weakness does not appear to be a driving force behind strikes.

\[\text{Abrams}\quad 101\]


\[\text{Ibid}\]
Domestic Factors

H8 predicts that drone strikes will decrease as public opinion against drones increases. The Roper Center asked participants across vast countries: “Do you approve or disapprove of the United States conducting missile strikes from pilotless aircraft called drones to target extremists in countries such as Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia?”

They asked U.S. participants this question in the Spring of 2012 and the Spring of 2013. In 2012, 62% approved, 28% disapproved, and 10% “didn’t know” or refused to answer. The 2013 poll showed little difference, with 61% approval, 30% disapproval, and 8% dk/refused.

Clearly, the majority of the public support strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia from 2012-2013 with very little change occurring between those years.

Bureaucratic Factors

The Government Politics Model that agencies with a greater ability to allocate resources will be able to act with more autonomy while remaining relevant. For this case, we can presume that CIA funding as a result will be able to predict the amount of infighting the CIA maneuvered to achieve this end. Funding is classified, but recently leaked documents merit examination. Furthermore we can look at key debates that may have influenced a greater or lesser role in CIA operations.

As discussed earlier, the CIA and DOD do not release information on funding for covert operations. Edward Snowden released a document that estimates CIA and DOD
funding from 2004 to 2012. This black budget document (not corrected for inflation) is listed in Figure 18.

*Figure 18:*

This budget concerns many types of operations, but it could point to if the CIA has money to acquire and use drones. This data portrays a general increase in CIA funding from 2004 to 2013. If we look closely we can see that 2010 funding was less than 2012.

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funding. This does not correlate with the heightened Pakistani strikes in 2010 and the much lower level of strikes in 2012.

Bureaucratic infighting may have influenced strike number. In 2009, the CIA did not have to “come to the President for ultimate authority to authorize specific attacks, nor must it subject its target list nominations to interagency process” (Chesney 1). However, the military must had to do both these things for activities in Yemen. This process was designed by John Brennan to “keep the military program in check” (Chesney 1). In this case, it appears as though the CIA has more freedom to strike at will, whereas the military is subject to stricter strike procedure. In 2011, the DOD proposed authorization for signature strikes in Yemen, but Brennan told Obama not to give the DOD that ability. Later in 2011, Brennan began to grow frustrated with DOD requests for “larger strikes” and he decided to, “blow up the decision making process and pull it into the White House” (Chesney 1). It is not clear what Brennan meant by that, but it continues to appear that Brennan and the CIA have sufficient lobbying ability with President Obama.

An important note that strikes began to decrease after 2010. In 2012, a great deal of infighting occurred over the development of a “playbook” governing counterterrorism disposition options. In this inter-fighting, Brennan apparently sought to keep CIA strikes free from interagency vetting. Brennan pushed the Pentagon to the sideline in

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203 Ibid

204 Ibid

205 Ibid
determining targets and he gave himself greater input than all other agencies\(^\text{206}\). On the contrary, Brennan has discussed a more judicious process for CIA targeting. Although significant, the bureaucratic infighting seems to only remain partially supported in the case of Pakistan.

**Cultural Factors**

Acting CIA director, Michael Morrell (2011, 2012-2013), “regularly delivered briefings regarding the drone program to Pakistan’s ambassador to the US, Husain Haqqani”\(^\text{207}\).

Leon Panetta was the CIA director from 2009-2011 and even after his time as CIA director, Panetta defended drones. He states

> “My mission, whether it's at CIA or here, is to keep the country safe. And I thought the ability to use these kinds of tools and operations to go after those who would attack our country -- I felt that they were legitimate if we follow the law” (Sullivan 2).

The culture during his command appears to support an escalation of strikes, which is what occurred from 2008-2010.

After Panetta, Morell took over temporarily before Petraeus took the helm. Petraeus’ military experience depicted a leader who favored escalatory and de-escalatory tactics.

Finally, former White House counterterrorism adviser, John Brennan, was nominated by Obama to take over the CIA. Brennan supports drone strikes, while


advocating for limitations on targeting procedures to make the process more judicious. This public discussion of limitations began in late 2012, as strikes were already in decline. As counterterrorism advisor, Brennan’s focus was on the security of the U.S. as a whole, which could explain why we saw periods of escalation and de-escalation during that time. As CIA director, we see that strikes continued to decline in 2013.

Summary- Case #2 Pakistan

H3 appears to be supported. Strikes appeared to increase when the U.S. perceived greater security threats. H4 appears partially supported, as changes in protocol limited strike number. H5 is supported as strikes were lowered when cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan deteriorated. H6 is supported as well based on the same premise. H7 is not supported due to Pakistan’s consistently lower ranking on the Failed States Index. H8 is not supported. H9 appears to be somewhat supported as the CIA accumulated more wealth and influence, although that accumulation does not directly correspond with drone strike number.

The Culture of the CIA, as articulated by leadership, hints at subtle shifts between paramilitary organization and intelligence network. These cultural shifts somewhat coincide with shifts in strike number. However, one could argue that the CIA was responding to public condemnation against a civilian agency firing drones, making cultural shifts a response to the domestic climate.
Case 3- Yemen

Yemen is located in the southwestern to southern part of Western Asia.

Yemen has a history of interstate violence between the North and the South dating back to the late 1960’s. In the 1990’s the United Republic of Yemen was officially formed, merging the two spheres.

The coalition military response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait prompted fears by Yemen’s President in 1990. Yemen was a member of the United Nations Security Council and voted against many resolutions that prompted anger from the United States.

In 1994, Yemen experienced a civil war between the North and the South, which resulted in southern defeat, giving President Saleh control over all of Yemen.

A terrorist attack in Aden, Yemen in 2000 resulted in the deaths of seventeen U.S. personnel on the USS Cole. The event was said to be orchestrated by Al Qaeda members.

After the attacks on September 11, 2001, President Saleh told President Bush that Yemen supported the War on Terror. However, a Shia insurgency in 2004 caused an

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208 Figure 19: "Yemen Location." Geography. N.p., n.d. <http://www.indexmundi.com/yemen/loca>
uprising against the Yemeni government, resulting in domestic unrest and violence. Even with Saleh democratically reelected in 2006, Yemen continues to experience domestic conflict. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) used this opportunity to oppose Yemeni government, and Yemen and the U.S. now see Al Qaeda insurgency in Yemen as part of the Global War on Terror. Fighting continued to escalate through 2011.

**Testing**

The first recorded drone strike in the War on Terror occurred in Yemen in 2002. Since then, strikes ceased until 2009 when strikes began to escalate. Figure 20 portrays annual strike number in Yemen.

*Figure 20:*

![Yemen Annual Strike Number](image)

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209 Figure 20 constructed by author based on Data from TBIJ
Compared to the arenas of Afghanistan and Pakistan, Yemen strike numbers almost look insignificant. However, these strikes have been pivotal in attacking AQAP. More so, Figure 20 only lists confirmed strikes in Yemen, even though some data indicates that strike numbers have peaked to 41 strikes in 2012\textsuperscript{210}.

Also, Yemen is geographically closer to Somalia compared to Pakistan, which borders Afghanistan.

\textit{Security Factors}

In looking at threat assessment for H3, it is important to also look at the concerns before initial strikes began in 2009. It is noticeably significant that Yemen is not mentioned in the 2008 threat assessment. We can conclude that Yemen was not considered threatening to the U.S. at this time. The first mention of AQAP in Yemen begins in 2009. The assessment states,

“Yemen is reemerging as a jihadist battleground and potential regional base of operations for Al Qaeda to plan internal and external attacks, train terrorists, and facilitate the movements of operatives. Al Qaeda leaders could use Al Qaeda in Yemen and the growing presence of foreign jihadists there to supplement its external operations agenda, promote turmoil in Saudi Arabia, and weaken the Salih regime” (ATA 7).

Now we see that AQAP in Yemen has become a threat to the U.S. On September 17, 2008, AQAP in Yemen conducted an attack against a U.S. Embassy in Sana’a using two explosive-laden vehicles, suicide-bombers, and small-arms fire killing six guards and

four civilians\textsuperscript{211}. This attack was one of 20 attacks in 2008 against U.S., Western, and Yemeni Targets, most of which were carried out by the splinter faction, Jund al-Yemen\textsuperscript{212}. This threat level can explain the initial three drone strikes in 2009. The 2009 ATA discusses Yemen’s security concerns. It cites the activity of AQAP as a concern, but Blair says he discusses Yemen more fully in his classified statement\textsuperscript{213}. To explore this gap, I examined tracked incidents in Yemen from criticalthreats.org. I counted 90 incidences in Yemen in 2009, many of which were violent and calculated. For example, one plot was barely foiled by the U.S. where AQAP attempted to bomb planes in both Dubai and London\textsuperscript{214}. American officials assumed that American born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki was responsible for the attack\textsuperscript{215}. Awlaki, a U.S. citizen, was eventually killed by a drone strike. The events point to an increase in threat compared to the previous year. That increased threat does not correspond with the decrease in strikes that occurred in 2010. The 2011 ATA states,

“the Republic of Yemen Government is facing the most serious threat to its stability since its 1994 civil war” (ATA 16).

The report also mentions “security concerns” and that “challenges still remain.” This rhetoric illustrates increased threat levels and we see a surge in strikes to 13 in 2012. The 2013 report mentions a general decline in Al Qaeda capability following the death of Anwar Al Awlaki, but that AQAP remains “the node most likely to attempt transnational

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid
\textsuperscript{213} Ibid
\textsuperscript{215} Ibid
attacks” (ATA 3). The report also mentions growing instability giving AQAP the ability to adopt a more aggressive strategy in southern Yemen, and “it continues to threaten U.S. and Western diplomatic interests, particularly in Sanaa” (ATA 15). We can see growing threat perception from the U.S., which can explain the spike in strikes (27 confirmed) in 2012. In the 2013 ATA, Yemen only is mentioned in a small paragraph. The section discusses the power transition to new President, Abd Rabuh Mansur Hadi and how his government will, “also have to maintain pressure on AQAP following a military offensive this past summer that displaced the group from its southern strongholds” (ATA 16). This military offensive has had a great diminishing effect on threat levels, which is why we see a drop in drone strikes in 2013 (12 confirmed). Generally H3 appears supported.

H4 focuses on drone strike procedural changes. In 2009, the DOD requested authorization to use signature strikes in Yemen, but Brennan and Obama rejected their request\textsuperscript{216}. The DOD again ask for signature strike approval in 2011, but Obama wanted it to be clear that use of force in Yemen is about protecting the homeland\textsuperscript{217}. It remained unclear what the CIA rules are for Yemeni strikes. With AQAP surging in 2012, and Yemeni authorities urging the U.S. to do something, Obama and Brennan finally authorized signature strikes\textsuperscript{218}. With this authorization came the result of increased strikes in 2012. A Washington Post article noted the significance by stating,


\textsuperscript{217} Ibid

\textsuperscript{218} Ibid
“the decision to give the CIA…greater leeway is almost certain to escalate a drone campaign that has accelerated significantly” (Miller 2).

This is probably partly due to the increase in targets that are “legally” allowed to be fired upon. Previous to this authorization, strikes were only allowed to target HVTs\(^{219}\). Even with more targets, the Yemen campaign faces stricter targeting guidelines when compared to Pakistan. In Yemen,

“signature strikes will only be allowed when there is clear indication of the presence of an Al Qaeda leader or of plotting against targets in the United States or Americans overseas” (Miller 3).

We see a decrease in strikes in 2013, which can be attributed to the general curbs imposed on signature strikes that year. H4 is supported with strike protocol influencing strike number.

H5 presumes an increase in strikes with an increase in cooperation between the U.S. and Yemen. U.S. aid to Yemen has totaled $600 million since 2011\(^{220}\). The U.S. State Department believes that the U.S. has a strong and growing partnership with Yemen\(^{221}\), and H4 testing revealed that Yemen asked for assistance in 2012. Cooperation between the two states remained strong and the U.S. was free to strike without interference from Yemeni officials. In the same sense, there has not been outcry from Yemen officials over strikes, supporting H6. Relations appear cooperative, therefore not diminishing strike number.


\(^{221}\) Ibid
H7 examines state weakness with weaker states expecting increased strikes. Yemen was ranked 21st in 2008 when it experienced no strikes. Gradually, Yemen moved up higher on the Failed State Index from 18th to 15th, 13th, 8th, and 6th (2009-2013). This does not precisely correlate with the variation in strike number through the same time period. But, when strikes were highest in 2012 the ATA mentions “ongoing instability” as a primary security concern. So, we can assume that state weakness presented a threat to the U.S., or that there were no superior alternatives to confront the threat. H7 is partially confirmed.

**Domestic Factors**

In the previous section, the question of public support for drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia revealed that the public supported strikes (62%-2012, 61%-2013) in these arenas. This cannot explain the decline in strikes from 2012 to 2013. H8 is not supported.

**Bureaucratic Factors**

The CIA, DOD, and JSOC operate together in Yemen. For the sake of this paper, we assume that strikes are carried out by the CIA. We assume this because the Bureau of Investigative Journalism makes a point of “Tracking CIA and Covert Action in Yemen”. With that in mind, the same bureaucratic factor testing can be applied here as it was in Pakistan. We already noted that CIA Director John Brennan heavily influenced strike protocol in Yemen and we saw increased funding to the CIA from the “black budget”. The continuously increased budget can only partially explain Yemen’s surge in strikes,
but the decrease in strikes in 2010 and 2013 make conclusions difficult. H9 is inconclusive.

**Cultural Factors**

The previous section also noted shifts in leadership in the CIA and the differences in leadership style by different CIA directors.

These changes cannot explain the fluctuation of strike numbers in Yemen from 2009-2012, but Brennan’s role in 2013 can partially explain the decrease in strikes. His support for a more judicious process of targeting procedures led to fewer targets.

**Summary – Case #3 Yemen**

H3 is supported with threat levels corresponding to strike levels. Strike protocol appears to have an effect on strike number, supporting H4. H5 is partially supported with stable cooperation between the U.S. and Yemen. There are no cases of Yemeni outcry against strikes leaving H6 not supported. H7 is partially confirmed with evidence of state weakness causing an increase in strikes. However, continuous state weakness does not correspond with the fluctuation in strike number in Yemen. H8 is not supported. H9 seems partially supported as well with the CIA continuously gaining resources and remaining autonomous.

Cultural factors hint at the decrease in strikes from 2012-2013.
 Fallout with the Soviet Union during the 1980’s forced the Somali Government to seek a new major ally and they chose the United States. This relationship was stable until the collapse of the Barre government during the Somali Civil War forced the closure of the U.S. embassy in Mogadishu.

The United States aimed to maintain ties with Somalia, while Somalia established the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The U.S. recognized and acknowledged the TFG as the Somalia’s national governing body.

In 2012, the Federal Government of Somalia was formed and the U.S. vowed to maintain ties with the new regime. In 2013, the U.S. approved an arrangement to provide defense articles and services to Somalia

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Testing

Of all the cases, Somalia has experienced the fewest number of strikes. Somalia is also the only case study to experience an initial escalation in strikes with subsequent annual decrease. Figure 22 illustrates the trend:

![Figure 22: Somalia Annual Strike Number](image)

The decreasing strike number demands examination.

Security Factors

In Somalia, the U.S. is primarily concerned with Al Shabab, a militant group that joined Al Qaeda in 2012. There were no strikes from 2008-2010, but we still must look at those years to determine if there was a threat.

The 2008 ATA mentions Ethiopia’s intervention in Somalia in 2006 citing it, “quickly toppled the Council of Islamic Courts” (ATA 40), a coalition of business, clan and religious interests increasingly under the influence of extremists with close ties to Al

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223 Figure 20 constructed by author based on data from Umassdrone.org
Qaeda in East Africa\textsuperscript{224}. Therefore, this intervention prevented threat levels from increasing through 2008. The 2009 ATA notes possible initial causes for increased threat levels. The report states,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Somalia…continues to be mired in conflict. In January 2009 Ethiopia withdrew the troops it deployed in late 2006 to protect the TFG and oust the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC). Resurgent Islamic extremists are now fighting to fill the void and expand their hold on territory throughout the country”} (ATA 36).
\end{quote}

The report also discusses further security concerns:

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Violent power struggles between Islamist militias and emerging local resistance groups could displace thousands of additional Somalis. Lawlessness in Somalia already has prompted a surge in piracy in the Gulf of Aden”} (ATA 37).
\end{quote}

All indicators point to increased threat possibilities beginning in 2009. The 2010 trend proceeds as anticipated. The 2010 report emphasizes the struggle between the Transitional Federal Government and Al Shabab\textsuperscript{225}. The report predicts that Al Shabab is “certain” to attack on the TFG. There are clearly increased threat levels compared to previous years. The 2011 assessment begins by calling Somalia “the quintessential example of a failed state” (ATA 17). The TFG will continue to be attacked by Al Shabab and threat levels are elevated after the July 2010 twin bombings in Kampala- suggesting the desire for expanded group influence in Somalia\textsuperscript{226}. The elevated threat levels appear to support the initial 8 strikes in 2011. The 2012 reports suggests that the TFG will

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}
experience consistent attacks, but we see a decrease in strike number. Finally, the 2013 report states,

“Al Shabab, the Al Qaeda-affiliated insurgency that has terrorized populations and destabilized the transitional government since 2008, is largely in retreat, ameliorating instability and opening space for legitimate governing entities to exert control in Southern Somalia” (ATA 20)

In this case, the decrease in strikes to 1 in 2013 applies directly to the decrease in strikes. H3 appears supported.

There is little known about drone strike procedure in Somalia to test H4. This may be partly due to the novel and relatively small nature of the operations. We do know that missiles have struck vehicles, a technique that appears in line with “signature strike” approaches. Still, we do not have enough information to test the hypotheses.

H5 looks at cooperation between the U.S. and Somalia. The relations are irrelevant to strike number. The U.S. supported the Somali Transitional Federal Government, but it lacked any influential power to impact U.S. decision-making. Instead, the U.S. operates to help ensure stability in the region.

There are no official examples of overt outcry from Somalia, rendering H6 unnecessary.

H7 looks at state weakness to determine strike number. From 2008-2013, Somalia ranked 1st on the Failed State Index. With a consistent top ranking, we cannot say that state weakness dictates drones strikes. It is notable that there were no strikes until 2011, even with the top ranking. Therefore, state weakness cannot be a major driving force behind drone strikes in Somalia.
Domestic Factors

My previous section covered the public’s approval/disapproval of drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. The public’s attitudes towards drone operations remained stable with 62% approval in 2012 and 61% approval in 2013. In Somalia, there were only 2 strikes in 2012 and 1 in 2013, indicating contrary predictions to public sentiment. H8 is not supported.

Bureaucratic Factors

Sometime between 2010 and 2011, the CIA supposedly constructed a compound in Djibouti, equipped with runways and airplane hangars. Djibouti borders the Northwest tip of Somalia. Indicators point to an increased CIA counterterrorist effort in Somalia, but the operations are limited. A senior Somali intelligence official said,

“They want to help us, but the situation is not allowing them to do (it) however they want. They are not in control of the politics, they are not in control of the security” (Seahill 2).

If cultural factors suggest the CIA favors escalation, than the CIA was struggling to conduct operations in Somalia.

Cultural Factors

Limited strike operations in Somalia began in 2011. The transition from Patraeus, to Morrell, to Brennan could support a de-escalation of strikes as Brennan supported more judicious process for targeting.

Summary - Case #4 Somalia

H3 depicts a major driving force for variation in strike number. There is not enough information to test H4. H5 does not matter because of Somalia’s excessively weak government. There has been no outcry against strikes to test H6. H7 appears somewhat conclusive. H8 is not supported and H9 is partially supported.

Culturally, the CIA leadership transition could explain the consistent de-escalation of strikes.
Chapter 6: Conclusions

This paper aimed to establish the driving forces behind drone strikes across and within specific arenas from 2008-2013. On its face, threat levels are the most expected to be the only sole force behind drone strike increase and decrease. My literature review revealed that there might be many other factors behind drone strike numbers, including domestic, bureaucratic, and cultural influences. I developed hypotheses to test in the combat arena of Afghanistan, and the non-warfare arenas of Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. This chart illustrates our findings for each case:

S=Supported  
O=Partially Supported  
X=Not Supported  
I= Insufficient Information  
N/A= Not Applicable  
Inc= Inconclusive

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<tr>
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<th>H1</th>
<th>H2</th>
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My findings reveal that threat levels appear to be the greatest driving force behind drone strikes. Cooperation appears to matter, but only states with high levels of strikes (Pakistan and Afghanistan). Limitations on strike procedure have a significant effect on drone strike number. The other factors cannot establish causality with strike number.
Casualty Aversion Theory is supported in Afghanistan. The public and prefers drone warfare in comparison to putting soldiers in harm’s wary. Economic aversion theory requires further testing.

Cultural factors can help us understand the reasoning behind decision-making and merit future research.

Other Findings:

Insurgent attack levels in Afghanistan almost correspond directly with strike numbers in Pakistan. This suggests that violence in Afghanistan may have a direct influence on drone strike number in Pakistan. Al Qaeda was able to operate and orchestrate attacks in FATA so the U.S. might be targeting the source of attacks in Afghanistan by aiming at group base locations in FATA.

Future Research:

Future Research should be aimed at examining the long-term effects of drone combat. My paper examines driving forces, but the results and controversy from drone combat may ultimately undermine any security effort by the U.S.

Drones may take soldiers away from the danger of combat, but they also lose the opportunity to relate to civilians in these arenas. Instead, drones may kill these civilians, increasing anti-American sentiment across the world.

Decision-makers need to be well informed on the long-term effects of drone combat if the U.S. wants to achieve global peace and stability. Drones are unbelievably
effective at vanquishing terrorists, but the effect of such combat may hurt future U.S. action.
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