Managing Militias:
Recruitment, Discipline, and Governance among Counterinsurgent Militias in Sierra Leone

Jonathan Filip Forney
Charlottesville, Virginia

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles, 2006
Master of Arts in Foreign Affairs, University of Virginia, 2008

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Politics

University of Virginia
July, 2014

_____

_____

_____

_____

Managing Militias:

Recruitment, Discipline, and Governance among Counterinsurgent Militias in Sierra Leone

by Jonathan Forney

Abstract

Why do non-state armed organizations change over time? Why do some armed groups retain high levels of discipline and cooperative relationships with civilians, while other groups degenerate into racketeering and rogue banditry? This dissertation uses micro-comparative evidence to identify the mechanisms of organizational durability and change within three counter-insurgent militias that operated in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. Newly gathered oral history and survey data from interviews with over 150 former militia members reveal that militia recruitment processes are essential in managing community-level conflicts, and are thus highly predictive of the long-term trajectories of armed organizations that draw recruits from local communities. Critical questions about how militia members are recruited have profound consequences – manifested in the varying levels of success of attempts to monitor and control existing militia members, and to extract key resources from civilian populations. My fine-grained examination of civil militias in Sierra Leone suggests important revisions to, and extensions of, existing theories of recruitment in armed groups and theories of civilian victimization during civil wars.

For my American family, Barbara Forney and Peter Forney

For my Sierra Leonean family, Etta Kamara, Bakarr Koroma, Sayed, and Waheb

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

Acknowledgments

The fieldwork for this dissertation was an elaborate exercise in social networking. While many helpful people in Sierra Leone deserve profound thanks for selflessly integrating a stranger into their webs of personal relationships, a few of them deserve special mention here. Osainatu was the first person to welcome me to Sierra Leone, and it was her hospitality and extensive social network that provided me with the initial encouragement and information necessary to make this overwhelmingly expansive research project seem viable during my preliminary fieldwork. I cannot thank Danny Hoffman enough for connecting me with Mohamed "Sparo" Tarawalley, who is arguably the most efficacious and well-networked individual I have ever met. Nyamakoro Sesay, Sahr Buffa, S.R. Fillie-Faboe, and Mama Munda Fortune also deserve special thanks for their contributions to my research. Bakarr Kororma, David Yarjah, Mohamed Gbondo, and Henry Macauley were phenomenal research assistants and remain great friends.

I could not have completed this project without the tough-love mentorship of David Waldner, who has been my most incisive and insightful interlocutor during every phase of the research and writing process. David read countless drafts of the chapters of this dissertation and often identified my arguments and their merits before I did. He allowed me significant creative latitude whenever possible, reigned me in when necessary, and has truly perfected the art of posing the right question at the right time. To the extent that my writing is crisp and my argument clear, David deserves significant credit.

Whenever I write about the history of people in Sierra Leone, I ask myself: "How would Joe Miller phrase it?" For many years now, Joe has helped me to strike a balance in my thinking and writing between the theory-laden positivism of political science and the life-stories of ordinary people. Joe is also one of the most careful readers and thoughtful

editors I have ever encountered. Exchanging drafts with him was an integral part of my creative process during the framing of this dissertation.

Robert Fatton, Todd Sechser, and Denise Walsh also provided invaluable criticism and mentorship along the way. I want to thank Arthur Abraham, Paul Richards, Paul Staniland, Tom Guterbock, Ana Maria Ibañez, and Brenton Peterson for sharing their specialized expertise and providing helpful comments on various aspects of this project. I received immensely helpful feedback from participants in Yale University's 2012 Conference on Paramilitaries, Militias and Civil Defense Forces in Civil Wars as well as the 2013 Olympia Summer Academy on Conflict & Political Violence. And of course, I am deeply grateful to Stathis Kalyvas for planning and facilitating both of those experiences.

The bulk of this dissertation was written during a generous two-year pre-doctoral fellowship with the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies at the University of Virginia. I could not have asked for a more welcoming and intellectually stimulating environment in which to refine my thinking and finish my writing. I remain indebted to Deborah McDowell, Lawrie Balfour, and all of the fellows at the institute. My fieldwork in Sierra Leone and Liberia benefitted from the financial support of an Albert Gallatin Graduate Research Fellowship, a Louise and Alfred Fernbach Research Grant, and funding from the Department of Politics at UVA. A UVA Society of Fellows Summer Grant made possible a tremendously productive two month pilot study in Sierra Leone.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Creating and Controlling Ad-hoc Armed Organizations

Mama Munda Fortune looks like someone who has magical powers. Her wizened face and yellowed eyes frame a mouth that only has a few teeth left, jutting upward from her lower jaw, sharpened into pointy fangs by years of tooth decay. No more than five feet tall, she is a character of literary proportions. Ask anyone in Sierra Leone. Mama Munda created thousands of bulletproof fighters to fend off the chaos that threatened to devour her country from 1991 to 2002. As the legend goes, her power to protect men against bullets came from a devil named Kassela who appeared to her by the shore of a great body of water, and called upon her to help her people. She, and other magically empowered "initiators" like her, became the cornerstone of defensive militia mobilizations in which undergoing a bulletproofing ceremony was a defining rite of passage for those who became militia members.

I first met Mama Munda in February of 2012, at her house on the outskirts of Bo Town. Finding her was easy. I hailed a motorcycle taxi and asked the rider if he knew where to find Mama Munda Fortune. A quick glance at the scarification patterns on his bare arms told me what his answer would be. "Lo' go [let's go]," he said. I cannot say that Mama Munda was happy to meet me, but a short divination ritual involving the burning of a whisk broom told her that I was not a threat. It took me several visits between February and June to earn a modicum of her trust.

Unfortunately, I never learned to speak enough Mende so that I could converse with Mama Munda without the aid of an interpreter. During my penultimate visit to her, after an

exchange of greetings and gifts, I had my research assistant tell Mama Munda that I had a very important question for her. It is, in fact, one of the only research-related questions that I asked her, and she refused to respond. But her refusal told me everything that I needed to know. I asked Mama Munda if she had ever performed her magical bulletproofing rituals on any Paramount Chiefs. Her level of surprise needed no translation. Her gasp quickly turned into a grin. She wagged her finger at me in feigned dismay and chided me in Mende. My research assistant laughed and explained, "This is very funny. You really caught her [off guard]. She says you shouldn't be asking her that question."[1] Clearly, I had chosen the right question. But why was my question so important, and what did Mama Munda's non-answer mean?

Paramount Chiefs are elected leaders in Sierra Leone – part of a national system of political hierarchy that was codified as part of the apparatus of colonial indirect-rule (Abraham, 1978, 2003). Paramount Chiefs serve political roles akin to those of state governors within the United States and also serve as non-partisan representatives in the national parliament. They are "big," i.e. powerful, men (and occasionally women) who are major hubs in national and local patronage networks. They are repositories of social capital (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Coleman, 1988; Levi, 1996; Portes, 1998; Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson, 2013). In times of crisis, Paramount Chiefs and networks of lower-level chiefs are the most efficacious organizers of local manpower – making them political problem-solvers of first-resort. When the forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) insurgency invaded Sierra Leone in 1991, networks of local and Paramount Chiefs were the first to respond. With the encouragement of the central government, wartime Chiefs went on to build defensive civil militias throughout the country. Paramount Chiefs and the more local Section Chiefs and Town Chiefs below them mobilized tens of thousands of men through networks of reciprocal obligation maintained for multiple generations through the distribution of political funds and favors.

In general, Paramount Chiefs are not the kind of people one expects to find participating in a militia. They are high-level organizers, managers of people and logistics – not

[1]To be clear, she was not offended by the question. Rather, she was surprised that I had gained enough local knowledge to ask a simple question that probed so deeply into wartime politics.

fighters. There were exceptions, including the Paramount Chief of Yile Chiefdom, who was known to have personally led, and fought alongside, the civil militia that he created in his own chiefdom.[2] However, most Paramount Chiefs, and even many lower-ranking chiefs, did not initially join the militias that they helped to create. Only late in the war did Paramount Chiefs start to seek out initiators like Mama Munda and request to undergo their protective rituals.

When Paramount Chiefs finally went to initiators, it was because they needed protection, not only from roving insurgents, but also from the very militias that they had helped to create. Paramount Chiefs, as well as the Section and Town Chiefs below them, found themselves and their communities being increasingly harassed by the militias that were supposed to be defending them. For chiefs, joining a militia meant bodily protection against harm, and perhaps more importantly the restoration of their authority vis-a-vis growing hordes of bulletproof militia members who had come to think of themselves as superior to civilians, including civil authority figures such as chiefs. This ironic power struggle – militias versus their creators – was the troubling subtext of the question that I asked Mama Munda. While I do not interpret her refusal to respond as necessarily implicating her in the problem, I take her reaction as a tacit acknowledgement of the important political undercurrents to which my question alluded.

How did chiefs in many parts of Sierra Leone lose control of the defensive militias they helped to create? This is the historical puzzle that motivates this dissertation. In broader theoretical terms, this dissertation is about how and why armed organizations change over time. In particular, why do some armed groups retain high levels of discipline and cooperative relationships with civilians, while other groups degenerate into racketeering and rogue banditry?

My answers to these questions draw on eleven months of fieldwork in Sierra Leone. I use newly gathered oral histories and survey data from interviews with over 150 former militia members to identify the mechanisms of organizational change within three counter-insurgent militias that operated in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. During my fieldwork,

[2]Author conversation with Paul Richards.

informants consistently described early militias as having been filled with loyal individuals who refrained from looting and who never abused local civilian populations. Former militia members, as well as people who had remained civilians during the war, attributed the positive characteristics of early militias to the high levels of selectivity achieved during recruitment processes in which chiefs would carefully screen new recruits. Notwithstanding their initial success, these systems of screening recruits proved fragile. My informants suggested that, as the war intensified, recruitment strategies changed and deteriorated. In many cases, this led to the increasing victimization of civilians by poorly selected militia members.[3] While every regional militia was adversely affected by intensifying conflict, some groups fared better than others. Tracing the divergent histories of three autonomous militias reveals the central importance of recruitment processes as a determinant of the long-term development of armed groups.

The Recruitment Problem: Finding Trustworthy Fighters

The leaders of informal armed groups are plagued by the problem of finding trustworthy fighters. In his autobiography, Yoweri Museveni (1997, 85) described the challenges he faced when attempting to find suitable recruits to join the National Resistance Movement (NRM), fighting against Idi Amin in the late 1970s:

> We recruited fifty-four boys, mostly from Bugisu, and started training them at Nachingwea. Unfortunately, once again, these boys had not been well selected. They had been working mostly in towns like Nairobi and had a *kiyaye* (lumpen proletariat) culture. They began misbehaving in the Frelimo camp and soon after their training, the Tanzanian government dispersed them.

Museveni attributed the misbehavior of a cohort of new recruits to the fact that they were not "well selected." From Museveni's perspective, the recruits' youth and their "kiyaye" or lumpen status – being unemployed and socially marginal – made them particularly intractable. The Tanzanian government was able to eject the problematic recruits from NRM forces while they were still being trained in Tanzania, thus preventing a scenario in which a group of newly armed and poorly disciplined fighters could potentially undermine the functionality

[3]These findings are consistent with findings reported by Nathalie Wlodarczyk (2009, 102).

and credibility of the armed organization.

The individuals in charge of recruitment in informal armed organizations vary widely in their ability and willingness to control influxes of new fighters. Like Museveni, the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Foday Sankoh, experienced similar challenges when attempting to find suitable recruits for his insurgent organization in Sierra Leone. Sankoh also tried to incorporate young volunteers into his forces, but unlike Museveni, he did not subject those recruits to the same level of scrutiny in terms of their quality. The native historian of Sierra Leone, Ibrahim Abdullah (1998, 234), cites careless recruitment and insufficient indoctrination as primary reasons for the collapse of discipline in the RUF insurgency:

> Whereas the 'classical' liberation movements had policy guidelines with respect to the recruitment and training of lumpens [street youths], the new movements, with the sole exception of Museveni's NRM, were more concerned with having people who could wield weapons in the name of 'revolution'.

Abdullah bemoans the fact that Foday Sankoh's RUF and many other contemporary African armed groups, such as the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), undermined their own "revolutionary" or "patriotic" credentials by victimizing the civilians whose cause they claimed to be championing. He attributes the indiscipline and wanton violence of RUF fighters to "the [unmitigated] influx of more teenagers as lumpens" (Abdullah, 1998, 234). The induction of lumpens was problematic because it strained existing leadership and supervisory structures within the RUF, with the end result being an almost complete collapse of discipline and the loss of popular civilian support.

In the context of civil warfare, armed groups – be they insurgents or counterinsurgents – face similar problems of *adverse selection*. That is, the leaders or patrons of armed groups attempt to select trustworthy new fighters on the basis of limited and potentially unreliable information about the quality of prospective members. So long as there are benefits associated with joining an armed group, there will be people who are willing to lie about their motives and qualifications in order to gain access to those benefits. How can recruiters sort the good from the bad? What determines the quality of individuals who become members in an armed group?

Current understandings of the recruitment of armed actors have been strongly influenced by questions about how civilians decide whether or not to volunteer to join an armed group (Petersen, 2001; Wood, 2003; De Mesquita, 2005; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008; Weinstein, 2007). In comparison, we know very little about what recruiters want and how they determine who should and should not be admitted to their armed organization.[4] A small number of social scientific studies directly address recruitment processes from the recruiter's perspective (Hegghammer, 2013; Weinstein, 2005). However, these analyses tend to assume, rather than investigate, recruiters' preferences with regard to the quality of new recruits. As a result, the key construct of recruit "quality" is frequently decontextualized – defined abstractly and deductively, rather than grounded in an empirical assessment of what recruiters want. In addition, the few theories that do focus on recruiters and adverse selection problems tend to focus on how would-be fighters can send recruiters "signals" (information) about their quality. These theories over-emphasize the efficacy of signaling mechanisms in wartime contexts and tend to portray recruiters as having extremely limited means with which to actively gather information about the quality of volunteers. This dissertation is an attempt to fill these gaps in the literature about recruitment in informal armed groups.

The Argument

I argue that recruiters in armed groups, much like employers in a civil labor market, can ameliorate problems of adverse selection by screening new recruits – that is, by proactively gathering information about the motivations and skills of prospective fighters. Assuming that recruiters do not merely admit all willing volunteers into their organization, the selectivity of screening will be a function of recruiters' levels of access to two scarce non-material resources: *social networks* and *time*. Social networks can act as conduits of information, transmitting locally held knowledge about a given recruit's character and background to the central figures in charge of screening recruits. These flows of information enable recruiters to identify and exclude undesirable types of would-be fighters, even when

[4]The recruiter-focused scholarship that does exist is heavily influenced by empirical studies of terrorist recruitment and is mostly descriptive (Blazak, 2001; Arjona and Kalyvas, 2009; Forest, 2006; Gerwehr and Daly, 2006; Richards, 2002).

such undesirables are prevalent within the pool of volunteers. Time is also essential because it affects the ability of recruiters to collect and consider the information made available through social networks. Other things being equal, more information and more time should allow for more selective screening, which should be reflected in the quality of the individuals inducted into a given armed group. In turn, the quality of recruits is of immense practical importance because low quality recruits are harder for commanders to control, and are more likely to victimize civilians in the areas where they operate.

Violent Processes, Recruitment, and Change

Empirically, one finds significant spatial and temporal variations in the ability of recruiters to solve adverse selection problems during recruitment in armed groups. This is because the determinants of recruitment selectivity are constantly shifting at the local level. The availability of both social networks and time is endogenous to warfare as a violent social process (Wood, 2008). Social networks tend to fragment or degenerate as a result of the death and displacement of civilians. Impending attacks by nearby enemy forces can rob recruiters of the precious time that they need to gather information and screen new recruits. In general, violent processes tend to degrade or disrupt existing systems of political control, including recruitment procedures that lend themselves to high levels of selectivity. Once damaged or destroyed, such systems of control are extremely difficult to repair or recreate. Historically, this creates a ratchet-effect – fragile mechanisms of control such as recruitment selectivity will tend to degenerate over time, and seldom improve again once they have degenerated. With that being said, violent social processes vary significantly over time and over the geography of a conflict. In some cases, a group's recruitment procedures may fall apart over time. In other cases, recruitment may remain selective throughout the course of the war.

Recruitment in ad-hoc armed groups is a dynamic, iterative process involving the militarization of local and regional social networks.[5] The formation of non-state armed groups

[5]Scholars of group mobilization, protest, and organized violence have all emphasized the importance of social networks in facilitating violent and high-risk collective action (Barkey and Van Rossem, 1997; Centola and Macy, 2007; Gould, 1993, 1995, 1996; Marwell, Oliver and Prahl, 1988; Parkinson, 2013; Siegel, 2009;

involves significant sub-sections of communities making the abrupt and potentially destabilizing transition from civilians to armed (hence instantaneously more powerful) combatants. No community is free from political power struggles, personal hatreds, and petty jealousy, but these conflictual undercurrents are typically restrained by peacetime norms and legal structures. National-level crises such as civil warfare or state collapse undermine mechanisms of restraint and enable the violent expression of local animosities (Kalyvas, 2006, 1999, 2003; Lubkemann, 2008). In these pivotal contexts, recruitment processes play an essential role in managing latent community-level conflicts and are thus highly predictive of the long-term trajectories of armed organizations that draw recruits from local communities. The leaders who control recruitment processes are well aware of the political fault-lines within their own communities, and are strongly motivated by the fear that poorly selected fighters may literally stab them in the back.

Changes over time in the selectivity of recruitment processes have the potential to produce cascades of increasingly consequential outcomes. The most proximate outcome is that recruitment selectivity determines the quality of recruits who become fighters in an armed group. Different quality fighters will have different allegiances and different propensities to obey their commanders, and these varying levels of obedience will affect internal group discipline. In turn, fighters' levels of obedience and discipline within their own groups also affect, and are affected by, the levels of restraint that they use when interacting with local civilian populations. More selective recruitment will lead to higher quality recruits who will be more likely to obey their commanders and thus will exhibit higher levels of internal discipline and lower levels of victimization of civilians. Conversely, decreases in recruitment selectivity will result in the induction of increasingly large numbers of low quality recruits

Staniland, 2014). In particular, I follow Paul Staniland (2012) and Sarah Parkinson (2013) in theorizing the importance of social networks to the creation and maintenance of non-state armed groups during civil wars. My treatment of social networks focuses on the informational properties of those networks and is thus different from the theory presented by Staniland (2012, 2014), which focuses on the organizational properties of social networks – i.e. the conversion of peacetime associations or "social bases" to wartime organizational hierarchies or institutions. My theory of social networks as conduits of information also differs from the focus that Sarah Parkinson (2013, 418) places on the relational properties of social networks – i.e. how non-militarized "quotidian" social networks can form a bridge, and facilitate cooperation, between the hierarchies of otherwise disconnected militant factions. It is worth noting that Parkinson (2013, 423) mentions the fact that social networks facilitate the sharing of information, but in her theory information sharing is not an independent variable – rather, it is one of several outcomes that can be explained by understanding changes in quotidian relationships.

who are prone to disobedience.

A small number of low quality recruits and a few acts of disobedience will not necessarily be enough to fundamentally alter the character of an armed organization and the relationships its members have with civilians. Commanders can discourage disobedience through the monitoring and punishment of misbehavior. However, as the number of poorly selected recruits grows, the supervisory burdens placed on commanders will increase and will eventually reach a breaking point. Overwhelmed by disobedient recruits, commanders will be increasingly unable to dole out effective punishments, and unpunished disobedience tends to lead to spirals of increasing disobedience. In extreme cases, the end result is that the leaders of armed groups will effectively lose control over the forces that are presumably under their command, which opens the gates for the opportunistic victimization of civilians. The processes that produce group discipline and relationships with civilians are complex, involving a number of potentially important factors, but my contention is that recruitment selectivity and recruit quality are at their center.

I use a combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence from the operations of civil militias in Sierra Leone to refine and test my theory of recruitment selectivity and its consequences. My intention is to formulate a theory that will have broad application to the category of non-state armed groups that develop through the militarization of local civilian social networks. I will comment further on the scope conditions of my theory below. For now, I want to emphasize that my relatively narrow focus on a single national context and a single type of non-state armed group is justified as an attempt to maximize the internal validity of the theory being developed and tested.[6]

Why Sierra Leone?

I focus on the civil war in Sierra Leone because of its centrality to two important threads of scholarship.[7] First, my theory of social networks and recruitment selectivity

[6] I provide an elaborate justification of my methodological choices in Chapter 2.

[7] In purely practical terms, Sierra Leone is currently a relatively safe, welcoming, and convenient place to do research on conflict. People in Sierra Leone are remarkably welcoming toward foreigners, and Krio, the lingua franca of Sierra Leone, is an English-based creole that is easy for native English-speakers to learn. After a decade of stable peace, nationwide reconciliation, and the closing of legal proceedings (of the Special

stands as a counterpoint to "resource-curse" theories of conflict that emphasize the corrupting influence of material resource endowments (such as diamonds) on the development of armed groups. The civil war in Sierra Leone was one of the important early cases that led to the development of resource-focused theories, often characterized as the quintessential "greed"-based civil war (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004). The war in Sierra Leone has been widely analyzed for the central role played by loot-able diamond wealth (Lujala, Gleditsch and Gilmore, 2005; Humphreys, 2005), and the "opportunistic" motivations of insurgents (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Given the ostensible importance of "blood diamonds" in shaping the civil war in Sierra Leone (Campbell, 2004), the armed groups that operated during the conflict provide a challenging set of "least-likely," micro-level cases (Eckstein, 1975; Lijphart, 1971) with which to develop and test a theory that focuses on distinctly non-material factors such as social networks, rather than on natural resource endowments and cash-flow from foreign sponsors.

Second, my analysis of the militarization of social networks within the Sierra Leone conflict is an attempt to look beneath the "mask of anarchy" that tends to distort understandings of African warfare (Ellis, 2001). Beyond the eye-catching moments of chaos, one finds local, privatized systems of social control that have the potential to create security and governance even amidst the disintegration of Weberian statehood. The conflict in Sierra Leone provided social scientists and policymakers with an important glimpse into what appeared to be the stomach-turning future of "failed states" in the post-Cold War world (Reno, 2004; Rotberg, 2004; Kaplan, 1994). The precipitous collapse of Sierra Leone as a nation-state was pivotal in the theorization of the "warlord politics" of African strongmen and weak post-colonial states (Reno, 1998; Herbst, 2000). And, for many scholars, the unfolding civil chaos in Sierra Leone foreshadowed the contours of modern African insurgency and counter-insurgency (Bøas and Dunn, 2007; Clapham, 1998) – including the involvement of private

Court for Sierra Leone) stemming from the conflict, it has become timely to record and understand the stories of peoples' wartime experiences in Sierra Leone. While peoples' memories of the conflict remain strong, the passage of time, and nationwide reconciliation processes have allowed people to forgive and forget. For the most part, people in Sierra Leone no longer judge or condemn one another based on wartime grudges or offenses. Nonetheless, I was conscious of the potentially sensitive nature of my investigation and designed my interview procedures to protect interviewees, while respecting their rights as research subjects and human beings. This project was approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Virginia.

security contractors (Johnston, 2008; Gberie, 2005; Keen, 2005), the widespread recruitment of child combatants (Singer, 2006; Rosen, 2005; Pham, 2005; Brett and Specht, 2004), and the ostensible "anarchy" of militarized youths hacking off limbs and brutally raping women in a drug-induced haze (Kaplan, 1994). As one of the great archetypes of anarchy, Sierra Leone is the perfect case within which to identify and explore social mechanisms of "governance without government" (Raeymaekers, Menkhaus and Vlassenroot, 2008; Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009; Meagher, 2012; Menkhaus, 2007).

To be sure, my analysis of the conflict in Sierra Leone involves an attempt to understand and explain violence, but not the violence of 'tribal' hatreds, mass killings and amputations that dominates Western (mis)understandings of African conflicts. Despite what media coverage of African conflicts might suggest, killing is a relatively rare outcome when compared with the beatings and looting that take place on an almost daily basis during conflicts. This dissertation focuses on these comparatively more prevalent, but also seemingly mundane, forms of everyday civilian victimization.

In peacetime society, theft and assault are punishable crimes, but in wartime such acts become naturalized, almost invisible to foreign spectators. War crimes tribunals and the International Criminal Court do not put rank-and-file fighters on trial for coercive mistreatment of local civilians.[8] To the extent that fighters are punished for everyday war crimes, it is by their compatriots and their commanders. In wartime, justice and governance are not completely absent, they are merely more privatized and less consensus-based than usual.

I analyze the members of civil militias in Sierra Leone not only as potential perpetrators, but also as potential providers of governance. I conceptualize civilians not only as potential victims, but also as citizens engaging with combatants in attempts to create semblances of order and justice in the absence of central government. The fact that warfare tends to destroy such governance arrangements means that they are indeed fleeting, but does not mean that they are impossible to create.

[8] I do not mean to imply that the ICC or other bodies should indict combatants for comparatively small, everyday offenses. Rather, I want to highlight the strong tendency for everyday victimization to disappear, not only in wartime reportage, but also during post-war processes of meaning-making and history-writing. Danny Hoffman (2007) and Tim Kelsall (2009) have highlighted some of the greater ironies that emerged during foreign attempts to create post-war transitional 'justice' in Sierra Leone.

Why Civil Militias?

I focus on civil counter-insurgency militias, as opposed to state militaries or rebel/insurgent forces, because militias are an under-studied category of non-state armed groups. Prevailing theories of organized violence either ignore the widespread existence of civil militias or lump these armed groups together with government forces, assuming a level of political unity and coherent, centralized command that seldom exists among counter-insurgency forces. The empirical studies that directly address the topic of civil militias are primarily descriptive and do not directly engage with the expanding social scientific literature theorizing aspects of civil warfare and organized violence (Muana, 1997; Reno, 2004; Hoffman, 2011, 2007; Francis, 2005; Wlodarczyk, 2009; Mazzei, 2009; Richani, 2007; Wilson, 1992). This dissertation is among the first studies to integrate militias into existing debates about recruitment in armed groups and civilian-combatant relationships during civil wars.[9] Given the prevalence of civil militias in modern and contemporary civil warfare – from Colombia to Morocco to Iraq – my analysis will be of immediate interest to Africanists, anthropologists of warfare, political scientists of conflict and peace studies, and Western policymakers concerned with military interventions.[10]

I also focus on civil militias in Sierra Leone because the histories of many regional militias in that conflict have yet to be written. Most of the extant histories and ethnographies of civil militias focus on the *Kamajor* militia in Sierra Leone (Muana, 1997; Richards, 2002; Hoffman, 2011; Francis, 2005). The attention that the Kamajors have drawn is appropriate because the Kamajor civil defense movement was the largest of its kind, but this narrow focus is also problematic because the Kamajors were one among five major regional militias (and a handful of smaller, urban militias) that operated during the course of the conflict in Sierra Leone. This dissertation compares the now widely studied Kamajor militia with two equally consequential, but still mostly unknown, regional militias – the *Tamaboro* and *Donso*. To my knowledge, the empirical chapters of this dissertation represent the most

[9]Notable exceptions are the analysis offered by Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) and the papers presented at the Conference on Paramilitaries, Militias, and Civil Defense Forces in Civil Wars, held at Yale University on October 19-20, 2012.

[10]On counterinsurgency policy debates revolving around civil militias in Afghanistan and Iraq, see: (Marten, 2012; Moyar, Mark, 2011)

complete history of the Tamaboro and Donso militias that has been written.[11]

Scope Conditions

Although I develop and test the theory of recruitment selectivity on civil militias in Sierra Leone, the underlying logic of the theory should apply to insurgent and counter-insurgent forces alike. At the national-level, civil militias are clearly different from rebel forces: civil militias are typically allies or extensions of official state militaries and defenders of political incumbents, whereas rebel forces are the opponents of state militaries and actively seek to disrupt the political status quo. However, this dissertation emphasizes the extent to which civil militias and insurgent forces can be quite similar at the micro- or organizational-level because both kinds of groups face analogous managerial challenges, including problems of adverse selection during recruitment. Counter-insurgent militias, like insurgent forces, tend to solve managerial problems in an ad hoc fashion and on shoestring budgets. These groups make do with local and occasionally foreign-supplied resources, while having inherently limited (or no) access to the significant infrastructural power of the nation-state within the borders of which they operate. The theory of recruitment selectivity should ultimately apply to a broad class of armed groups that maintain their membership by drawing voluntary recruits from ambient civilian populations, providing limited and inconsistent material benefits to incentivize membership and good behavior, and relying heavily on social networks as informational resources.

In fact, the theory of recruitment selectivity potentially applies to instances of high-risk collective action that take place outside the political context of civil warfare. Street gangs, terrorist cells, and organized criminal syndicates all face similar problems of adverse selection when recruiting new members (Hegghammer, 2013; Gambetta, 2009; Vigil, 1996; Densley, 2012). These organizations, along with militias and insurgencies differ importantly from most state military and police forces in terms of how they can manage the recruitment of new members. I group all of these non-state armed organizations together on the basis of

[11] To date, the recorded history of the Tamaboro and Donso is limited to a monograph by Caspar Fithen (1999), the ethnography of Danny Hoffman (2011), and a few snippets in national-level histories of the Sierra Leone conflict (Gberie, 2005; Keen, 2005).

their shared lack of capacity to: 1) draw on state infrastructure, information technology, and criminal records during processes of selecting new members, 2) credibly promise both short- and long-term benefits to participants (in terms of regular wages, pensions, and medical care), and 3) implement elaborate procedures to train and control new recruits once they have been selected and armed. For groups with limited capacities along these lines, careful selection of new recruits is the primary backstop against rank-and-file disobedience, and social networks are the primary resource with which such groups can engage in selective recruitment.

This is not to suggest that social networks are not relevant to recruitment in state-administered armed groups. On the contrary, social networks are utilized in most recruitment scenarios involving an employer/recruiter evaluating the quality of a prospective employee/recruit. The important difference is that most government forces, like civil firms, will have a much larger range of resources available with which to calibrate offers of incentives and reduce informational asymmetries during recruitment, and to induce desirable behaviors once new recruits have been formally inducted and armed. The three key capacities listed above provide better resourced groups with alternative means of vetting recruits and controlling their behavior once recruited, thus vitiating the significance of screening through social networks.

With that being said, the intersection of state- or nation-hood and high levels of infrastructural and economic power is incidental and historically contingent (Mann, 1986, 2013). One finds state militaries with profoundly limited capacities, and non-state armed groups with surprisingly extensive capacities. For example, my argument about social networks and the significance of recruitment selectivity is probably more applicable to the case of the poorly financed, under-equipped and disorganized Sierra Leone Army (from 1992 to 2001) than to the case of wealthy, disciplined, and semi-professionalized drug cartels in contemporary Mexico (as of the early 2000s).[12]

[12]The Sierra Leone Army had extremely limited resources due to the poverty and rampant corruption within the national government and among high-ranking military officers, placing inherent limits on the potential for the army to attract high quality recruits and exclude low quality volunteers. Due to a rare combination of incapacity and incompetence, commanders in the Sierra Leone Army embezzled wages and logistical support that was meant for frontline forces, while indiscriminately conscripting homeless young men in the capital city of Freetown (Gberie, 2005). These practices, simultaneously undermined typical

Clearly, conventional typologies of armed groups are of extremely limited utility in understanding where and when the theory of social networks and recruitment selectivity is likely to serve as a primary mechanism for explaining important outcomes such as group discipline and relationships with local civilians.[13] In lieu of re-typologizing, I want to simply suggest that my theory will be most relevant when armed groups have access to local social networks but are lacking in terms of other, more formal aspects of organizational capacity. Specifically, my theory will be most applicable when armed groups lack extensive infrastructure, information technology, and public records during processes of selecting new members; when groups are unable to make credible promises to provide middle- and long-term benefits to participants (in terms of regular wages, pensions, and medical care); and when groups have limited capacities to implement elaborate procedures to train and control new recruits once they have been selected and armed.

An Overview of the Dissertation

A conventional approach to social scientific inquiry, including the study of civil warfare, is to focus on a single outcome or dependent variable to be explained, e.g. the victimization of civilians by armed groups. I am deeply concerned with the plight of civilians

wage-based incentives for soldiers to obey their commanders (or risk being fired and losing all future wage and pension benefits) and generated an influx of completely un-vetted soldiers who proved to be impossible for their commanders to control. The result was a complete breakdown in military discipline that manifested as the "sobel" phenomenon throughout Sierra Leone – soldiers 'defending' civilians during the day and then robbing them like rebels during the night. The Sierra Leone army thus lacked or failed to utilize most of the capacities that we would typically associate with a state military.

Contrast the Sierra Leone Army with the contemporary *La Familia* drug cartel (as of the early 2000s) that operates out of Michocán, Mexico. La Familia is known for grotesque violence against its enemies, but also profoundly disciplined restraint against local civilians. In the early 2000s, La Familia controlled local police through targeted bribery and threats, enforced contracts, built public structures, and provided night-time policing of municipalities (Finnegan, 2010). I do not have enough evidence to reconstruct La Familia's recruitment procedures, but the group clearly employs a class of well-equipped fighters who are sufficiently well trained and professionalized to be capable of directly confronting Mexico's state military and police forces. The leaders of La Familia have sufficient information technology to maintain extensive international networks for the movement and sale of contraband goods, and sufficient financial resources to provide consistent salaries and benefits to La Familia members, should they choose to do so (Finnegan, 2010).

[13] I would argue, more generally, that conventional typologies of armed groups are of limited utility to most theoretical understandings of violent collective action. Labels such as *militia*, *paramilitary*, *terrorist*, and *rebel* have much to do with the politics of meaning and legitimacy surrounding violent groups, and little to do with the realities of how those groups operate. But this is too expansive, and perhaps, too controversial of a claim to defend in this dissertation.

during periods of civil chaos, and that concern was one of the personal motivations behind my choice to study organized violence and perform fieldwork in Sierra Leone. However, one of the primary implications of my research is that the victimization of civilians by armed groups is just one part of a set of iterative processes that take place repeatedly over the course of a conflict. During a single month of a conflict, militia leaders and patrons may recruit new members, discipline existing members, and interact with local civilians – a set of overlapping processes that have the potential to affect one another in the present moment and to determine future outcomes. For the purpose of analysis, I have broken these often simultaneous and cyclical dynamics into a more tractable and linear format that addresses a set of sequential outcomes, starting with the creation of militias and initial attempts to recruit trustworthy armed actors, and ending with the question of how those armed actors treated civilians.

Chapter 2 presents a more elaborate and testable version of my argument about the short- and long-term consequences of variations in the selectivity of recruitment in non-state armed groups. Drawing on economic theories of asymmetrical information between principals and agents, I establish a deductive basis for my theory of how the creators of armed groups (as principals) can use social networks to screen new recruits and thereby increase their control over armed agents. Although my theory of principal-agent dynamics is a simplification of reality, it retains many of the important complexities of micro-level processes of militia management, and pays greater attention to historical context than existing theorizations in the literature. The theoretical framework articulated in Chapter 2 provides a clear set of questions and hypotheses that organize the empirical chapters in this dissertation.

Chapter 3 begins with a set of related questions: who are militia recruiters, what do they want, and what means do they have for pursuing their objectives when recruiting new militia members? Using fine-grained evidence from my fieldwork in Sierra Leone, this chapter arrives inductively at a set of pivotal definitions – most importantly, of *recruit quality* – that most theorists have merely assumed or deduced without a firm empirical basis. Chapter 3 also illustrates the mechanisms behind selective recruitment, revealing how chiefs, as militia recruiters, utilized extensive patronage networks to gather information about prospective

militia members and exclude undesirable recruits.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the causes and short-term consequences of changes over time in the selectivity of militia recruitment. Chapter 4 uses qualitative evidence from oral histories and secondary sources to show how escalating warfare can disrupt information-gathering systems during militia recruitment, leading to reductions in recruitment selectivity. Chapter 5 uses quantitative survey data to present a more systematic test of the relationship between changes in recruitment selectivity and measurable changes in recruit quality, while controlling for a number of alternative explanations suggested by prominent theories of recruitment in armed organizations.

Chapter 6 explores the longer-term consequences of variations in recruitment selectivity and recruit quality. Are carefully selected recruits easier for their commanders to control? Do carefully selected recruits exercise more restraint in their interactions with civilians? Chapter 6 presents a combination of statistical tests and qualitative evidence to test two interrelated hypotheses: 1) that carefully selected recruits are easier for their commanders to control, and 2) that carefully selected recruits are less likely to victimize civilians in the areas where they operate. My findings provide confirmation for both hypotheses, suggesting that recruitment selectivity and recruit quality are important determinants of internal militia discipline and external relationships with civilians.

This dissertation raises critical and, as yet, unexamined questions about how informal armed organizations recruit their members. Who underwrites the creation of non-state armed groups and selects their members? How does the identity of these patrons affect their preferences over different types of prospective members? And, to what extent can the patrons of armed groups ensure the quality of new recruits and control those recruits once they become active fighters? The answers to these questions have profound consequences, manifested in varying levels of discipline within armed groups, and variations in the relative safety of civilians in the areas where armed groups operate.

Chapter 2

A Theory of Recruitment and Organizational Change

Why do non-state armed organizations change over time? Why do some armed groups retain high levels of discipline and cooperative relationships with civilians, while other groups degenerate into racketeering and rogue banditry? The violence of warfare has a general tendency to destroy things and people, and to disrupt systems of political authority and social control. Yet local experiences of warfare may differ greatly, both over time and across space. These variations help to explain important dimensions of differentiation among armed groups that form and operate in different localities.

This chapter presents a theory of how recruitment processes produce changes in armed organizations over time. Critical questions about how new fighters are selected have profound consequences – manifested in the varying levels of success of attempts to monitor and control existing militia members, and to maintain cooperative relationships with civilian populations. The theory in this chapter is ultimately a more formal and generalizable version of a set of casual explanations that people in Sierra Leone offered to account for major changes over time in regional militias such as the Kamajors.

The following narrative synthesizes the explanations for organizational change that I encountered during my fieldwork with former militia members and civilians. In the early days of militia recruitment, community leaders, called "chiefs," took charge of recruitment processes and created screening or vetting procedures that kept untrustworthy people out of militias. Because the early Kamajor militia was made up of trustworthy people, the group dutifully defended against intruders without victimizing civilians. Later in the war, chiefs

lost control of the process of Kamajor recruitment, and the traditional healers (often called "initiators") who usurped chiefly authority admitted large numbers of untrustworthy people who would have otherwise been excluded by the chiefs. That influx of untrustworthy people gradually undermined Kamajor discipline and led to the increasing victimization of civilians in the areas where the Kamajors operated. The explanation in this narrative revolves around the selectivity of Kamajor recruitment. Although this simple narrative does not explain the reasons why, it is clear that chiefs recruited different kinds of individuals than initiators recruited, and those immediate differences in recruit quality had broader consequences in terms of changes in the internal discipline of the Kamajors and in the tendencies of Kamajors to victimize civilians.

This explanation for differentiation between the early and late Kamajors hinges on a basic intuition about the potentially large significance of even small variations in the quality of individuals in a group. Individuals who are members of an organization will vary in the degree to which they are self-motivated, or can be trusted, to perform sets of tasks that leaders delegate to them. Highly trustworthy individuals can be thought of as self-governing in the sense that no additional positive incentives or punishments need to be imposed in order for them to be obedient to their commanders and behave in ways that are consistent with the goals of the organization writ large (Cook, Levi and Hardin, 2009; Gambetta, 1988; Hardin, 2006; Ostrom and Walker, 2003). Untrustworthy members require additional supervision and inducements toward productive behavior. In the absence of those inducements, untrustworthy types can be expected to behave in ways that are either unproductive or counterproductive in terms of the goals of the organization.

These differences in the trustworthiness or quality of members are highly significant to individuals in leadership roles. Leaders have a stake in ensuring that the behavior of members is in keeping with their preferences, and with the goals of the organization as a whole. As additional untrustworthy members join a group, they increase the supervisory burden on group leaders, and also increase the likelihood that other group members will disobey their superiors. As leaders face increased supervisory burdens, it becomes increasingly likely that the members of the group will be able to disobey leaders with impunity. Unsanctioned

disobedience is particularly detrimental to group discipline because unpunished infractions have a documented tendency to produce vicious cycles of increasing disobedience as individuals realize that the influence of relevant norms and authority structures is deteriorating (Keizer, Lindenberg and Steg, 2008; Paternoster et al., 2012).

The leaders of armed groups are plagued by the problem of finding appropriately motivated recruits and maintaining control over fighters once they have been armed. Building on the deductive insights of agency theory, this chapter analyzes the iterative challenges that leaders face when attempting to maintain control over the members of their armed organizations. The principal-agent model provides a framework for analyzing managerial strategies for coping with the agency problems that arise when one party (the principal) has delegated some set of responsibilities to another party (the agent). During the creation and maintenance of non-state armed organizations, the individuals facilitating the formation of those groups face significant agency problems related to the recruitment of trustworthy new members, and the subsequent maintenance of discipline among those members once they have been mobilized as fighters. These problems are similar to the well theorized agency problems faced by civil employers who must solve adverse selection problems in the recruitment of appropriately motivated and skilled employees, and supervision problems in ensuring that employees are satisfactorily executing the tasks that have been delegated to them (Miller, 1992; Greenwald, 1986).

The key generalizable characteristic of agency problems in both civil and military contexts is the issue of asymmetrical information between principals and agents. In the case of an armed organization, the principal in charge of recruiting fighters faces problems of *adverse selection*. The recruiter wants armed agents who are martially skilled and trustworthy, but has limited information about the relevant characteristics of would-be fighters. The individuals proposing to join armed groups have full knowledge of their quality or type, but cannot easily convey reliable information about their type to recruiters. To make matters worse, prospective members of an armed group may also be motivated to misrepresent themselves as skilled or trustworthy in order to gain access to the benefits of membership. To the extent that recruiters can gather reliable information about the traits of prospective recruits, they

can maximize the proportion of highly skilled and trustworthy individuals in their organization, while excluding undesirable types. Once recruited, armed agents present a second layer of managerial problems that have sometimes been categorized as problems of *moral hazard* (Miller, 1992; Weinstein, 2007). The rank-and-file members of an informal armed organization typically operate with significant autonomy, and the principals who supervise them have an inherently limited ability (lacking access to the significant infrastructural power of the state) to monitor the performance of those agents and to sanction undesirable behavior when it arises. To the extent that rank-and-file fighters are self-motivated to execute the responsibilities delegated to them, the burden on supervisors is lessened.

The sections in this chapter build on the general framework provided by the principal-agent model to present a sequential theory of recruitment and organizational change in armed groups. In the first part of this ongoing managerial process, principals face problems of adverse selection – attempting to select trustworthy new recruits who will eventually become full members of the organization and be deployed as fighters. Having chosen among would-be fighters, principals then face the problem of supervising those fighters who were selected. Taken together, the problems of selecting fighters and the problems of supervising fighters in an operational environment both influence how those fighters will perform in the tasks delegated to them, including the theoretically and practically important question of how they will treat civilian populations in the areas where they operate. Having laid out a theory of recruitment and organizational change, the final portion of this chapter addresses questions of research design and case selection.

Adverse Selection Problems: Finding Trustworthy Fighters

The leaders of armed groups face problems of *adverse selection* during recruitment. Armed groups tend to attract a variety of volunteers from among the population of civilians, and some of those volunteers will be undesirable from the standpoint of the leaders in charge of recruitment.[1] From the leaders' perspectives, adverse selection problems arise when leaders

[1]This is an important assumption: the underlying civilian population must contain a variety of types, at least some of whom are undesirable from the standpoint of the leaders of armed groups.

would like to minimize the number of undesirable types who join their organizations, but have limited information with which to identify and exclude such types during the recruitment process.[2]

From the perspective of individuals volunteering to join an armed group, membership implies not only risks to life and limb, but also a number of possible benefits. If the benefits of membership were only appealing to the kinds of individuals who leaders wanted, there would be no problems of adverse selection. But, the benefits of membership typically have broad appeal. Material incentives, such as wages or other goods, may attract a disproportionately large number of undesirable types of volunteers (Weinstein, 2005, 605). To make matters worse, material incentives also provide undesirable types with the motivation to misrepresent themselves as desirable types in order to gain access to the incentives offered. This exacerbates the informational problems that the leaders of armed groups face. Even when leaders do not offer material incentives, membership in an armed organization presents unemployed young men and others on the lower rungs of society with unique opportunities for empowerment and advancement (Hoffman, 2011). The seductive power of wielding a weapon will tend to attract exactly the kind of opportunistic (or otherwise perversely motivated) volunteers whom leaders would prefer to exclude from membership in their armed organizations.[3]

Assuming that the leaders of armed groups have an interest in ameliorating adverse selection problems and sorting out undesirable types of volunteers, the ability of leaders to do so will vary significantly depending on the context. Understanding these variations requires an analysis of recruitment as a complex, iterative process that ultimately determines the quality of individuals who are granted membership in a given armed group.

A complete model of voluntaristic recruitment in armed groups requires an account of the supply of, and demand for, fighters: i.e. who volunteers to join, and who (among the

[2]And, I will argue below that costly (i.e. meaningful) signaling by prospective members of an armed group is extremely unlikely. Given near impossibility of costly signaling, the "market" for fighters is significantly different from the civil labor market in which education levels can allow employers to sort between different types of job-seekers (Spence, 1974).

[3]For now, this is an assumption about the quality of the underlying population of volunteers in the absence of a incentive-based sorting mechanism or a signaling mechanism (e.g. education-levels in civil labor markets). I will replace this assumption with empirical evidence below and in the following chapter.

volunteers) is actually admitted into the organization. Recruitment processes begin when recruiters request additional manpower, and decide what kinds of incentives (if any) to offer in order to attract recruits. The leaders of armed groups assess the resources available to them and choose the level of recruitment incentives to be offered (Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Civilians then weigh the potential benefits of joining a a given armed group (given the incentives offered) against the costs, and self-select into, or out of, the group. Not all of the costs of joining will be known to the civilians who contemplate volunteering, but rumors may circulate if some aspects of the process of joining are particularly "costly" – for example, if recruits are required to undergo traumatic hazing rituals. If induction costs are high and this becomes public knowledge, some individuals who are considering volunteering may decide to remain a civilian rather than submit to the costs of joining. Given the pool of individuals who actually show up and volunteer to join, recruiters must then decide whom to admit into the group. Recruiters have the option of simply accepting every volunteer into their group, but if recruiters decide to be selective, their abilities to do so are contingent on the availability of private information about the quality of individual volunteers, and on the availability of time to collect and utilize said information to exclude unwanted types of volunteers. Once the volunteers have been screened, they are allowed to undergo the rites of passage necessary to join the group. If these rites impose high costs – e.g. physical and psychological trauma – there may be some attrition of volunteers during the induction process. The individuals who make it through the induction process then become full-fledged recruits (or new members) of the militia. The quality of any new cohort of fighters is ultimately conditioned by the three mechanisms described above: self-selection, screening, and attrition.

Self-Selection: Resources and Remunerative Incentives

Nearly all of the scholarship theorizing variations in recruitment and membership in armed groups focuses on the first two stages of the recruitment process – on how recruiters' incentive-choices affect the supply of volunteers, or on how the identities, motivations and preferences of individuals in the general population affect their willingness to join an armed organization. Empirically, the extant scholarship is highly recruit-centric

and has been strongly influenced by questions of recruit motivations and mechanisms of self-selection (De Mesquita, 2005; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008; Wood, 2003; Petersen, 2001). Motivation-focused approaches have drawn on, and contributed to the evolution of, theories of identity (usually "ethnic") politics (Varshney, 2003), collective action problems (Olson, 1965), and incentive compatibility (Gates, 2002). In contrast, very few scholars have focused on understanding how the preferences and capacities of recruiters affect the strategies and tactics that they employ when selecting members for their armed organization. The recruiter-focused scholarship that does exist is heavily influenced by empirical studies of terrorist recruitment and is mostly descriptive (Blazak, 2001; Arjona and Kalyvas, 2009; Forest, 2006; Gerwehr and Daly, 2006; Richards, 2002).

The most prominent theory addressing the choices made by recruiters is Jeremy Weinstein's theory of the rebel "resource-curse," which focuses on the structural determinants of recruiters' incentive choices. His theory suggests that recruiters who have access to significant material resources will tend to offer recruitment incentives (in money, diamonds, or other goods) and will consequently attract a large proportion of low-quality volunteers (called "consumers") whose primary motivations for joining are opportunistic – focused on self-enrichment, rather than furthering the goals of the armed organization (Weinstein, 2005, 603). In contrast, recruiters without access to material resources rely on social ties and promises of future rewards to entice volunteers. The absence of material incentives discourages opportunists and attracts high-quality "investors," whose primary motivations for joining are intrinsic and rooted in solidarity with the underlying identity or goals that characterize the armed organization.

In the resource-curse theory, recruiters gain information about new recruits through a "signaling" mechanism: individuals signal whether they are investors or consumers when they accept the offered incentives to join an armed organization.[4] However, it is somewhat

[4]Weinstein's theory could be categorized as a demand-side theory because it focuses on the first choice made by recruiters – whether or not to offer recruitment incentives(Hegghammer, 2013, 5). However, the theory ultimately explains differential recruitment in armed organizations by explaining what kinds of individuals ("investors" versus "consumers") volunteer to fight. Although recruiters play a role in the process by providing incentives, the choices that recruiters make are structurally determined and highly remote from the effects that they produce in terms of the quality of members inducted into a given armed group. In other words, the model focuses on stage 1 of recruitment, and stops short of explaining how recruiters make discriminating choices about whom to admit to the organization.

misleading to frame the resource-curse theory in terms of a signaling game, because recruiters only receive the signal (of acceptance or rejection of a given set of incentives) after an individual has already joined. Thus, leaders cannot use this information to make informed decisions about whom to include or exclude from membership in their armed organization.[5] According to the resource-curse theory, strategies of proactively reducing informational asymmetries through "information gathering, vouching, and costly induction are more likely to be used by rebel organizations that rely on social endowments" (Weinstein, 2005, 607). The corollary of this assumption is that groups with significant material resource endowments are less likely to engage in proactive strategies for reducing informational asymmetries. These implications are paradoxical to the point of being unrealistic. The theory suggests (without explaining the decision-making processes behind recruiters' strategic choices) that recruiters will employ information gathering strategies when they need them least and will eschew such strategies when they need them most.

Setting aside these assumptions, the key insight of the resource-curse theory is that available resources may affect the incentives that recruiters offer, and incentives offered may, in turn, affect the quality of individuals who volunteer to join a given armed group. The theory directly implies two, sequential hypotheses. First, when the leaders of armed groups have access to significant material resources (e.g diamonds or government sponsorship), they will tend to offer recruitment incentives. Second, when the leaders of armed groups offer recruitment incentives, they will tend to attract lower quality recruits.

A third hypothesis about the relationship between available resources and recruit quality can be derived from part of the underlying logic of the resource-curse theory. This hypothesis is not developed and tested in Weinstein's work, but it is consistent with one of its fundamental intuitions – that more opportunities for material gain will tend to attract larger numbers of opportunistic (hence low quality) volunteers. It may be the case that recruiters do not always convert available material resources into recruitment incentives. If it is widely known that militia membership entails the ability to mine diamonds, opportunistic recruits

[5] In Weinstein's argument, it might be more accurate to talk about incentives as a self-selection mechanism – with volunteers sorting themselves according to their types and preferences – rather than a signaling mechanism, which implies that recruiters make a (more) informed choice based on information revealed through costly signals.

may still be attracted to militias near diamond mines. This means that the opportunity implicit in diamond mining may still attract a disproportionately large number of opportunists even if recruiters do not hand out incentives or make explicit promises regarding mining-rights.

If positive incentives attract more unwanted recruits, then increased hardships and costs of joining should discourage unwanted recruits. The next section explores this hypothesis.

Self-Selection and Attrition: The Costs of Induction (or Negative Incentives)

Civilians self-select into, or out of, the pool of volunteers on the basis of negative incentives as well as offers of remuneration. When prospective militia members are considering whether or not to go through with the process of joining, they consider the costs of induction, which may involve hazing, lengthy periods of indoctrination or training, or even a payment or offering made at the time that membership is conferred. Depending on how much is publicly known about initiation or induction processes, there may be one or two points at which members can take the costs of induction into account, although variations in public knowledge do not change the overall predicted effects of induction costs on recruit quality. If hazing and other costs are public knowledge, then prospective militia members may self-select out of the recruitment process and will never enter into the pool of volunteers. If the costs of joining are not public knowledge, volunteers may choose to drop out once they are directly confronted with the costs of induction. Thus, the costs of induction may influence the membership of armed groups through two mechanisms: self-selection and attrition.

For the costs of induction to have predictable effects on the quality of recruits, it needs to be the case that either the costs (or the correlative benefits of joining) are discriminating in terms of the quality of the prospective members. That is, high quality individuals must be more willing, on average, to bear the costs of joining than low quality individuals. The literature on "costly signaling" identifies a class of discriminating actions "that are too costly for a mimic to fake but affordable for the genuine article, given the benefit that each can

expect in the situation" (Gambetta and Hamill, 2005, 11). In early job-market formulations of signaling and screening arguments, it was generally assumed that the benefits of getting a job (e.g. wages) were universal, while the costs of being hired (e.g. getting an education), were discriminating (Spence, 1974).[6] Subsequent formulations of these arguments have recognized that benefits can be discriminating, and costs can be universal. Ultimately, the effects of discriminating costs or discriminating benefits are the same in terms of sorting out individuals of different productivity or quality. The hazing rituals of street gangs are one example of costly induction in which every new member of a gang is subjected to approximately the same level of physical and psychological stress under the presumption that only individuals who are sufficiently tough and appropriately motivated will be willing to endure such hardship (Vigil, 1996; Densley, 2012).[7] More severe hazing means a lower likelihood that the gang will be infiltrated by impostors or poorly motivated members, even if the benefits of joining do not change.

Non-state armed groups are similar to gangs because the benefits of joining are typically more discriminating than the costs of joining. In most cases, non-state armed groups cannot afford to provide their recruits with regular wages or other benefits. Especially when material incentives are not present (but even when they are), some individuals will be motivated to join a given armed group primarily because they agree with the stated goals of that group. From the perspective of civilians, one of the potential benefits of joining an armed group is the ability to contribute to the long-term social or political goals of the group (Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Presumably, such long-term, intangible benefits will only be attractive to individuals who are by definition intrinsically motivated and dedicated, hence

[6] In his now canonical model of adverse selection in a labor market, Spence (1973) suggests that education is costly to everyone, but that highly productive workers can afford to invest in education precisely because they are more productive and can use that excess productive capacity (whether conceptualized as mental or physical resources) to attain an education. Less productive workers would like to invest in education (if they think it will get them a better job), but they, by definition, have fewer mental and physical resources to dedicate to the task, and thus are less likely to pursue an education.

[7] I recognize that hazing and other rites of passage may serve a multiplicity of psychological and social functions. Independent of their screening effects, these strategies of costly induction may also increase an individual's solidarity with an organization. However, hazing and other forms of costly induction may also produce the opposite social and psychological effect – fostering resentment among new members against the established members of the group who were responsible for imposing the costs associated with induction. Given the potentially ambivalent nature of these social and psychological mechanisms, I choose to set them aside and focus on the screening mechanisms associated with the cost being imposed on new members and the potential for costs to induce members to reveal whether or not they are trustworthy.

high-quality recruits. As the costs of joining rise, only the most motivated and dedicated individuals will be willing to shoulder those costs. Thus, assuming that costs or benefits of joining are discriminating, higher costs of induction should lead low quality volunteers to drop out, resulting in higher quality cohorts of recruits.

The following section moves beyond a focus on the choices that prospective members make. The most under-studied stage of the recruitment process is that in which recruiters exercise the most control. Given a pool of volunteers (of largely unknown quality), recruiters have varying capacities for actively investigating the quality of volunteers and filtering out undesirable types. Variations in recruiters' abilities to screen volunteers should significantly affect the quality of individuals who are recruited into armed groups, even when we control for self-selection and attrition mechanisms.

Screening: Social Networks, Information, and Time

How do recruiters in armed groups evaluate the candidacy of would-be fighters in order to address problems of adverse selection? This section offers a theoretical model in which recruiters' capacities to solve problems of adverse selection are determined by two scarce non-material resources – information and time. The availability of information and time place limits on the levels of selectivity that recruiters can exercise when evaluating or screening prospective members. The economic literature on labor markets provides the deductive basis for understanding the role of information in adverse selection problems such as those that occur during recruitment in armed organizations. Other things being equal, more information about potential recruits, means less severe problems of adverse selection, which manifests itself as more selective recruitment of new members. However, gathering and making appropriate use of information requires time, and conflict dynamics may place limitations on the amount of time that recruiters can afford to spend gathering information about, and deliberating over, a given candidate for membership in an armed organization. Even if the underlying sources and quality of information remain the same, decreases in the amount of time available to evaluate recruits will result in lower selectivity of recruitment.

In the setting of a civil job market, employers attempt to garner as much information

as possible about job candidates, thus reducing informational asymmetries and proactively mitigating problems of adverse selection (Greenwald, 1986). Would-be employees may provide employers with *signals* of their quality, often coming in the form of a would-be employee's educational background, certifications, or relevant work-experience (Spence, 1974). Employers may also *screen* job candidates by proactively collecting information about them through interview questions, examinations, or through recommendations and referrals. Empirical studies of employment markets suggest that employers typically use combinations of information gained through both signals from job candidates and through screening strategies (Campbell and Marsden, 1990; Holzer, 1987; Montgomery, 1991). Other things being equal, higher quantities of reliable information lead to more selective recruitment.

Mimicking employers in a civil labor market, the individuals in charge of recruitment in non-state armed groups can attempt to use signals sent by recruits as well as active screening strategies to attempt to reduce informational asymmetries and derivative problems of adverse selection. The problem is that most signals that can be sent by would-be fighters in a conflict setting convey very little reliable information (Hegghammer, 2013, 9). Assuming that there are benefits associated with being a member of an armed group, individuals outside the group will have an incentive to misrepresent their skills and motivations in order to heighten their chances of gaining access to membership and the benefits that come with it. Talk is cheap. For a signal to be reliable, there must be some cost to the signaler (Grafen, 1990*a*,*b*). In the civil labor market, job-seekers can send costly (hence reliable) signals about their type by spending time and money attaining a higher level of education or by investing in a professional certification, but these kinds of costly signals are irrelevant to wartime pursuits. One could imagine a type of costly wartime signal in which an aspiring fighter would go out on their own and kill or capture an enemy combatant, bringing proof of their conquest back to the recruiter as a signal of their bravery and martial abilities. The costs of such a signal are obviously high – so high, in fact, that it is likely that few, if any, of the pool of acceptably skilled and motivated individuals would even contemplate such a risky action. Given the near impossibility of receiving reliable signals from prospective members, recruiters have to proactively gather information about recruits in order to ameliorate problems of adverse

selection.

One of the more reliable and widely used methods of screening within civil employment settings involves employers using formal and informal information networks to gather recommendations or referrals that can reveal private information about a candidate's background, previous job performance, and other relevant qualities (Montgomery, 1991; Rees, 1996). Formal networks utilize institutions such as "state employment services, private fee-charging employment agencies...and school or college placement bureaus" (Rees, 1996, 559). Informal networks typically involve referrals from existing employees, who will vouch for the skills and motivations of new job applicants (Rees, 1996, 562). Both kinds of networks have the potential to provide employers with information that allows more selective recruitment of new employees.

Non-state armed organizations can also use networks to gather information about would-be members, but such groups (by their very nature) will typically only have access to informal networks. Empirical studies of insurgent groups, terrorist organizations and street gangs suggest that all of those organizations face problems of adverse selection during recruitment and use informal networks in order to screen members and exclude individuals who cannot be trusted (Densley, 2012; Hegghammer, 2013; Weinstein, 2005; Hamill, 2010). As in civil labor markets, the most common form of informal network-based screening involves individuals who are already members of the organization vouching for prospective members who they think are trustworthy (Gambetta, 2009).

Outsiders to the organization may also be useful as sources of information, provided that they are considered credible. People who are outside the organization may be viewed as credible, provided that they have, through ongoing interactions with the group, established a reputation for being credible, and even more so if group leaders can punish them for vouching for individuals who prove to be undesirable. Thus, anyone vouching for, or recommending, new members must at least be within the network of the individuals in the organization – hence having a known reputation and ideally being subject to punishment for faulty recommendations – even if they are not actually a member of the organization.

To the extent that the recruiters in armed groups have access to networks of credible

informants, recruiters can be more selective in terms of whom they induct into their organization. The lower the integrity and availability of information networks during recruitment screening processes, the less selective recruiters will be when choosing new members.

Variations in the availability and integrity of social networks arise during the course of violent conflicts because such networks are inherently fragile. Battles and raids can disrupt networks by causing forced migration, death, and mistrust among the individuals who constitute a network. Individuals who hold positions of political and social authority are typically major hubs within information networks, and the movement or death of even a small number of such well-networked individuals can fragment a network to the point that entire communities would no longer be connected with each other, and both the speed and quality of information flows would decrease (Barr, Ensminger and Johnson, 2009). Thus, the availability and integrity of social networks places fundamental restrictions on the amount of information that recruiters can gather during their attempts to screen new members.

The gathering and utilization of information during screening processes also requires time. Trustworthy informants must come forward or be sought out by recruiters, and recruiters must consider the information that they receive (including the reliability of its source) before making a decision. Independent of the availability and reliability of information, restrictions on the amount of time available for screening limit the ability of recruiters to acquire and use available information in order to engage in selective recruitment. Other things being equal, more restrictions on time will lead to less selective recruitment, which will lower the average quality of recruits.

The dynamics of ongoing conflict place limitations on the amount of time that recruiters can afford to dedicate to the collection and utilization of information about the individuals who they are screening. From the perspective of the leader of an armed group, the availability of time is a function of fluctuations in the strength and proximity of the enemy, and thus the relative immediacy of the threat of an enemy attack. The imminence of attack determines the amount of time that can be allotted to the screening of each individual who is proposing to join the armed group. These restrictions on per-person screening time mean less time to gather and consider information (irrespective of the level of availability and

veracity of that information) relevant to the decision to include or exclude that individual. Thus, less per-recruit screening time means less selective recruitment overall.

The Combined Effects of Information and Time

The table below represents the combined effects of the availability of time and the availability of information on selectivity of screening. The two variables are assumed to have a simple, additive effect on the recruitment selectivity. Other things being equal, screening will be most selective when reliable information is abundant, and when time is minimally restricted. In reality, information, time, and recruitment selectivity all vary along a continuum from zero percent to one hundred percent. In the interest of creating a simple model and avoiding false precision, I have reduced these continuous variables to simple binaries, or to a simple ordinal scale (see table). The different levels of selectivity are assigned a value with 3 indicating optimal screening under ideal conditions, and 0 representing indiscriminate recruitment in which no screening took place.

The foregoing discussion presupposes that the recruiters in armed groups are trying to screen prospective members in such a way as to exclude unwanted types of recruits. Empirically, not all armed groups engage in selective forms of recruitment. Indiscriminate recruitment strategies include open-door recruitment, in which all volunteers are welcomed into the group without being evaluated, and forced recruitment or conscription, in which new members are either drafted or abducted into the organization against their will. In general, non-selective and non-voluntaristic recruitment strategies are consistently sub-optimal – associated with the induction of large numbers of very low-quality recruits (DeBoer and Brorsen, 1989; Warner and Asch, 1995; Lee and McKenzie, 1992). Theorizing the choice between non-selective and non-voluntaristic recruitment strategies is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I proceed on the assumption that non-voluntaristic strategies are a product of leadership that is either too myopic or too opportunistic (or both) to bother engaging in selective recruitment.[8] When the leaders of armed groups decide to give up on screening

[8]The war in Sierra Leone provides examples of both types of non-selective recruitment and the deleterious effects in terms of recruit quality and discipline. Abdullah (1998) and Weinstein (2005) have attributed much of the wanton and apocalyptic character of violence committed by the RUF rebels to the fact that rebel recruitment tended to favor the forced recruitment of adolescents and young men who were minimally

recruits, the availability of information and time becomes irrelevant. Under indiscriminate recruitment, the number and quality of recruits is entirely a function of the underlying determinants of the supply of volunteers.

Table 2.1: The Selectivity of Screening Processes as a Function of Time and Information Networks

		Availability of Time	
		low	high
Availability of Networks	high	2	3
	low	1	2
	indiscriminate	0	0

The theory of screening selectivity suggests that higher levels of selectivity will lead to higher levels of recruit quality by enabling recruiters to identify and exclude more undesirable types within the population of volunteers. This is not to suggest that the characteristics of the pool of volunteers do not matter – rather, the supply of volunteers and the selectivity of screening processes are both likely to be important determinants of recruit quality, with screening acting as a filter (of varying fineness) applied to the population of volunteers. With that being said, high levels of screening selectivity should produce high levels of recruit quality, even when the average quality of the underlying pool of volunteers is quite low.

Taken as a whole, the model of the recruitment process laid out above provides a means of understanding how resources and incentives, the costs of induction, and the selectivity of screening processes all potentially affect the quality of individuals who are ultimately granted membership in an armed organization. Ultimately, the quality of members in an armed organization is important because different types of individuals behave differently under minimal supervision. Specifically, some individuals are more likely to disobey rules and issued orders than others, and disobedience is of great practical significance in terms of both the maintenance of discipline within an armed group, and the maintenance of work-

interested in rebellion as a platform for national political reform, and who had strong tendencies toward opportunism. Gberie (2005), Keen (2005), and many others have observed that the Sierra Leone Army (under the NPRC government) engaged in major, indiscriminate recruitment drive during January of 1993. During the recruitment drive, the army took on thousands of new recruits, many of whom were underage and had been among the urban unemployed. The January 1993 recruitment drive has often been blamed for the evolution of the "*sobel*" phenomenon – "soldier by day, rebel by night" – involving rampant indiscipline within the Sierra Leone Army, and high levels of civilian victimization by government soldiers.

ing relationships with civilians upon whom groups often rely for information and material support.

The Effects of Recruit Quality on Discipline and Relationships with Civilians

To what degree does the selectivity of recruitment and the resultant membership of an armed group influence problems of supervising fighters within the group and the external relationships that fighters have with civilians? Organizations are more than merely the sum of their members, yet the quality of membership of a group is also likely to be a significant determinant of the aggregate traits and outputs of that group. The significance of the quality of individual members is a key assumption underlying the hiring practices of all civil employers, and it is also a critical assumption underlying the explanation that Jeremy Weinstein (2007) provides for levels of civilian victimization by rebel groups during civil wars. In Weinstein's theorization, large influxes of undesirable members lead to more internal supervisory problems and corruption, and more victimization of civilians.

The central managerial problem that arises in both civil and military contexts is one of delegating responsibilities – some individuals require more supervision than others in order to ensure that they carry out the tasks delegated to them. The leaders of armed groups cannot fight battles, gather materiel, or patrol territories by themselves. An armed organization can only function if its leaders are able and willing to delegate responsibilities to their fighters. Like problems of adverse selection during recruitment, the delegation of responsibilities implies a problem of asymmetrical information in which the leader (as supervisor) has limited information regarding compliance with the directives that they issued, while the individuals being supervised have full knowledge of the extent of their compliance. The leaders of armed groups will always go to some lengths to address informational asymmetries by verifying that their orders were followed, but there are limits to the amount of time that leaders can spend gathering information about the conduct of their fighters and disciplining disobedient individuals. In general, leaders would prefer to limit the amount

of time that they have to spend verifying that their orders were executed and dealing with instances of disobedience.

Leaders choose to engage in the selective recruitment of new members precisely because the careful selection of members has the potential to lessen leaders' supervisory burdens once volunteers become fighters. From the perspective of the leaders of armed groups, what makes a prospective member more or less desirable is the likelihood that the individual will be obedient and self-governing once they have been recruited and militarized. To be sure, leaders also care about the skill-sets of the individuals whom they are recruiting, but especially in informal armed groups, skill levels will typically be a secondary consideration as compared to the likelihood of obedience.[9]

Once volunteers are inducted and militarized – a transition often involving the distribution of arms and ammunition to the member – group leaders will delegate responsibilities to those recruits, who will then face the choice between obedience and disobedience with regard to the responsibilities delegated. Members' choices between obedience and disobedience are influenced by sets of unobservable personal preferences and predispositions for (dis)obedience, which are the (more or less hidden) traits defining the quality of those members. These individual choices between obedience and disobedience aggregate to produce organization-level traits or outputs, including the two characteristics that I am interested in explaining: group discipline and group relationships with civilians.

In other words, recruit quality affects group discipline and group relationships with civilians through ongoing processes of delegation and disobedience or obedience. To use an everyday example, a commander may instruct several rank-and-file fighters to go and find food, adding the caveat that they should not forcibly take food from civilians. Once responsibility for finding food has been delegated, the fighters in question may or may not actually spend their time finding food and (if they do go to find food) may or may not heed the commander's prohibition against stealing food from civilians. If the fighters in question refuse to go and find food, this is an act of disobedience with consequences that are entirely internal to the group, and such actions can be described as lowering group discipline in the

[9]At this point, these statements about leaders' preferences over recruit-types enter the discussion as an assumption. I will establish the historical-empirical validity of these statements in the next chapter.

aggregate. If the fighters in question chose to take food from civilians by force, this is an act of disobedience with external consequences, and such actions can be described as negatively affecting group relationships with civilians in the aggregate.

Ostensibly, the consequences of both acts of disobedience are small and potentially reversible. In the case of internal disobedience, members of the armed group have less food to eat because their peers did not take responsibility for finding food. In the case of external disobedience, a few local civilians are disgruntled because fighters stole their food. However, individual acts of disobedience often take on a larger significance that is out of proportion to their more immediate consequences. Internal disobedience may spread: fighters may learn about the disobedience of their compatriots and (especially if that disobedience goes unpunished) follow their example, leading to increasing cycles of disobedient behaviors. External disobedience may spread through the same contagion mechanism, and the victimization of a few civilians also has a tendency to broadly affect the reputation of a given armed group with local civilians. A few individual civilians who have been victimized will probably complain to their friends and acquaintances, and rumors will spread that fighters from group X were stealing food. Thus, only a few acts of external disobedience by fighters in group X may rapidly shift local public opinion from support for group X to antipathy toward group X. Given the potentially far-reaching consequences of both kinds of disobedience, the leaders of armed groups will have an interest in preventing disobedience and punishing the infractions that do occur.

When the leaders of armed groups can selectively recruit individuals who are predisposed to be obedient, we can expect to see less of both kinds of disobedience. In practice, what qualifies as disobedience may vary somewhat from group to group and leader to leader, and different leaders may have different tolerances for disobedient behavior. For now, I will assume that leaders are interested in achieving high levels of obedience to orders as well as organizational norms and rules within their groups. I also assume that leaders are interested in maintaining positive external relationships with local civilians. Thus, other things being equal, we can expect that higher quality recruits will be more obedient to their commanders, and will thus maintain better relationships with civilians.

Other Mechanisms of Control: Monitoring and Punishment

Leaders' attempts to solve adverse selection problems during recruitment are only the first line of defense against problems of disobedience. Once volunteers make the transition to being members of the organization, they are still potentially subject to supervisory strategies, which aim to increase members' obedience to their superiors. Any attempt to assess the importance of recruit quality in explaining group discipline and relationships with civilians requires the parallel assessment of these alternative explanations.

Once volunteers have become members and leaders have delegated responsibilities, group leaders gather information about how members perform in the tasks that are delegated to them, and attempt to identify and punish individuals who have failed to carry out their responsibilities. These supervisory strategies rely on the ability of group leaders to gather relatively accurate information about the performance of group members, and to provide selective incentives that reinforce desirable behavior and discourage undesirable behavior.

Supervisory strategies involving the monitoring and punishment of members are common and potentially effective, but are also inherently inferior to recruitment-based screening and attrition mechanisms. The inferiority of these strategies derives from the fact that they require an ongoing (hence larger, more costly) investment of resources by group leaders. Monitoring requires the ongoing gathering and evaluation of information, and the doling out of appropriate incentives. This is in contrast with the one-time investigation of recruits' backgrounds during screening processes. The strategy of monitoring and punishment is also problematic because it is recuperative rather than pre-emptive. Whereas recruitment strategies work by removing undesirable types from an organization before they can cause problems, supervisory strategies work by reacting to undesirable behaviors in such a way as to discourage similar behaviors in the future. Supervisory strategies are only activated when a member of an organization has already behaved in a way that potentially damages organizational norms and the authority of group leaders.

At the warfront, the only thing blocking a vicious cycle of increasing disobedience is the demonstrable ability of group leaders to punish disobedient individuals severely enough that they will be dissuaded from future disobedience. The added challenge of issuing punish-

ments in combat settings is that group leaders may have to fear the potential for backlash in response to the punishments that they issue. In a civil labor setting, employers can punish or reprimand employees without major fear of retaliation by the employee. In the context of an armed organization, the chaos of combat provides significant opportunities for a disgruntled group member to kill his or her superior and claim that it was an accident or that it was enemy fire.[10] Given the potential for retaliation against punishment, the most effective approach to preventing vicious cycles of disobedience and retaliatory violence in combat settings is to eject members from the group, or simply execute them, if their actions reveal them to be untrustworthy.

Summary

Fighters' choices to obey or disobey orders are ultimately influenced by their underlying predispositions for (dis)obedience and by their expectations regarding the consequences of disobedient actions – i.e. whether or not they think that they are likely to be punished. Recruitment affects internal discipline and relationships with civilians by removing potentially disobedient individuals from the group before they can ever present a problem. Supervision primarily affects these same outcomes by influencing members' assessments of the potential costs associated with disobedience. Chapter 6 will address the key outcomes – internal discipline and relationships with civilians – in much greater detail, but for now it will suffice to reiterate that both are measures of the same underlying construct: obedience through restraint. In other words, both categories describe operational behaviors of group members in which most of the rules, norms and orders governing those behaviors are *prohibitions* against certain behaviors rather than *obligations* to perform certain tasks.

Research Design and Case Selection

The empirical chapters of this dissertation use the history of three autonomous civil militias – the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias – in Sierra Leone to identify the

[10]This fear of "friendly fire" has a strong empirical basis that will be established in significant detail in Chapter 6.

mechanisms of organizational durability and change within three counter-insurgent militias that operated in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002. Like the theory above, the chapters are divided thematically according to the relevant steps in the sequential processes of creating and managing an armed organization: from the creation of militias through the militarization of local social networks, to processes of recruiting new members, to ongoing attempts to control active fighters.

I use newly gathered oral history and survey data from interviews with over 150 former militia members to investigate the short and long-term consequences of militia recruitment processes. I test the plausibility of the theoretical explanations developed in this chapter using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. My primary sources are people who led or participated in civil militias, and civilians who had direct dealings with civil militias. Qualitative evidence from informants with varied perspectives allows me to reconstruct important historical processes of organizational change in order to identify the contexts and factors that influenced those processes. Quantitative statistical tests provide a means of generalizing from individual-level oral histories up to the level of regional militias that had thousands of members.

The three militias that form the empirical foundations for this dissertation were chosen in an attempt to maximize variation in the full range of possible determinants of recruit quality and discipline in those armed groups. The Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias started in different geographic regions, under highly varied circumstances, and each organization changed significantly over the course of the war. I exploit both spatial and temporal variations – among militias and within each militia over time – in order to explore diverse constellations of important historical factors. These variations allow for an analysis of recruitment under different structural constraints and within varying conflict contexts.

In their early stages, all three of the militias under consideration were founded with access to different types of material resources and thus are cases in which material incentives were likely to be offered and the selectivity of recruitment was likely to be heavily influenced by droves of individuals who volunteered in order to gain access to the material benefits of joining. Despite the varying circumstances of their founding, all three armed groups initially

established selective recruitment procedures through the use of screening strategies.

Having established similar initial recruitment strategies, the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias would each go on to experience major shocks that disrupted existing systems of screening. These shocks, arising from the contingencies of escalating conflict, present a useful set of historical conditions for analyzing the causes and consequences of changes over time in militia recruitment strategies. The fact that each militia recruited its members from the same regional pool of civilians before and after the shocks helps to control for numerous unobservable factors associated with regional differences in pre-war social and political conditions as well as regional geographies and demographies. At at the national-level, these shocks took the form of a violent military coup in early 1997, when a contingent of the Sierra Leone Army, called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), overthrew the elected president and joined forces with the RUF rebels. The 1997 coup and its military aftermath sparked off several years of intensified violence throughout the country, during which civilian communities and civil militias often fled from their home areas in order to escape the violence of a resurgent RUF, and its powerful ally, the AFRC junta.

Because the 1997 coup simultaneously disrupted networks of recruitment and shifted the axes of the conflict, the year of 1997 provides a theoretically and substantively meaningful temporal cut-point at which to parse the histories of regional militias into separate, pre-shock and post-shock case-studies that facilitate comparisons in the chapters that present qualitative evidence. At the regional-level, the regional level, the effects of the coup were conditioned by different local contexts, and ultimately affected recruitment processes and their outcomes in different ways. In general, the intensification of the conflict meant that the leaders of all three of the militias experienced a reduction in the amount of time that they could dedicate to screening would-be recruits; however, the more local and long-term consequences of the 1997 coup were different for each militia. Northern militias (successors to the Tamaboros) carried out recruitment with severely disrupted networks as a result of the death and displacement of numerous community leaders. In the east, the Donso militia was split in two by a rebel incursion that forced communities and militia members to flee to the east, to Guinea, or to the south, to the neighboring district of Kenema. Despite their

displacement, communities and their leaders largely managed to stay together. In Guinea, systems of screening new recruits still drew upon the information networks that had been present prior to the 1997 coup. In Kenema, screening of displaced people from Kono was carried out by local leaders in Kenema who did not have easy access to Kono networks. Southern militias (successors to the early Kamajors) experienced temporary displacement as a result of the AFRC coup in 1997, but fewer community leaders fled or were killed than in the north, and communities were not displaced as permanently as was the case for the Donsos in the east. Despite the fact that most communities and their leaders were able to return to their homes within less than a year of the coup, militia screening was eventually completely abandoned among the southern Kamajors. The community leaders who had conducted early Kamajor recruitment lost control over the process, and the new militia recruiters who replaced them had discovered how to commoditize and sell militia membership. The allure of increased profit undermined any interest that new, capitalist Kamajor recruiters may have had in controlling the quality of the individuals whom they were recruiting.

These varying constellations of historical factors, and their related outcomes (in terms of victimization of civilians by civil militia members), are summarized in Table 2. Readers will note that the number of cases included does not allow for an exhaustive consideration of every possible combination of the variables that are likely to be important. However, the tabular summary of cases masks important year-by-year variations and district-by-district variations, which provide additional analytical leverage in the empirical chapters that follow.

While outcomes in the Tamaboro and Donso cases were almost entirely unknown at the time that they were selected for inclusion in this study, the early and late Kamajor cases were purposefully included because of prior knowledge of the high level of variation in outcomes within that particular regional militia. High levels of variation on the dependent variable are methodologically ideal for hypothesis testing, but more fundamentally, those significant temporal variations are the sort of historical phenomena that catch a researcher's eye and that beg for coherent explanation.

Table 2.2: Summary of Case Study Variation

	Determinants of Recruit Quality				**Outcomes**		
	Material Resources	Recruitment Incentives	Selectivity of Screening	Costs of Induction	Recruit Quality	Internal Discipline	Victimization of Civilians
Tamaboro 1992-1994	yes	yes	optimal (3)	low	high	high	low
Northern CDF 1997-2001	no	no	cursory (1)	low	low	high	low
Donso 1993-1996	yes	no	optimal (3)	low	high	high	low
Guinea Axis 1997-2001	no	no	suboptimal (2)	low	high	high	low
Kenema Axis 1997-2001	yes	no	cursory (1)	low	low	low	high
Early Kamajor 1993-1996	yes	no	optimal (3)	low	medium	high	low
Kamajor CDF 1997-2001	yes	no	indiscriminate (0)	high	low	low	high

This chapter has laid out the theoretical framework that organizes subsequent empirical chapters. The leaders of armed groups face a series of managerial problems when attempting to ensure the longevity of their organizations. First, leaders face adverse selection problems that arise during the recruitment of new members. Second, leaders face supervisory problems that arise once new recruits have transitioned into an operational setting and responsibilities have been delegated to those recruits. Given current omissions in the literature, I have focused on developing a theory about how social networks and screening mechanisms affect the quality of individuals who join armed groups, and ultimately the relationships that armed actors maintain with local civilians. However, I do not assume that screening mechanisms are the sole determinant of recruit quality and relationships with civilians. The empirical chapters that follow present qualitative and quantitative evidence to evaluate the relative importance of self-selection, screening, and attrition mechanisms as they relate to the iterative processes of militia management.

Chapter 3

Managing Militia Recruitment

In 1992 the Deputy Minister of Defense for Sierra Leone left Freetown by helicopter, and arrived in the remote northern city of Kabala on the mission of starting a civil militia. He convened a meeting of regional administrators and community leaders, and called upon them to organize a militia that would be capable of fighting against the RUF rebels who had captured some of the diamond-rich areas to the southeast. The Deputy Minister's mission was backed by government resources, and he promised that bags of rice would be provided to anyone who was willing to volunteer to join the militia. The offer of rice, which had become scarce during that period, drew thousands of volunteers, and might have resulted in the creation of a massive militia that, by itself, would have rivaled the RUF in size. However, the local leaders who had been placed in charge of militia recruitment worried that many of these early volunteers were primarily motivated by the incentive of free rice, and probably had little interest in actually going to the front to fight the rebels. Militia recruiters imagined that these opportunistic joiners might prove cowardly and difficult to control, and might bring the North a "bad image."[1] Responding to these doubts and fears, community leaders started an elaborate process of screening volunteers, and gradually whittled the pool of several thousands down to several hundred who were then mobilized and sent to assist the Sierra Leone army in fighting the rebels. This time-consuming screening took place despite the fact that the RUF rebels had already captured the eastern city of Koidu Town, giving them access to the main highway, from which they could launch strikes on Freetown and

[1] Author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011. Note, the majority of my respondents requested to remain anonymous. I cite their testimonies using the file names (e.g. Freetown_ShekuT) associated with their interviews, and I provide the month and year on which the interview was conducted.

Kabala.

Northern community leaders could have merely accepted every willing volunteer into the militias that they were creating. Instead, they decided to undertake the time-consuming and logistically complex task of screening new members. Prominent theories of recruitment in armed organizations predict that (other things being equal) the offer of rice as a recruitment incentive would have led the northern militia, created in Kabala, to be overwhelmed by opportunistic joiners (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2005, 2007). These theories tacitly assume that recruiters are either unaware of the adverse selection problems that they face, or that recruiters are so pressed for time and greedy for additional manpower that they simply accept all voluntary recruits into their organizations, without question.[2] Because these theories focus on incentive compatibility and structural determinants of the supply of volunteers, they cannot explain the case of careful recruitment in the northern militia that eventually became known as the Tamaboro. Explaining the recruitment strategies that the leaders of armed groups employ requires an understanding of leaders' preferences over different types of recruits, and of the capacities of those leaders to identify and exclude undesirable joiners.

This chapter compares the initial strategies that the leaders of three autonomous civil militias (including the northern Tamaboro militia) employed when recruiting members into nascent armed organizations. This comparison highlights the fact that the people in charge of recruitment in each militia chose remarkably similar strategies for carefully screening new members, despite theoretical expectations to the contrary. From that initial convergence, each of the three militias considered would eventually go on to develop in unique and sometimes destructive directions, and the reasons for (and consequences of) that divergence are the topic of the following chapter. For the purpose of this chapter, it will suffice to observe

[2]Weinstein Weinstein (2005, 606) mentions "information gathering networks" as a potential strategy for reducing informational asymmetry, but his theoretical model does not treat access to those networks as a variable that can potentially determine military leaders' abilities to exclude the selfishly motivated individuals that he calls "consumers." Weinstein's model (and others like it) suggest that recruiters gain information about new recruits through a "signaling" mechanism – depending on the types of incentives that are sufficient to attract recruits to the organization. For example, the individual who joins simply because he 'supports the cause' is estimated to be more loyal and intrinsically motivated than the individual who joins because he is offered a bag of rice or a diamond. The incentives that recruits accept can thus signal their quality, but this signal comes too late – they are already members of the organization.

that the particular directions of differentiation among militias were not predetermined by the material resources and recruitment incentives that influenced the supply of voluntary joiners.

I argue that the initial convergence among militia recruitment strategies occurred because recruiters arrived at similar definitions of the adverse selection problems that they faced, and leveraged similar informational resources to solve those problems. I use the labor-market analogy discussed in the previous chapter to understand the strategies that militia recruiters chose as reactions to problems of asymmetrical information. In Sierra Leone, militia recruiters were analogous to employers in a job market setting to the extent that they attempted to select trustworthy militia members on the basis of limited and sometimes unreliable information about the true quality of the available volunteers. A focus on the problem of asymmetrical information during militia recruitment raises important questions about the kind of information that recruiters required in order to make decisions, and the tools that were available to recruiters for collecting and verifying required information.

In order to adapt theories of adverse selection to the context of militia recruitment in Sierra Leone, this chapter begins inductively, taking the nature of adverse selection problems and the types of solutions that militia managers implemented as its primary focus for empirical investigation. Who were the individuals in charge of creating and managing militias, and what were their interests? To what extent did they understand themselves as facing problems of adverse selection during recruitment? From the militia recruiter's perspective, what traits made potential recruits more or less desirable as militia members?

Answering these questions is a prerequisite to the application of the theory of recruitment selectivity, presented in Chapter 2 and summarized below. Militia recruitment is understood as an iterative process involving three selection mechanisms: self-selection, screening, and attrition. The process begins when recruiters request additional manpower, and decide what kinds of incentives (if any) to offer in order to attract recruits. The leaders of militias assess the resources available to them and choose the level of recruitment incentives to be offered. Civilians then self-select into, or out of, a militia on the basis of the potential benefits of joining (given the incentives offered) versus the potential costs. Given the supply

of volunteers, recruiters must then decide whom to admit into the group. Recruiters have the option of screening new members, or of simply accepting every volunteer into their group. When screening processes are implemented, they act as a filter for removing undesirable types from the pool of prospective militia members. The fineness of that filter is contingent on the amount of information and time available to recruiters during the screening process. In addition to screening, recruiters may require volunteers to undergo a transitional phase that includes forms of training, indoctrination, and hazing before volunteers are allowed to become full-fledged members of the militia. If these transitional requirements impose high costs – e.g. physical and psychological trauma – there may be some attrition as volunteers drop out once confronted with the full costs of joining the group. The individuals who make it through the transition then become full-fledged members of the armed group.

The quality of a cohort of new militia members is ultimately conditioned by the self-selection, screening, and attrition mechanisms described above, but the relative importance of these mechanisms is heavily dependent on decisions that militia recruiters make. Empirically, one can only determine how civilians self-select into the pool of prospective militia members by understanding what kinds of incentives were offered to attract new members, and the answer to that question presupposes knowledge of who was in a position to offer incentives, and what resources were available to them to underwrite the provision of incentives. Understanding self-selection and attrition mechanisms also requires an understanding of how militia managers (consciously or unconsciously) arrayed the costs and benefits associated with militia membership in such a way as to discourage some would-be recruits while encouraging (or at least not discouraging) others. When militia recruiters implement procedures for screening new recruits, this raises the question of whether or not recruiters actually understand themselves as facing problems of adverse selection that can be solved through the collection of additional information about would-be recruits. Finally, a valid assessment of the quality of the individuals recruited into a militia depends on an understanding of recruiters' preferences over different types of recruits.

The inductive approach taken in the first part of this chapter contrasts with prominent theories that leave the identity of recruiters unspecified, and that proceed deductively

to overly general definitions of recruit quality (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Such theories have proven empirically inaccurate and have tended to define recruit quality in ways that are nearly impossible to observe or measure. A more nuanced and empirically grounded understanding of the preferences and capacities of militia recruiters suggests the strong potential for those individuals to modify strategies over time in response to the exigencies of escalating warfare. Such an understanding also makes clear the potential consequences (in terms of recruit quality) in cases when recruiters were killed or otherwise removed from their positions of control over militia recruitment.

The analysis below reveals how the choices that militia recruiters made were strongly influenced by their own, distinct identities and interests, as well as by their abilities to gain access to information about the characters and skill sets of the individuals whom they were recruiting. These findings suggest that different armed groups, offering different kinds of recruitment incentives to attract volunteers, may still utilize remarkably similar strategies for collecting information about would-be recruits and then excluding individuals deemed undesirable. When comparing among civil militias in Sierra Leone, a focus on how recruiters chose initial recruitment strategies helps to explain the early convergence in recruitment strategies among nascent militias, while also prefiguring some of the reasons for the future divergence of those strategies over time.[3]

In the following section, I introduce the contexts of persistent insecurity in which militias in Sierra Leone formed, and I describe how and why community leaders, called "chiefs," came to be in charge of militia recruitment throughout the country. Grassroots vigilante movements were an important feature of that characteristically volatile environment, with local vigilantism representing the first observable step in a series of increasingly coordinated reactions to a lack of civilian trust in both government and rebel forces that would eventually lead to the formation of regional civil militias. Disorganized vigilantism transitioned to increasingly coordinated militia recruitment as a result of a coordinated call to arms, issued by a newly installed military government. The military junta temporarily earned the trust of civilians throughout the country and facilitated the formation of the three militias

[3]The following chapter will theorize and examine the question of how and why recruitment strategies change over time.

in question, placing chiefs in charge of organizing militias and managing militia recruitment.

Having identified chiefs as militia recruiters, I then proceed inductively toward a detailed understanding of chiefs' preferences over new militia recruits. What did adverse selection problems look like from the perspective of chiefs in Sierra Leone? Aware of the generational tensions within their communities, chiefs understood the internal threats that might arise when empowering members of their community to take up arms as scouts and fighters. Chiefs were strongly motivated by the fear of selecting militia members who might later shoot them in the back – a fear that was founded in a history of violent mobilizations of socially and economically marginal young people. Thus, one of the primary qualifications that chiefs sought in would-be militia members was loyalty to chiefly authority and a commitment to maintaining the local political status quo.

In the final section of this chapter, I trace the processes that led chiefs in three different regions, with different underlying supplies of voluntary joiners, to create similar systems for collecting character references and otherwise vetting new militia members. Chiefs and their appointees used patronage networks that are ubiquitous throughout peacetime Sierra Leone in order to collect private information about the trustworthiness of joiners. Such information allowed recruiters to make more informed judgements about the desirability of the would-be militia members who came before them. An understanding of these early screening strategies, including both the high efficacy and the fragile nature of the information networks that they employed, helps to frame the following chapter. Chapter 4 uses temporal changes in recruitment strategies to test the theory of recruitment selectivity.

Emergency, the Emergence of Militias, and Chiefly Leadership

The first militia-like groups in Sierra Leone formed shortly after the beginning of the conflict, during a period when citizens throughout the country were becoming increasingly aware of the seriousness of the threat posed by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels and the correlative ineffectiveness of the Sierra Leone military in dealing with the rebel incursion. During the first months of the conflict, in April to June of 1991, Sierra Leoneans

read reassuring (but propagandistic) newspaper headlines like "Hundreds of Rebels Killed," that exaggerated the successes of the Sierra Leone Army and Guinean combined forces in fighting against rebels who had invaded from Liberia (Koroma, 1991; Anonymous, 1991). The majority of educated, national-newspaper-readers lived in the western, coastal, capital city of Freetown, which was geographically isolated from the southeastern borderlands that were first occupied by abusive rebels. However, by the end of 1991, Freetown elites began to sense what upcountry folks already knew – that the rebels remained a serious security threat and were actually on the offensive again. Danny Hoffman explains that early, grassroots proto-militias formed as civilians realized the full extent of their insecurity, including the threat of victimization by the state security forces that were supposed to be defending them: "Fearing the military as much as the rebels, many communities organized civil defense committees or civil defense units..." (Hoffman, 2011, 73). Increasing numbers of civilians came to similar conclusions – that neither the rebels nor the government military were reliable providers of security.

The earliest informal security forces in Sierra Leone arose as grassroots efforts in the easternmost districts of the country – typically in areas on the peripheries of rebel control. The Honorable Elizabeth Lavalie (whose husband would go on to command a major militia) recalled that early grassroots groups had more in common with "neighborhood watch" programs than with armed militias (such as the Kamajors) that would form later:

> Those were young people – not Kamajors – who helped, that is, to protect their locality. [...] Not to go out with the military, but just to [stay in] their locality. [...] Like a neighborhood watch – so you are always there in the streets. You are checking on strangers coming in and out.[4]

Self-styled as "vigilantes," these groups were largely staffed by un- or under-employed youth: "Most of them were just [...] guys that were not working. You know, they had nothing to do.[5] They volunteered to man roadblocks and collect intelligence about people deemed "suspicious," who they would then report to the local police or military.[6] These (often)

[4]Author interview with Elizabeth Lavalie (widow of Dr. Alpha Lavalie, chairman of the Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee – ERECDCOM), June 2012. A note on transcription: ellipses in brackets represent the editorial removal of material in order to improve the flow of the quotation. Ellipses outside of brackets represent actual breaks in the speaker's speech-flow during the interview.

[5]Author interview: Kono_DonsoAdministrator, May 2012.

[6]Partly because of their limited lifespan and limited involvement in the conflict, little research has been

unarmed groups were born of local collective action, without necessarily having the encouragement or endorsement of national-level politicians, and they operated primarily under the ad hoc leadership of a few charismatic community members. One might expect that the members of these unarmed security forces would have been the first individuals recruited into the armed militias that were soon to emerge. However, recruitment into early militias was centralized, structured and selective, whereas recruitment in vigilante groups amounted to an open invitation: "It was really not organized. But anybody could volunteer to be a vigilante – just to bring information or whatnot."[7] As a result, these highly informal vigilante groups included significant numbers of individuals (of presumably questionable character) who were later excluded from recruitment into the more formalized organizations that would eventually supplant, and to some extent subsume, the vigilantes.[8] At least some of those groups had minor successes, notably a spontaneous anti-rebel uprising in and around Bo Town that succeeded in driving the rebels out of the city and killing a number of them along the way (Hoffman, 2011, 75). Beyond a few exceptional cases, vigilante groups seem to have done little in terms of actively defending communities, but they also did little harm precisely because they were un-militarized, lacking both firearms and the authority to use force.

By the beginning of 1992, the reigning government of President Joseph Momoh had left its soldiers unpaid and undersupplied for several months to the point that the tide of the war had begun to turn in favor of the rebels. Abdul K. Koroma, who is a historian and native of Sierra Leone, has suggested that senior military officers bankrupted the army by embezzling funds that were earmarked for purchasing materiel (Koroma, 1996, 149). Also, some evidence suggests that President Momoh was minimally interested in prosecuting the war effort – and likely turned a blind eye to the corrupt senior officers in the army – because the ongoing conflict provided an excuse to manipulate national politics and delay his political opposition's calls for a general election. In response to these abuses of power,

done on these vigilante groups. As a result it is difficult to establish the details of the groups' formation and recruitment, and nearly impossible to reconstruct the motives of individuals who participated in those groups.

[7]Author interview: Kono_DonsoAdministrator, May 2012.

[8]Unfortunately, my survey instrument did not include a question about whether or not individuals who joined a militia were previously part of a vigilante group. Thus, I cannot provide an estimate of the degree of overlap between memberships in the two different types of groups.

a contingent of discontented, junior military officers, led by Lieutenant Solomon Musa and Captain Valentine Strasser, staged a popular and bloodless coup in April against Momoh's government. Captain Strasser emerged as the face of the new military government, which called itself the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). At least initially, the NPRC junta appeared to be far more focused than the preceding Momoh government on supporting effective offensive military operations and eventually defeating the rebels.

Members of the newly formed NPRC government provided the impetus for the formation of militias from 1992 to 1994, resulting in the creation of several, essentially autonomous regional militias. In contrast to the unarmed "vigilantes" who had organized spontaneously during the first year or two of the war, early militias were not truly grassroots organizations, since local efforts were typically catalyzed and facilitated by government representatives. Having encouraged the formation of militias (in some cases through the offer of government-provided incentives to initial recruits), representatives of the NPRC government left the management of those nascent armed organizations to networks of local chiefs who were responsible for appointing the original leaders of the militias, and who also exercised control over the selection of the original members of those militias. Paramount Chiefs, who sit at the intersection of local and national, legislative politics, were ultimately responsible for disseminating the request that communities mobilize individuals to join local defense forces. The important exception is that part of what would become the Kamajor militia (in Pujehun) was started through the initiative of a traditional healer, not a Paramount Chief, but the Pujehun Kamajors were quickly and cooperatively brought under the control of networks of local chiefs.

Enlisting the support and leadership of chiefs was a logical move for the NPRC government, given the historical relationships between chiefs and armed mobilizations in the countryside. During the colonial era, chiefs in Sierra Leone had been responsible for maintaining militias of "war boys" who could be rapidly mobilized for offensive or defensive purposes against neighboring chiefdoms, or most famously, against the colonial administration during the Hut Tax War of 1898 (Abraham, 1976, 65). In the post-colonial context, chiefs retained significant social influence and organizational resources, including a high level

of control over game-hunters whose authorization to own a firearm and to hunt came from the local chiefs. Accordingly, chiefs often turned first to their hunters when they started the process of recruiting members to staff local militias.

Having issued the call to arms for the Tamaboros, Donsos, and Kamajors, the chiefs who had summoned these nascent militias into being then used their political authority to establish control over the processes of selecting militia members – establishing standards for who could or could not become a militia member. The recruitment strategies that chiefs and their delegates implemented reflect not only their concerns with finding capable fighters, but also their prescient fears of losing control of newly militarized communities. The following section provides the historical basis for understanding why chiefs deemed certain kinds of potential recruits to be untrustworthy and potentially dangerous if militarized.

The Recruiters' Perspective: Who Could Chiefs Trust with a Gun?

How do we understand recruiter's preferences over different types of recruits? Most existing models of recruitment in armed groups are founded on broad assertions about the desirability of would-be fighters, while remaining agnostic about the identities of the individuals who are actually choosing the fighters and how those recruiters would construe the most important qualifications for membership in the armed group (Gates, 2002; Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Because these theories are cast at a high level of generality, they tend to proceed deductively on the assumption that the primary goal of recruiting new fighters is always to maximize something abstract and long-term, like the military effectiveness of the organization, or (along similar lines) the likelihood that the organization will successfully achieve its (presumed) political objectives. These assumptions are plausible, but they ignore the variety of adverse selection problems that confront armed groups in reality, particularly the degree to which recruiters in different contexts may vary in terms of how they define suitable versus unsuitable recruits.

Having identified chiefs and their delegates as the individuals in charge of militia recruitment in Sierra Leone, this section proceeds inductively to a regionally and historically

contextualized specification of the types of individuals who chiefs sought to include in, or exclude from, militias. Chiefs and their delegates tried to induct the most martially skilled individuals possible, while excluding individuals who might pose a threat to chiefly authority, if armed. During processes of selecting new militia members, the category of unemployed, "wayward" young men or "riffraff" came to embody the problem of adverse selection in militia recruitment because it described what many Sierra Leoneans saw as a relatively coherent class – in the terms that Marx (1978) used, the *lumpenproletariat* – of young people who, defined by their socially marginal and economically destitute status, had much to gain from contesting their local political status quo (Fanthorpe, 2001; Abdullah and Muana, 1998).[9]

A former commander in the Tamaboro suggests that he, and the local leaders with whom he worked, were cognizant of problems of adverse selection that they faced, and thus came up with a system to "verify" members prior to admitting them to the organization:

> So, we gather, at that time, in 1992, we form this group; we verify ourself. Because, we don't want let we get any bad image. Because somebody will said, "I am a fighter. I am a spiritual man." Which, of course, he don't know anything. So, we verify ourself – let we know [. . .] your ability – what you are capable to do. If you can be able to change into wolf, or either you can be able to [change] in[to] lion [. . .] you can demonstrate before us.[10]

This former Tamaboro commander described adverse selection problems in terms of people who claimed to be fighters, but who in fact, "don't know anything" – meaning that they did not have the requisite magical or hunting skills thought to be necessary on the battlefield. He suggests that the process of verification was implemented in order to avoid getting a "bad image," which seems to encapsulate a broad set of concerns including a lack of skill, but also including tendencies toward abuse of power and general misbehavior. These fears of earning a bad image were amplified for the Tamaboro, because the government provided bags of rice to be offered as "traveling allowance" to individuals who were willing to join the incipient militia.[11] The offer of rice (which was increasingly expensive and scarce during that period)

[9]For broader empirical discussions of the myriad ways in which African civil wars become locations for violent expressions of dissatisfaction with the broken "machinery" of post-colonial states, see, Bøas and Dunn (2007).

[10]Author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011. Note, this interview was given in English, but the speaker uses Krio modes of expression into his English – most noticeably, the use of "we" instead of "us" in the accusative case. Krio does employ varied cases for pronouns.

[11]Author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011; See also author interview: 1041, November 2011

resulted in thousands of individuals showing up to register merely so that they would have the opportunity to get a bag of rice. The chiefs and elders in charge of Tamaboro recruitment could have simply inducted all of these volunteers into the new militia, but they feared the possible effects of opportunistic joiners who "don't know anything" and who might create a "bad image" for the group as a whole. As a direct result of those fears, they created a procedure for verifying the skills and character of would-be Tamaboros.

Descriptions of the most desirable traits for Tamaboro volunteers suggest that the character and community-status of would-be Tamaboros was as important as their skills and martial aptitude during the verification process. Paul Kortenhoven was an American missionary and wartime NGO worker who lived in Koinadugu and knew many of the early Tamaboro fighters. He recalls Tamaboro recruitment and the emphasis placed on recruits having positive reputations within their communities: "You couldn't be a Tamaboro without [...] some austerity, some presence, some respect, you know by, um, your compatriots, by your age-mates and so on."[12] Kortenhoven suggested that chiefs were looking specifically for individuals who were established and contributing members of their communities and who thus had a vested interest in the local, political status quo. He specifically contrasted the types of individuals who joined the early Tamaboro organization with what he referred to as the jobless, young "riffraff" who eventually infiltrated the Kamajors in the south, implying that the Tamaboros (as well as the early Kamajors) had intentionally excluded such potentially subversive individuals during the initial stages of recruitment into those organizations.[13]

The leaders of the Donso and Kamajor militias were even more explicit than the Tamaboros about their fears of betrayal by discontented members of communities. There was, indeed, a concern with recruiting able-bodied individuals – for example, one former Donso fighter explained that "there are people with certain qualities and body weight and strength that had priority when it came to recruitment; determination in relation to cow-

and author interview: 2004, November 2011. Note: the accounts of the use of rice as a material incentive at the time of recruitment are at odds with a few accounts that recall the period of Tamaboro formation, either without mentioning the offering of incentives, or in one case, directly denying that any incentives were offered.

[12]Author telephone interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.

[13]Author telephone interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.

ardice was also high in consideration."[14] Yet, these martial characteristics often seemed to be of secondary consideration to the individual's potential loyalties. A chief who was in charge of Donso recruitment explained that he was specifically looking for individuals who were friendly to governmental authority and had positive reputations in their communities, because such individuals were the least likely to abuse their power:

> You're not going to take somebody who talks against the government, who is against his people. No. [If] you're a citizen – you have [good] family, you have [good] background – we pick you, because you're not going to betray your people.[15]

A former civil-administrator in the Kamajor militia provided one of the most direct statements of the adverse selection problem in incipient militias. He accented the (foreseeable) difficulties involved in controlling groups of young community members who were armed and (in the case of Kamajors) magically empowered through bullet-proofing initiation rites. Furthermore, he directly linked those fears with the origins of chiefly screening systems:

> All the paramount chiefs and the people said: "Now, we have a lot of people who are bad fellows in our chiefdoms. There are a lot of young men who are wayward. If you initiate them into this [Kamajor] society – you protect them – they will turn their guns against their own people. [...] So, therefore, what we would advise is: any chiefdom that wants to initiate the young men – these young men will have to be screened."[16]

From the perspective of many chiefs and community elders, adverse selection problems in militia recruitment were embodied by "young men who [were] wayward," and who had the potential to "turn their guns against their own people" (especially the chiefs) if they were inducted into militias and armed. Chiefs understood that young men were the most readily available and physically capable sources of military labor, but they also knew that many of those same young men had much to gain by overthrowing chiefly authority. As one former Kamajor explained, being willing and fit for combat was not sufficient: "If you are so worthy [but] you can't take no control [in the sense of obeying authority], the chief cannot appoint you to go [join]."[17] If chiefs were to maintain at least a modicum of control over the militias that they created, they understood the need to exclude individuals who were socially

[14]Author interview: 5003, May 2012.
[15]Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.
[16]Author interview: Bo_Workshop1_Kamajor, January 2012.
[17]Author interview: 3009, February 2012.

marginal and frequently at odds with local systems of customary law that were administered by the chiefs.[18]

Stereotypes of unemployed youth as a volatile and rebellious social class had deep roots in a history of post-colonial violence and repression in the major cities of Sierra Leone. Urban youths, often called (in pejorative Krio language) *rarray* boys, have been glossed by historians as "largely unemployed and unemployable youths, mostly male, who live by their wits or who have one foot in what is generally referred to as the informal or underground economy. They are prone to criminal behavior, petty theft, drugs, drunkenness and gross indiscipline" (Abdullah, 1998, 207-8). These marginal, young city-dwellers had historically been manipulated by politicians who would hire them to stage supportive rallies and to violently intimidate their political competitors. In the 1970s, politically minded university students began to ally themselves with urban, rarray youth to form networks of (at times, violent) political resistance against one-party rule.

Rural youth of low birth were less overtly violent, but no less marginal and repressed, than their urban counterparts. During the years leading up to the war, chiefs who ruled over agrarian communities often exploited customary laws to extract unpaid labor from powerless and uneducated young men. Customary laws also empowered chiefs and other "big men," (having high social status) to take multiple wives and to extract "woman damage," in the form of large fines, from any young man who was guilty of adulterous activity (Chauveau and Richards, 2008, 540-1). When young men were unable to pay the fines (which was most of the time), they would be obliged to pay with their labor – becoming trapped in debt bondage that often amounted to long periods of indentured servitude on the farms of powerful older men. Unable to marry or hold land without their chief's approval, rural young men were constantly beholden to chiefs for favors, while at perpetual risk of running afoul of chiefly

[18]It is important to keep in mind that all of these quoted characterizations of adverse selection problems are retrospective, and thus should never be taken as perfectly representative of the decision making processes that took place at the time of militia formation. Part of the reason why one finds such a strong emphasis on the potential problem of betrayal in early Kamajor recruitment is probably because of the benefits of hindsight. Later on in the conflict, the Kamajors would suffer from major problems of internal dissent and misbehavior by young fighters. With that said, I demonstrate in the discussion below that there was a strong pre-war historical precedent of constructing unemployed youths as potentially violent, criminal and subversive, which suggests that expressed fears of "wayward" young men are not exclusively a product of hindsight.

laws.

Urban political elites and rural chiefs seem to have been justified in fearing the subversive potential of the angry young men whom they had helped to create. In both urban and rural settings, unemployed young men were already stigmatized and at the margins of their communities. Such youths had nothing to lose in terms of property, family, or reputation, and they had much to gain from overthrowing a system that seemed to only perpetuate their status as the lowest of the low. The anthropologist Danny Hoffman observes that most of these young men participated in and were inspired by the "popular culture of a global black underclass," during the 1980s, with heroes such as Tupac Shakur, Michael Jackson and Bob Marley – the common appeal of all of their stories being, "the potential of male youth to seize power when the existing order denies them recognized forms of authority" (Hoffman, 2011, 67). Ironically, these deeply discontented and potentially subversive young men were often the most able-bodied and eager to join civil militias precisely because they were not otherwise employed and had nothing to lose. Yet, from the perspective of chiefs and elders, the threat that wayward young men posed far outweighed any potential contributions that they might have made.

Chiefs clearly recognized that they were facing adverse selection problems as they began the process of recruiting militia members. How did they attempt to solve those problems? The theory of recruitment selectivity suggests that the availability of information and demand for manpower strongly influence the ability of chiefs to solve problems of adverse selection. However, we also need to consider explanations relating to the self-selection of volunteers into militias, as well as their choices to drop out before becoming full-fledged militia members. The next section starts at the beginning of the recruitment processes described above. Armed groups form under conditions that influence the supply of voluntary joiners. Supply-side theories of recruitment in armed groups provide a relatively consistent set of predictions of the relationships between differential access to material resources, offers of different kinds of recruitment incentives, and the self-selection of civilians into, or out of, armed groups. The next section uses these supply-side predictions to establish a set of baseline expectations about self-selection and attrition mechanisms in early militias.

Material Resources, Incentives, and the Supply of Volunteers

Although the leaders of the Tamaboro, Kamajor, and Donso militias converged on similar recruitment strategies involving the screening of prospective fighters, there were important reasons to expect either some level of divergence, or the possibility that all three militias would emerge with strategies that did *not* involve the screening of new recruits. Overall, this chapter focuses on explaining the similarities among those three militias, and so most of the analysis does not distinguish strongly among them. In contrast, this section individuates the three militias, highlighting unique circumstances surrounding the formation of each armed group that might have plausibly led to different recruitment strategies than those that were actually observed. The fact that the Tamaboro, Donso, and Kamajor militias adopted similar screening strategies is remarkable precisely because the major determinants of the supply of volunteers generate contrary expectations.

The following is a short summary of major supply-side determinants and the expectations that they imply for each militia. The Tamaboro militia was unique in its offer of material recruitment incentives (in the form of bags of rice), and incentive-based theories of recruitment predict that groups offering material incentives will not bother to screen new recruits. The Donso militia was exceptional in that the group formed in the most highly diamond-ferrous region of the country and the resource-curse theory suggests that groups with access to easily mined diamonds will be corrupted by mineral wealth and will not invest in relationships with civilian populations or in recruitment strategies (such as screening) that leverage civilian cooperation and knowledge. Like the Donso, the Kamajor militia also had some access to easily mined diamonds. However, the Kamajors were initially geographically fragmented between two regions, which included the bifurcation of Kamajor leadership between those two regions. One set of Kamajor recruiters had access to significant deposits of diamonds, but recruiters in the other region did not, suggesting that one half of the Kamajors might have been influenced by the resource-curse, while the other half was not. Beyond access to diamonds and offers of material incentives, Kamajor factions presented prospective members with a unique constellation of costs and benefits associated

with special "bulletproofing" initiation rituals that became a hallmark of membership in the Kamajor militia. Bulletproofing conferred obvious benefits to recruits, but it also required that recruits undergo a set of traumatic initiation rites.

To summarize, all three militias (with the exception of one Kamajor sub-faction) had access to material resource endowments that – according to the resource-curse theory – portended severe adverse selection problems and weak ties to local communities. The Kamajor militia differed importantly from the Tamaboro and Donso militias to the extent that Kamajor initiation was known to be both traumatic and highly beneficial. The costs and benefits associated with Kamajor initiation were not a part of Kamajor recruitment strategies per se, but they are worth considering because they may have affected civilians' decisions about whether or not to go through with the process of joining the Kamajor militia.

In addition to establishing baseline theoretical expectations, the analytical individuation of militias in this section also sets the stage for subsequent chapters that will explore how militias eventually evolved in increasingly unique directions as a result of the contingencies of escalating warfare. The three militias considered emerged in geographically remote locations, with names reflecting their unique regional, ethnic origins. "Tamaboro" was the name given to the northern militia formed in 1992, the story of which provided the opening anecdote for this chapter. Tamaboro is a compound-word in the Mandingo (and related Koranko) language, which can be translated as "liberate us" or "deliver us from trouble."[19] "Donso" was the common name given to the Kono District Defence Committee (KONDECOM), which formed in 1993 in the diamond-rich eastern district of Kono. "Donso" is a word in the Kono language that describes traditional hunters who were thought to have magical powers. The origins of the Kamajor militia are harder to date because the militia was a fusion of two initially autonomous defensive civilian mobilizations that began in two neighboring districts in the south and southeast of Sierra Leone. It appears that both mobilizations independently

[19]See author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011. Paul Kortenhoven provided a similar translation in his interview with the author, September 2012. Lansana Gberie (2005, 82) provides a different, more literal translation of *tama* as 'to lead' and *boro* as a special 'bag' used by magically empowered hunters, suggesting that Tamaboro "could mean literally 'bag that leads', implying the use of occult powers." Danny Hoffman (2011, 230) (who conducted ethnographic fieldwork with Kamajor fighters during the war) also suggests that both translations were seen as legitimate and meaningful to those within the Tamaboro organization.

adopted the label of "Kamajor," which in the Mende language (used throughout southern Sierra Leone) describes a magically empowered traditional hunter, linguistically equivalent to the term "Donso" in the Kono language.

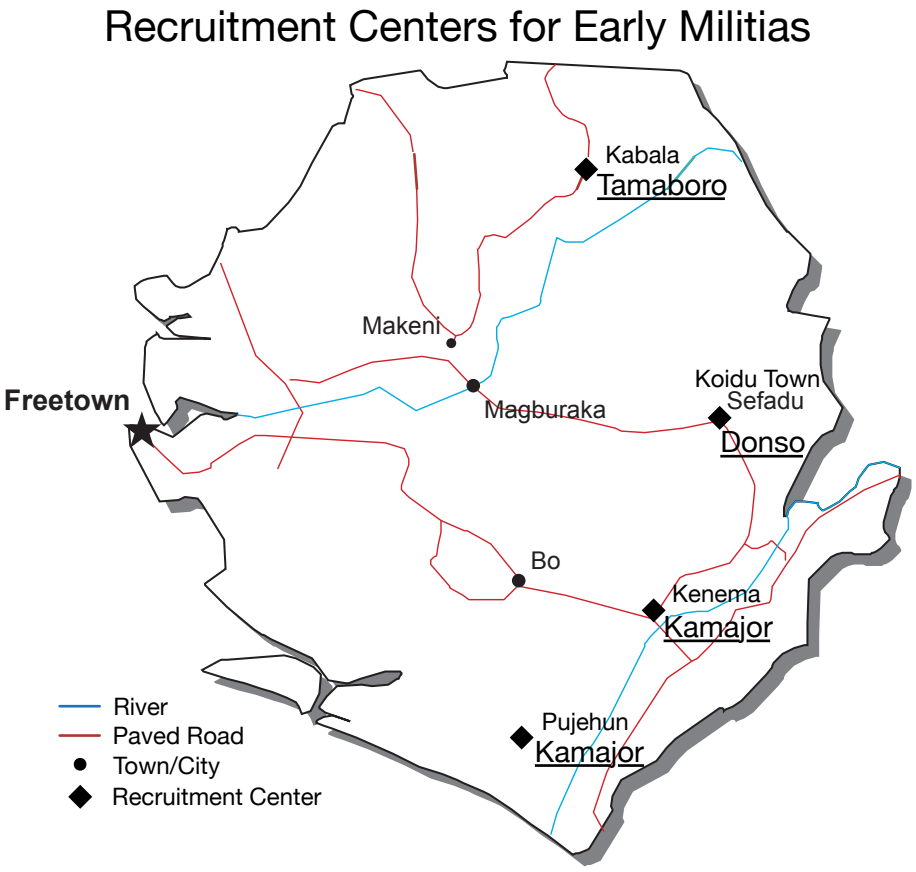

Figure 3.1: Recruitment Map

The Tamaboro in the North

The Tamaboro militia was unique in terms of the amount of support it received from the government of Sierra Leone. A senior officer in the NPRC junta, Samuel Komba Kambo, provided the impetus for the formation of the Tamaboro in 1992, making it the first government-encouraged civil militia in Sierra Leone.[20] Shortly after being appointed as the

[20]This story of the creation of the Tamaboro is corroborated by several other interviews conducted by the author, as well as the reportage of Lansana Gberie (2005), a Sierra Leonean journalist who covered the war and who managed to interview some of the original Tamaboro leaders (including the famous female fighter, Marie Keita) before they were assassinated by rebels later the war.

Deputy Minister of Defense, Komba Kambo visited Koinadugu District and convoked local chiefs and elders to discuss the idea of organizing local hunters into an auxiliary force that could operate alongside the Sierra Leone military. Komba Kambo chose the northern district of Koinadugu as a primary recruiting-ground because of his own political connections in the district, and probably also because he had first-hand knowledge of the occult powers of his northern brethren.[21] His plea for help was said to be inspired by the belief that "the war was coming to a critical stage and that the rebels were bringing in people from Burkina Faso whom he [Komba Kambo] believed were using some kind of voodoo in the pursuit of the war," which suggests that the NPRC government had looked to recruit fighters in Koinadugu District specifically because of the need to fight foreign Burkinabé magic with equally powerful indigenous magic.[22] In national historical memory, the people of Koinadugu had long held the reputation for being experienced hunters and warriors, as well as powerful manipulators of magical or supernatural means. A former Tamaboro recalls Komba Kambo's visit and explains why Koinadugu was the first place that he and the NPRC government turned:

> Now, the government sent a message: "This is the position. [...] We need your support to see how best you can back up our military." Because, Koinadugu have the highest number of ex-combatant: some... have been to this [World War II]. So, we have so many of them. They are old men – they have carried a long age – but they can still perform [supernatural acts]. And they can... easily train the young ones to make use of... the weapons.[23]

As described in the introduction, Komba Kambo disseminated a call to arms through local chiefs and promised that anyone who volunteered to join the incipient Tamaboro militia would be provided with a bag of rice as "traveling allowance."[24] This provision of significant material support from the government would prove to be unique to the Tamaboro militia, and it predisposed Tamaboro recruiters to face greater numbers of opportunistic joiners than recruiters in the other two regional militias. By one estimate, the offer of rice as a recruitment

[21] According to Gberie (2005, 82), Lieutenant Komba Kambo was "believed to have had his body 'washed' (to make it bullet-proof) by a powerful medicine man and ex-politician in the area, Daembaso Samura." See also, author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011.

[22] Author interview: 2002, November 2011.

[23] Author interview: 2003, November 2011.

[24] Author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011.

incentive attracted roughly 6,000 initial volunteers.[25] At least some of the community leaders involved suspected that a significant number of those volunteers were attracted by the offer of rice, and were not sufficiently skilled, brave or dedicated to make reliable fighters. It is not clear why rice was only provided to the Tamaboros and not the Kamajor and Donso militias that would form soon after the Tamaboro.

This flood of potentially opportunistic joiners was entirely consistent with the predictions of theories that emphasize the potential for material recruitment incentives to attract large numbers of undesirable volunteers who are difficult to distinguish from desirable volunteers. However, a supply-side theory of recruitment incentives cannot explain how the leaders of the nascent Tamaboro militia ultimately managed to selectively narrow thousands of volunteers down to a much smaller number – estimates vary between approximately 350 to 1000 fighters (Hoffman, 2011; Fithen, 1999).[26]

The Kono District Defence Committee (aka. Donso) in the East

Organized in the eastern district of Kono during the end of 1993, the Kono District Defense Committee (KONDECOM) was called into being by a representative of the NPRC junta who convened a meeting in the district capital of Koidu Town and entreated Paramount Chiefs to organize defensive militias .[27] The chiefs were ready to answer the government's call for help because they had already witnessed first-hand the brutality of the RUF during the rebel incursions in 1992. Kono chiefs may have also been eager to organize defensive militias because they had already seen (firsthand) or heard of the successes of the Tamaboros who had worked with soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army to clear the rebels out of Kono in late 1992 and early 1993. Also, at least a few of KONDECOM's early organizers were in contact with Alpha Lavalie (one of the early organizers of the Kamajors), who provided encouragement and expertise during the organization creation of KONDECOM.

The KONDECOM militia, which also became widely known as the "Donso" (the Kono term for a traditional hunter), was unique to the extent that it formed in the most

[25] Author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011.
[26] See author interview: Freetown_ShekuT, November 2011.
[27] Personal archives of Sahr Fillie-Faboe. See facsimile document in Appendix.

diamondiferous region of the country and recruited from a population that had a high proportion of individuals with experience as artisanal miners of alluvial diamonds. One of the main variants of theories of recruitment incentives focuses on the potentially corrupting role of loot-able resources, including alluvial diamond deposits that can be mined without heavy equipment. The resource-curse hypothesis (elaborated in the previous chapter) suggests that the presence of loot-able diamonds could have corrupted militia leaders and influenced recruitment strategies by leading chiefs and their delegates to provide diamonds, or other goods purchased with diamond-wealth, as incentives to attract recruits.[28] Militia commanders could have also promised rank-and-file fighters that they would be able to mine part-time in order to enrich themselves. Both of these strategies could have possibly led to large numbers of opportunistic joiners who, analogous to the Tamaboro case, were primarily motivated by the incentives offered and not by a genuine desire to defend their communities and prosecute the war.

Ultimately, Donso recruiters did not use diamond wealth or the promise of mining-rights as a means of attracting recruits. Interviews suggest that recruiters never even considered using diamonds as incentives. The most plausible explanation is that Donso recruiters did not feel the need to offer incentives because they expected civilians to respond positively to the call to arms. The chiefs in Kono started recruitment for the Donso militia during a time when the demonstrated successes of the Tamaboro militia were likely to have been known to the people of Kono. Having heard about or observed the successes of other civil militias, people in Kono were probably more sanguine about the potential success of the Donso militia and were thus more eager to join than they would have been had there been no precedent for successful militia formation and operations.

The Kamajor in the South

Kamajor militia was unique in claiming two points of origin, within two different administrative districts of Sierra Leone. In Kenema District, a university lecturer named Alpha

[28]Weinstein's theory tends to represent loot-able resources (including alluvial diamonds) as an irresistible temptation that corrupts the recruitment processes of armed groups by encouraging recruiters to offer material incentives, which presumably attract more opportunistic, i.e. bad, individuals. See, Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion*.

Lavalie (with some encouragement from representatives of the NPRC government) helped to create and head the Eastern Region Defence Committee, the fighters of which came to be known as Kamajors. In the neighboring district of Pujehun, a man named Mwalimu Saddam Shariff started performing protective "bulletproofing" rituals on local volunteers (also called Kamajors), a process that eventually became the hallmark of the Kamajor militia-society (Hoffman, 2011, 231).[29] Some former Kamajor fighters have framed these as competing origins-stories, but they seem to describe two independent and nearly simultaneous historical processes of militia formation, with Lavalie's mobilization in Kenema dating to 1992, and Shariff's mobilization in Pujehun dating to circa 1993 or 1994. The participants in both of the two groups deployed the Mende term *kamajoisia* (the plural of *kamajoh* or *kamajo*) to invoke a category of magically empowered Mende hunters who were historically responsible for protecting communities against threats from external beings both natural and supernatural (Hoffman, 2007; Alie, 2005; Ferme, 2001; Leach, 2000). Because of the powerfully evocative nature of the label, *kamajoisia* and the anglicized version, Kamajors, became synonymous with the militias that developed throughout the south of the country.

Since the Kamajors originated in two different geographic locations and with initially separate leadership cadres in each location, it might seem that the movement was destined for some level of fractionalization.[30] The Kenema Kamajors had access to significant diamond deposits, whereas the Pujehun Kamajors did not. This unequal distribution of material

[29]See author interview: 3007, February 2012. It is not clear whether or not Shariff's earliest efforts were encouraged by the NPRC government. Because Shariff was killed during the war, it has been difficult to reconstruct the history of his activities.

[30]One of the central hypotheses in Staniland (2012) is that groups formed with fragmented leadership structures are prone to suffering from infighting and managerial problems. Staniland's theory focuses on the organizational properties of social networks – namely, the conversion of peacetime associations or "social bases" to wartime organizational hierarchies. Staniland argues that weak or fragmented social bases in peacetime translate into weak armed organizations that are prone to fragmentation and mismanagement. A fragmented social base means weak ties among leaders, which lead to the construction of weak (i.e. poorly organized) groups that are prone to various problems of mismanagement (Staniland, 2012, 151). The Kamajor militia(s), at their inception, were split between chiefs and their delegates (in Kenema) who derived their authority through political office and social esteem, and "initiators" (in Pujehun) who derived their authority through popular belief in the efficacy of their protective magical initiation ceremonies. Contrary to what Staniland's theory would lead us to expect, the initial geographic fragmentation and bifurcated leadership of the Kamajor militia did not result in observable infighting. There is no evidence that Shariff (credited as the founding initiator) opposed the imposition of chiefly control over initiation processes – a move that obviously limited the power of initiators by placing chiefs and their delegates (like Lavalie) firmly in charge of Kamajor recruitment and in charge of most other major decisions related to the management of local contingents of Kamajors. There is also no evidence of personality conflicts or power struggles between Shariff and Lavalie, even as their two groups began to grow and operate in overlapping areas.

resources suggests that the two groups would have chosen different recruitment strategies and outcomes, reflecting their varying ability to convert diamond wealth into recruitment incentives. However, Kamajor leaders in Kenema made no use of diamond wealth while organizing the militia and recruiting new members. While the Pujehun Kamajors did not initially have a formalized recruitment process, the group was rapidly and peacefully brought under the control of local chiefs who, like their counterparts in other regions, established processes for screening new recruits. Far from the divisive power struggles that one might have expected, chiefs, chiefly delegates, and initiators developed a set of symbiotic relationships that granted a somewhat uneven level of power to chiefs over initiators. Initiators benefitted from chiefly patronage in the form of bulk gifts of money and goods that chosen men (women were not allowed to undergo Kamajor initiation) would bring with them when they came to be initiated, while chiefs benefitted from having their own local detail of militiamen who were emboldened to guard their communities by having received the powerful magical protections that only initiators could provide. In the context of patron-client politics in Sierra Leone, accepting patronage from a chief also implies the tacit acceptance of chiefly authority, and initiators must have understood that the money and goods conveyed to them by chiefs were more than merely a form of payment offered in exchange for a service. Early initiators, like the men they initiated, were servants of the chiefs who were their patrons.[31] From 1994 onward, Kamajor mobilizations throughout the south of Sierra Leone were increasingly collaborative and uniform in their organization, due to coordination through regional networks of chiefs.

Although Kamajor factions did not offer recruitment incentives to attract volunteers, the Kamajor initiation process provided recruits with the inestimable benefit of being made magically bulletproof. On its own, this benefit may have attracted a large number of individuals who volunteered to join the Kamajors simply to undergo the protective rituals that initiators offered. However, this unique benefit of Kamajor membership was, to some extent, counterbalanced by the fact that the associated rites of passage were known to be physically

[31]This point deserves special emphasis because the Kamajor militia would eventually go through a phase of serious fractionalization and mismanagement, but those problems were a result of wartime processes and personality conflicts that were unrelated to the initial geographic fragmentation of the group, and did not prevent the initial establishment of carefully orchestrated recruitment processes.

and psychologically traumatic (Hoffman, 2011). At least in the early stages of the war, the paired costs and benefits of initiation appear to have cancelled each other out. It was uncommon for civilians to join the Kamajors exclusively to gain access to the protective benefits of initiation ceremonies. Given the profound secrecy that still surrounds Kamajor initiation, it is impossible to determine if this balance between costs and benefits was achieved by design or by accident. Irrespective of the intentions of militia organizers, the relative balance between the costs and benefits of Kamajor initiation was highly functional and preempted adverse selection problems that would have plagued the Kamajors had induction into the militia been completely costless to volunteers.

All three militias (with the exception of the Pujehun Kamajor sub-faction) had access to material resource endowments that could have been used to offer material incentives to attract voluntary recruits. Thus, if we look only at the initial distribution of resources – which is how predictions are derived in the resource-curse theory – we would predict that all three militias would have relied on incentives to attract new recruits and (as a corollary) would have neglected to build strong ties to local communities. Contrary to these theoretical expectations, only the leaders of the Tamaboro militia actually made use of the available resources to offer recruitment incentives. The resource-curse theory cannot explain this differential use of available resources because the theory implicitly assumes that whenever resources are available, they will be used. Ignoring the shortcomings of the theory, we can make predictions based on the kinds of incentives offered – a variable that is more directly connected (than resource endowments) to the severity of adverse selection problems during recruitment. Focusing on recruitment incentives leads us to expect that Tamaboro leaders would have suffered from uniquely severe problems of adverse selection as compared with the Donso and Kamajor militias. According to the resource-curse theory, Tamaboro leaders' reliance on material incentives rather than social ties should have led to weak links with local communities, hence the unfeasibility of using social networks to screen new members.

This chapter began with a short narrative history of Tamaboro recruitment, describing

how the Tamaboro offered material recruitment incentives in the form of bags of rice, and then leveraged local social networks to screen the veritable flood of would-be recruits who were attracted by the incentives offered. The history of early Tamaboro recruitment makes it clear that the leaders of incipient armed groups do not face a strict either/or choice between using material or social resources during recruitment. Furthermore, the history of the Donso and (Kenema based) Kamajor militias suggests that the mere availability of a resource (such as diamonds) is not enough to guarantee that it will be utilized. When solving novel problems, people tend to first avail themselves of the tools that they are accustomed to using – in much of sub-Saharan Africa, this means that social networks are the tool or resource of first-resort. The following section moves from the supply to the demand side of recruitment, exploring how and why community leaders utilized social networks to gather information during militia recruitment.

Using Information Networks to Find Loyal Fighters

Across the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor civil militias, one finds a consistent set of recruitment strategies being adopted by local leaders and militia administrators. Tasked with recruiting new fighters, militia recruiters were strongly motivated by the need to create groups of martially skilled individuals who also had strong loyalties to chiefs and their communities. In all three militias, the initial recruitment strategies that chiefs and their delegates chose prioritized the quality of fighters over the quantity. Furthermore, recruitment strategies included organized and fairly elaborate attempts to assess and then exclude individuals with undesirable qualities – i.e. to proactively address problems of adverse selection by gaining access to information about the skills and potential loyalties of the individuals proposing to join nascent militias. The cases of the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias in Sierra Leone suggest the need to modify some of the most influential theories of recruitment in armed organizations, which have tended to ignore profoundly consequential variations in the extent to which the leaders of armed groups employ information-gathering techniques to ameliorate problems of adverse selection. As militia recruiters, chiefs used well established

webs of relationships between political patrons and their clients to tap into networks of local knowledge about the relevant personal characteristics of would-be militia members. Access to these knowledge networks allowed chiefs to make informed decisions about whom to include and whom to exclude from militia membership.

When asked about the process of joining militias, recruiters as well as rank-and-file fighters described the central role played by chiefs as selectors of militia members, and the more literate among those interviewed specifically used the term "screening" to refer to the process that new recruits would undergo prior to joining a militia. In the context of militia formation in Sierra Leone, screening did not mean exactly what it has come to mean in the context of the intensive and invasive vetting or "background checks" carried out by many western employers. Chiefs in Sierra Leone did typically interview would-be militia members before they joined, but the interviews themselves were fairly cursory. In Sierra Leone, screening refers primarily to a system of vouching, resembling the kinds of recommendations or character references that one might find in a Western employment-setting. When asked if *anyone* could simply go and join a militia, fighters would almost always answer in the negative and explain that "Nobody can go by himself to join."[32] In most cases, parents and guardians of new recruits would have to appear before the chief to vouch for the character of the would-be militia member. A former administrator in the Tamaboro militia recalls how chiefs and their delegates would call upon parents to attest to the character of their sons:

> First of all, we have to know your name; where you come from; who are your parents; who are your guardians. Then, in turn, we consult this of your guardian or your father or your mother, to say, "ok, now, do you know this man?" "Yes." "This person is my son, or my niece or my nephew." "Do you trust him (or her)?" "Yes, I trust him." "Ok." [...] "Come, we accept you."[33]

These in-person recommendations served an important dual purpose. They revealed otherwise hidden information about the character and background of the individuals proposing to join the militia, and they also came with the added understanding that the recommender would, to some extent, be culpable for the actions of the person whom they recommended. A

[32] Author interview: 3009, February 2012.
[33] Author interview: 2003, November 2011.

commander in the Donso militia emphasizes the role of familial recommendations as having both the potential to reveal "criminal" or "unruly" character of the recruit, and the potential to later link the recruit back to the family members who vouched for him:

> First thing, they ask your guarantee from your family [...] The chief will interview the volunteer and the family, because the chief knows all of the people from family ranks. If the person approves that in the presence of the family, then we allow that person. We ask, if the person has a wife; what is his own conduct. We would not like to take somebody criminal. [...] And whatever happens within that rank-and-file [recruit's] activities, we report that person back to the family – that this person is not disciplined; that this person is unruly. [34]

For new members of the Kamajors, there was the added step of undergoing a protective initiation ceremony, but it is clear that the screening process prior to initiation involved the same kind of familial recommendation as in the Tamaboro and Donso groups:

> When you want to go join, the first thing, where you go – you go to one of your parents [who] take you to the Paramount Chief. When you go to the Paramount Chief, you don't need to go to the commander. When a person volunteers to defend that particular group, [...] the people of that land – your mother and father and sister and brother – take you to the Paramount Chief, then the Paramount Chief recommends you to the initiators. When you go there, after the initiator [performs the rites] they hand over this man to the commanders. [35]

This system of vouching for, or recommending, others is a common social practice throughout peacetime Sierra Leone, based on time-honored mechanisms of social responsibility in which the members of a community must 'stand for' or 'be for' others in the community (according to common phrasings in the Mende language), in the sense that "everyone must be accounted for by someone else" (Ferme, 2001, 106). In peacetime, people rely on networks of family, friends, patrons, and clients to attest to the character of "strangers," who are outside their social networks. Without someone to vouch for one's character, one can remain a socially marginal "stranger" for long periods of time after entering a new community.[36]

In wartime, the call to arms for militia members was disseminated through a hierarchy of chiefs, originally codified as a part of the apparatus of colonial indirect-rule. News would travel from Paramount Chiefs to Section Chiefs, to Town Chiefs and local elders, until

[34] Author interview: 5001, May 2012.

[35] Author interview: 3007, February 2012.

[36] "Stranger" is a commonly used term in the Krio language, and denotes (as in English) one who is not familiar or whose identity is not known. The Krio term bears the added connotation of someone who, although known in a literal sense, does not belong to the community or the collective.

it reached individual communities where Town Chiefs made it their business to literally know everyone in their communities (Hoffman, 2011, 74).[37] The Town Chiefs could use their intimate knowledge of their communities to select people who they knew were both physically able, and who were likely to act as faithful servants of the hierarchy of chiefs. As a former Donso recalls, "The Town Chiefs recommended us who were hunters, because they [the Town Chiefs] knew their people well."[38] Recommendations for recruits deemed worthy would then flow back up the same hierarchy until they reached the Paramount Chiefs who would grant the recruit their final approval. Many of the reconstructions of early militia recruitment include some reference to the hierarchical nature of the process through which recruits found recommendations:

> Everybody comes from a town. There is a chief from that town. ... So, the Town Chief, the Section Chief, with the parent of this person, would have to recommend to the Paramount Chief, and if the Paramount Chief is satisfied with the recommendation that has come... then he will recommend this person to be initiated.[39]

In every case, these screening systems relied heavily on the ability of Paramount Chiefs to access extensive hierarchies of lesser chiefs who were embedded in networks of local knowledge, which included important information about the characters of would-be fighters. In many cases, the most relevant information was negative information that potential recruits might try to conceal, e.g. having a criminal record. Working without computerized record-keeping systems, and often without written records of any kind, Paramount Chiefs could not, on their own, know enough about the thousands of individuals who would come before them as candidates to join regional militias. A former Donso fighter emphasizes the flow of information through the hierarchy of chiefs:

> They [Paramount Chiefs] had to look at your background to know whether you are a criminal and so on. I was personally screened by the Paramount Chief. A list [of candidates] was also sent where the Paramount Chief would interview the Town Chief who would recommend those that were seen as fit to join.[40]

Given the informational networks at their disposal, Paramount Chiefs were in a unique po-

[37] During my own fieldwork I was obliged to visit the local chief upon arriving in any new area. It is considered a significant insult to a chief to be in his community without his knowledge and consent.

[38] Author interview: 5004, May 2012.

[39] Author interview: Bo_Workshop1_Kamajor, January 2012.

[40] Author interview: 5002, May 2012.

sition to make informed decisions about who could and could not join civil militias. Even in the Kamajor militia, where "joining" the militia was synonymous with undergoing a protective initiation ceremony, it is clear that the Paramount Chiefs were still the sole arbiters of membership. An early initiate into the Kamajors recalls that new recruits were sent to initiators in groups that were selected by the Paramount Chiefs and that carried the authorization of the chief's signature. It was unthinkable for someone to go on his own and without the endorsement of the Paramount Chief:

> Nobody can go by himself to join. [...] If you are moving from Bo to come and join, you have to carry the signature of the Paramount Chief [to the initiator] before you join the Kamajor. [...] It is the initiative of the chiefs, that, if Bo is sending 50 people to go [to the initiator] and join [...] They have to screen you before you go.[41]

These systems of wartime recommendations of militia recruits also had a peacetime-institutional precedent in the Chiefdom Council Act from the 1960s, which established systems of informal character references in which "firearms permits were issued by police authorities on the recommendation of village headmen and the local chief" (Alie, 2005, 74) The Act effectively vested local, traditional leaders with the authority to vouch for the character of individuals (mostly, male hunters) who had applied for a permit to own a gun. Not only did this system of vouching set a precedent, it also meant that in times of crisis local leaders already had lists of armed community members who might be able to serve in a defensive capacity. A member of the Donso militia explained the Paramount Chief's role in militia recruitment as being specifically linked to the chief's institutionalized authority over gun owners – hence over local hunters:

> You have no right to handle single-barrel [rifle] in the Paramount Chief's chiefdom without him knowing. [...] Even if you are in the village, that village should know how many guns are there, that chief [of the village]. So, that means you are serving the chief. If even [...] there was no war, when you kill the big animal – like a deer – you must, um, give a portion to the chief, for his respect [i.e. out of respect for his authority]. [42]

Thus, the initial call to arms specifically focused on mobilizing local hunters, not only because they could easily adapt their hunting skills to the task of stalking human prey, but also because they were already embedded in networks of chiefly patronage. Hunters derived their

[41] Author interview: 3009, February 2012.
[42] Author interview: 5001, May 2012.

right to own guns from chiefly authority, and acknowledged that authority any time they hunted by sharing a portion of their bounty with their chief. Given the provisions of the Chiefdom Council Act, hunters had already been effectively pre-screened in terms of their backgrounds and their loyalty to chiefs. Hunters were thus the natural first-resort as chiefs began forming local defensive forces, which led to even greater of levels of uniformity among the recruitment strategies that chiefs employed and in the kinds of individuals who joined early militias.

Because militia recruitment systems were informal and ad hoc, they were not completely uniform from one militia to the next. An individual who joined the Kamajor militia in Bo Town suggested that every would-be militia member had to collect three recommendations in order to join – "somebody of your own, the chief, and one of the [Kamajor] leaders to recommend you."[43] This particularly stringent standard for collecting recommendations was not a universal one, even within the Kamajors, and in many areas aspiring Kamajors were only required to have the endorsement of one or two of their family members or of their Town Chief. There are also a few examples of individuals who joined militias without any endorsements at all. A very small number of former Tamaboros and early Kamajors reported that they did not undergo any sort of interview or screening. These men explained that no such process was necessary for them because they were already well known and well-connected with regional chiefs and elders. One Tamaboro man was the brother of the Paramount Chief from his chiefdom, and another former Tamaboro claims that, because of his reputation as a "medicine man," the Paramount Chief called upon him personally to ask him to join the Tamaboro.[44] These two exceptions to the screening rule are still consistent with the underlying principles of militia recruitment – that chiefs did not allow individuals to become fighters unless their character was either known to the chief, or subject to verification through recommendations. Notwithstanding these small, local variations in the implementation of militia recruitment and screening, Paramount Chiefs were uniformly in control of those processes and were the final arbiters of who could and could not become a member of their respective regional militias.

[43]Author interview: 3007, February 2012.

[44]See author interview: 2003, November 2011; and author interview: 2004, November 2011.

In addition to the recommendations forwarded through patronage networks, Paramount Chiefs (and probably some lesser chiefs) also employed a set of basic heuristics when evaluating individuals who were proposing to join militias. These heuristics drew upon the stereotypes of "wayward" young men (discussed earlier), and used easily accessible demographic information about militia-joiners – specifically their age, marital status, number of offspring, and current employment – in order to make inferences about the degree to which they were "respectable," and were embedded in their local communities. One hears these pieces of information being raised consistently in the context of chiefly interviews and vouching processes, and being closely linked to claims about the desirability of the militia recruits in question. Because Elizabeth Lavalie's husband led the early Kamajors based in Kenema, Mrs. Lavalie witnessed first-hand some of the screening of early recruits. Her descriptions reference the heuristics that chiefs used: "The [local] chief would tell you [the Paramount Chief], this man is interested: he has so many children, so many wives; he has a big plantation [...] So, he is a respectable man."[45] In numerous cultures, with Sierra Leone being no exception, the personal qualities of having secured a job, land, a spouse, and having sired children are considered to be markers of successful individuals who have reached responsible adulthood. A chief who was involved in the screening of Donso recruits reconstructed his own role and personal concerns during the process, and made clear his expectation that people who had attained respectable adulthood would be more embedded in their communities and would thus be much less likely to betray their communities and their chiefs:

> When you're a [local] chief, you know the people in your community. Because, you see someone is married, and they've had children. [Their] children are going to school; [their] children go to do farming, in the garden. So, if you call upon that person and say go [to defend], he remembers that he has children, and he's not going to do something to betray them. That is a good family. [46]

These heuristics for identifying people with a good background or "good family" provided a means of cross-checking the validity of the recommendations that were delivered on the behalf of new recruits. It is impossible to know how much weight these heuristics carried in comparison with the recommendations, but it is clear from the numerous references to these

[45] Author interview with the Honorable Elizabeth Lavalie (widow of Dr. Alpha Lavalie, chairman of the Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee – ERECDCOM), June 2012.

[46] Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.

stereotypes that they played a significant role in the process of evaluating recruits.

Ultimately, the combinations of character references and heuristics that militia recruiters gathered appear to have provided them with actionable information about the individuals whom they were screening, which should have allowed for a significant level of selectivity during recruitment processes. These screening procedures were made more viable and accurate by the fact that, during the initial phases of militia recruitment throughout Sierra Leone, the full hierarchical network of chiefs and local elders was available to collect and forward references who could attest to the character of would-be recruits. Since militia recruiters left behind very few written records, it is nearly impossible to quantify the selectivity of recruitment processes in terms of the ratios of the number of candidates for membership as compared with the number of individuals who were actually accepted as members of the organization. The organizers of the Tamaboros specifically suggested that thousands of would-be recruits showed up before a committee of chiefs in Kabala (because they were attracted by the offer of bags of rice), while only hundreds were actually extended membership. In the case of the Donsos and Kamajors, it appears that Town Chiefs and Section Chiefs only sent people to the Paramount Chiefs if those people were already good candidates. Thus, most of the rejection of candidates probably occurred locally and behind closed doors – under a veil of privacy that is unlikely to be lifted for a foreign researcher.[47] A more viable (albeit less direct) way of assessing the numerical selectivity of early recruitment processes is to observe that the average chiefdom in Sierra Leone contained tens of thousands of men who were over the age of eighteen and who were candidates for membership in early militias.[48] Despite the large numbers of potential candidates and the dire need to create defensive forces, each chiefdom only initially called upon twenty or fifty (or in extreme cases, one hundred) volunteers (Hoffman, 2011). Thus, most Paramount Chiefs appear to have tapped less than one percent of the eligible male populations within their chiefdoms during initial recruitment drives.

[47]In order to avoid asking questions that would get me or my respondents into trouble, I opted to not pursue discussions that might lead to the naming of specific individuals who were rejected.

[48]These estimates were constructed using national population estimates from The World World Bank (2013), and sub-national population distribution estimates and gender-proportion estimates from Thomas, MacCormack and Bangura (2006).

Taking the Time to Use Information Networks

Narrowing the field of recruits through screening required time. Under indiscriminate recruitment (no screening) there should be minimal delay between the time that someone volunteers to become a member of a militia and the time that they are effectively ready to be trained (if there was any training) and deployed as a fighter. In contrast with indiscriminate recruitment, the delay that resulted from selective recruitment through screening was probably on the order of a few weeks. For the Tamaboro, with centralized screening in Kabala, the delays emerged from a very small number of screening committees having to evaluate an extremely large number of candidates. In the case of the more decentralized screening in the Donso and Kamajor militias, delays came from the slow rate of transmission of information. In terms of the technologies for moving people and information, chiefs had access to little more than their own personal resources, which were limited to a small number of automobiles, a sparse network of landline phones, and motorbike riders who could act as messengers and couriers. In most cases, critical information traveled only at the speed of the individuals who were moving, by car but more often on foot, to the locations where Paramount Chiefs and their recruit-screening processes were headquartered.

The theory of recruitment selectivity developed in Chapter 2 suggests that increasing threats from enemy forces will tend to decrease the amount of time that recruiters are willing to devote to screening new recruits. One or two weeks is a significant amount of time in terms of ongoing violent conflict within a small country, and could easily be the margin between victory and defeat at the local level.[49] Thus, a one or two week delay of deployment (due to screening) would only have been acceptable if demand for manpower was relatively low. I use the enemy's numerical strength and the proximity of rebel forces to a militia's primary recruitment center as a way measuring local threat-levels and thus assessing the relative urgency with which chiefs carried out screening procedures.

Over all, the threat of enemy attack was relatively low during the initial stages of

[49]To give a sense of scale, 16 days is a sufficient amount of time to move a large militia force on foot (at a rate of 10 miles per day) from the recruitment point of the Tamaboro militia in Kabala to the point of their deployment against rebel forces in Kono District. This is, by far, the longest distance that had to be covered by any militia during its deployment.

recruitment for the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias. At the time of Tamaboro recruitment in 1992, rebel forces were still quite small, probably numbering under 1,000 fighters.[50] Chiefs carried out Tamaboro recruitment in the northern city of Kabala, while the nearest rebel forces were in and around Koidu Town, which is roughly 160 miles away using the most direct route. Recruitment of Kamajors in Kenema began at the end of 1992, possibly in response to news of Tamaboro successes, and was conducted in much closer proximity to the nearest rebel forces in Pendembu, a little over 60 miles away. The perceived threat of a rebel attack must have been higher for Kamajor recruiters in Kenema than for Tamaboro recruiters in Kabala (who were 100 miles further away). However, recruitment in Kenema started during late 1992, when rebels were already on the run, being pursued by a combination of Tamaboro and Sierra Leone Army (SLA) forces. For recruiters in Kenema, the rebels were, at most, only moderately threatening: the nearest rebels were still several day's march away, and were known to be on the defensive and taking serious losses. The Donso in Kono formed at a point in 1993 when Tamaboro and SLA forces had pushed the rebels completely out of the country and into hiding in the heavily forested border regions with Liberia. This placed Kono recruiters in a clearly low-threat environment, with the nearest rebels (on the eastern border with Liberia) being scattered, numerically depleted, and at least 100 miles away from recruitment centers in and around Koidu Town. Thus, the leaders of all three militias had significant amounts of time in which to gather the information necessary to screen new recruits.

Explaining Convergence

The resource-curse theory cannot explain the convergence of Sierra Leonean militias on strategies of screening through chiefly patronage networks. The resource-curse theory leads us to expect that recruiters who rely on recruitment incentives – despite the known tendency of incentives to attract "opportunistic" or untrustworthy types – will also decide

[50]Upon first entering Sierra Leone in 1991, the RUF probably only numbered in the low hundreds (Weinstein, 2005, 617). The initial popularity of the RUF movement allowed for a period of intense voluntaristic (and probably some forced) recruitment that swelled the RUF ranks (Hoffman, 2011, 33). While it is difficult to find estimates of RUF numbers during this period, it is unlikely that the force grew to be larger than 1,000 fighters.

to eschew screening. Historically the very opposite occurred. Tamaboro recruiters offered incentives and received a flood of volunteers. Recognizing the problem of opportunistic, incentive-seeking joiners, Tamaboro recruiters implemented systems of screening. Similarly, in the process of Donso and (Kenema) Kamajor recruitment, the resource-curse theory predicts that the presence of local diamond deposits would have led militia recruiters to capitalize on diamond wealth to offer incentives. Again, what historically occurred was the opposite of what was predicted: the decision-making process has proven nearly impossible to reconstruct, but it appears that recruiters never even considered using diamond wealth to underwrite recruitment – possibly because such a move would have been illegal, and possibly also because such a strategy was seen as unnecessary or even potentially counterproductive (as in the Tamaboro case). The Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor cases highlight specific points where the resource-curse theory provides faulty predictions. These predictive failures call into question the underlying validity of the logic of the resource-curse theory, and provide a basis for rejecting material resources and recruitment incentives as alternative explanations in all but one of the cases considered.

The process of Pujehun Kamajor recruitment is the exception. It is only historical case that is consistent with the predictions of the resource-curse theory. The case of the Pujehun Kamajors is nearly identical to that of the Donso and the Kenema Kamajors. The only difference is that the Pujehun Kamajors did *not* have access to major diamond deposits or any other significant form of material resources. A lack of significant resource endowments left recruiters without the option of offering material recruitment incentives, and pushed leaders to leverage social networks during recruitment, including the use of information networks for screening recruits.

Surprisingly, the leaders of militias with different sets of initial conditions affecting the supply of volunteers all adopted the same recruitment strategies involving screening. What explains this remarkable convergence is the fact that the Tamaboro, Donso, and Kamajor militias each formed within a set of expansive and efficacious information networks. Those militias also formed under propitious conditions that allowed chiefs sufficient time to devise systems of selective recruitment and to tap into information networks in order to screen

militia recruits. The analysis in this chapter comes together to show that chiefs had the motivation or intent, the requisite information, and the necessary time to engage in selective recruitment of new militia members. However, the evidence presented in this chapter does not tell us whether or not chiefs actually succeeded in recruiting selectively – i.e. excluding unwanted recruits and including high-quality recruits. The question of variations in recruit quality is the topic of the following chapter.

Network Fragility and the Foreshadowing of Divergence

One can only truly appreciate the selectivity of a given recruitment strategy by comparing the quality of recruits inducted under that strategy with the quality of recruits inducted under a qualitatively different strategy. The preceding analysis suggests that initial militia recruitment strategies were highly selective because they combined a small number of recruits (in proportion to the number of eligible individuals in the population) with a large amount of information about the relevant qualities of those recruits. Presumably, shifts in recruitment strategies toward larger numbers of recruits or less availability of information (or both) should lead to corresponding decreases in the quality of the individuals who were allowed to become militia members. The Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias prove to be good cases for testing this hypothesis about the selectivity of recruitment strategies, because all three of those armed groups would go on to significant negative shocks that disrupted existing recruitment strategies and led to a variety of adaptations. The timing and the magnitude of those changes were different from one militia to the next because of overarching differences in the ways in which militia managers were affected by, and reacted to, the highly contingent processes of escalating conflict. In general, initial recruitment strategies proved to be prone to deterioration because of the fragile nature of the social resources that militia managers used to address organizational challenges that they faced.

Early militia recruiters carried out relatively elaborate processes of collecting information through recommendations without much in the way of formalized bureaucracy or technological infrastructure – facts which are surprising in light of emphasis that some the-

orists have placed on the significance of both organizational structure and technology on the evolution of armed organizations.[51] Chiefs and their delegates organized civil militias in an ad hoc manner and gave only limited consideration to questions of institutional design. Although a few organizationally talented individuals did create organogram sketches and try to impose a level of scientific or rational design on the process, militia organizations never resembled the multi-tiered, pyramidal hierarchies and accountability structures that are the hallmark of western military bureaucracies. Chiefs and other community leaders – now, the managers of civil militias – shared power in uneven ways that were an extension of peacetime exchanges of patronage, usually in the form of funds and political favors. The structures of these newly militarized relationships were not new. Relationships continued to be characterized by diffuse rather than centralized authority, reflecting the web-like structures of the peacetime social networks upon which militia organizations were hastily superimposed. The fact that civil militias in Sierra Leone managed to carry out logistically complex tasks with a minimum of Western-style, managerial resources would seem to suggest that social resources, which Sierra Leoneans had in abundance, may have been at least partially substitutable for the comparatively scarce institutional and technological resources.

In wartime contexts, the primary difference between more technical, managerial resources and more social resources is not their efficacy, but rather their durability. The problem with social resources is that they are uniquely vulnerable to the destructive effects of violent conflict, which has a tendency to invert or otherwise re-order peacetime social relationships. The above analysis demonstrates the central importance of chiefs as the originators of militia recruitment policies, and also as individuals who were uniquely and powerfully placed within patronage networks and concomitant flows of information about recruits. These findings prepare us to contemplate the potential consequences if chiefly control over recruitment were to be somehow diminished or completely disrupted. The violence, mistrust and uncertainty of prolonged conflict have a tendency to rearrange social landscapes, either through the death or displacement of individuals who constitute social

[51] Johnston (2008) and Staniland (2012) have identified technology and institutional design as potentially important determinants of the ability of armed groups to successfully monitor and discipline members, manage organizational resources, and maintain symbiotic or "governance" relationships with local civilian populations.

networks, or through the usurpation of pre-existing authority by individuals who normally sit on the lower rungs of peacetime society. Precisely because of their political and social power, chiefs became targets, not only for the rebel forces terrorizing communities, but also for the wayward young men and other discontents who had an interest in overturning the social status quo. In many cases, with the conflict in Sierra Leone serving as a primary example, marginal individuals can find themselves uniquely empowered by wartime contexts in which the ability to do or to control violence has effectively become the sole denominator in equations of social power. Building upon these preliminary insights, the following chapter provides a detailed reconstruction of why and how militia recruitment strategies changed over time. The chapter provides a set of qualitative tests of the hypothesis that changes in the selectivity of a given militia's recruitment strategy will lead to predictable changes in the quality of the individuals recruited into that militia.

Chapter 4

Crisis and Change: Recruiting the Wrong People

In the early years of the war in Sierra Leone, militia members were popular heroes and the stuff of West African legends – magical hunter-warriors, dedicated to the defense of their communities. It is no surprise that the real militia fighters did not live up to the standards of popular imagination, but it is still surprising how far they fell from their initial popularity. By the end of the war in 2002, Sam Hinga Norman, the man responsible for coordinating the efforts of regional militias throughout the country, was tried for war crimes alongside rebel commanders who had recruited child combatants, turned a blind eye to gang rapes, and supervised the vengeful amputation of thousands of limbs. How did the situation change so drastically in the late 1990s that militia leaders were subject to indictments by the Special Court of Sierra Leone?

Not all militias in Sierra Leone fell into the same level of disrepute, and people throughout the country offer multiple narratives to explain why militias changed over time. Still, a common thread emerges across those narratives, suggesting that good militias turned bad when they recruited the wrong kinds of people. These are obviously post-hoc rationalizations, but my contention in this chapter is that they hold a grain of truth in linking poorly selected fighters with increasing civilian abuse. The problematic recruits who entered militias later in the war were the "wayward" young men identified in Chapter 3. Stereotyped as dangerous discontents, in reality, marginal young men saw unique opportunities for personal advancement and safety in militia membership, and probably also had reasons to resent the authority of the community elders who managed local militias. This chapter is

not about what those marginal youths did once they became militia members – this will be covered in Chapter 6. This chapter addresses the question of how problematic recruits came to be militia members despite the fact that chiefs would rather have excluded them from membership.

Elizabeth Lavalie, parliamentarian and widow of the late militia-leader Alpha Lavalie, provided one of the more historically contextualized accounts of how militias went bad by recruiting the wrong people. She pointed out that the fundamental problem of recruiting appropriately motivated fighters was not unique to militias, but also led to the corruption of the Sierra Leone Army during the first three years of the war. Based on her first-hand experiences managing southern militias with her husband, and then continuing to engage with militia administrators after his death, Lavalie explained that war produces incessant demands for manpower, which if met carelessly, result in the rapid corruption of armed organizations. Under profound pressure from increasingly powerful enemies, militias needed large numbers of additional recruits, but informal and increasingly disrupted systems of screening recruits could not manage large influxes of cannon fodder. As Lavalie explained, "When you want manpower [. . .] 'A drowning man will clutch at a straw.' [. . .] So, whatever is available, you use."[1]

Micro-level data on militia recruitment are consistent with Lavalie's explanation. During the second half of the war, the number of militia members inducted per year exploded, suggesting significant nationwide decreases in the selectivity of recruitment processes (see Figure 1). As Lavalie suggested, a precipitous decrease in recruitment selectivity probably allowed a significant number of "shady characters" to join militias during the late 1990s. Presumably, these low quality recruits were the ones who were responsible for tarnishing the reputations of once-popular militias.

[1]Author interview with Elizabeth Lavalie, widow of Dr. Alpha Lavalie, chairman of the Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee (ERECDCOM), June 2012.

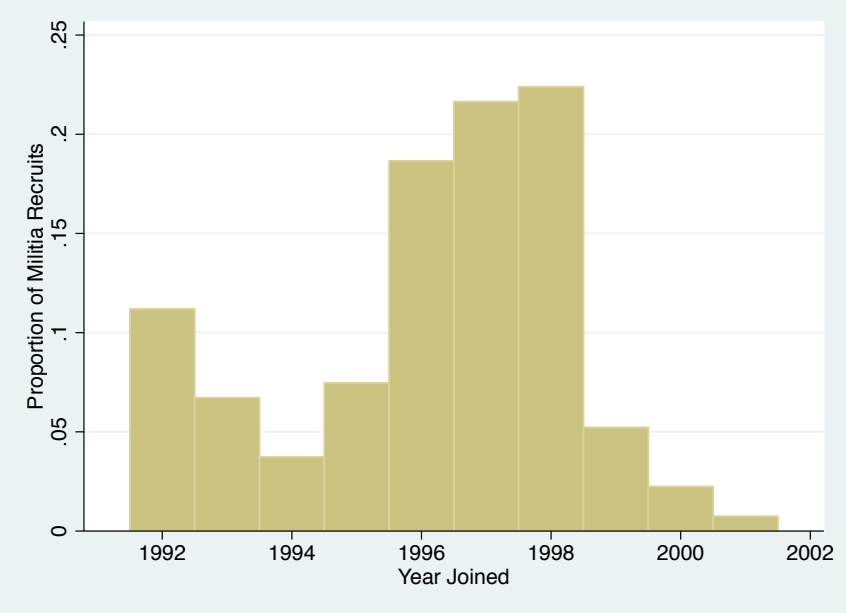

Figure 4.1: The Proportion of Sampled Militia Members Recruited by Year

At their inception, the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias all converged on a relatively uniform set of recruitment strategies, making use of informal information networks to screen new recruits. The creators of militias adopted these recruitment strategies explicitly as a means of selectively recruiting militia members by excluding undesirable types – specifically individuals who had questionable levels of loyalty to local chiefs and elders. Oral history evidence suggests that these strategies were successful in terms of selecting high-quality recruits, and that the primary reason for their success is that early screening took place under ideal or near-ideal conditions. The chiefs who were in charge of early screening processes had access to extensive networks for gathering information about prospective militia members and had ample time to use such information.

How would the efficacy of screening processes and the quality of individuals recruited have been different under less-than-ideal conditions? This chapter explains temporal variations in recruit quality by comparing the optimal screening strategies that militia recruiters first employed with different kinds of second-best (or worse) strategies that recruiters adopted later in the war. This comparison is possible because the initial similarities among militia recruitment strategies did not last. The efficacy of these strategies depended on recruiters having ample information and time. The intensification of conflict tended to take both of

these resources away. In particular, social networks are as fragile as the lives of the human beings who constitute those networks. Escalating conflict tended to damage and disrupt social networks, destabilizing established methods for solving adverse selection problems in the Tamaboro, Donso, and Kamajor militias, and leading to a significant degree of differentiation among the recruitment processes used in each of those armed groups. These variations provide the basis for evaluating the hypothesis that decreases in selectivity of recruitment in a given armed group lead to corresponding decreases in the quality of individuals who become members of that group.

Because the previous chapter has already analyzed the historical processes that account for convergence among early militias' screening strategies, this chapter begins by explaining how regional militias diverged in terms of their levels of recruitment selectivity. Treating the unique regional histories of the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias as case studies, I trace important changes in the capacities of militia recruiters to screen recruits and exclude undesirable types. I look for evidence of the degradation of information networks through the death or displacement of key individuals, as well as evidence of increasingly hasty recruitment as a result of mounting pressure from enemy forces that were in close proximity and on the offensive. Fine-grained historical evidence, especially direct testimonies from former militia administrators, commanders, and rank-and-file fighters, provides a means of reconstructing the historical processes that resulted in the modification of recruitment procedures over time.

Having established how recruitment processes changed over time, I then turn to the question of whether or not changes in recruitment selectivity produce significant and predictable changes in the quality of individuals recruited. For the case of each militia, I examine the interplay among three potentially important determinants of recruit quality: 1) the underlying quality of the pool of volunteers, 2) the capacity of militia recruiters to screen recruits and prevent some low quality volunteers from becoming members, and 3) the potential for induction costs (i.e. the costs of joining borne by volunteers) to discourage low quality individuals from joining. Having used these factors to establish a set of expectations regarding changing recruit quality for each case, I then measure recruit quality using both

qualitative, oral-history evidence and using descriptive statistical data from a respondent-driven sample of former militia members. I use the average age of recruits and the percentage of recruits who had prior experience with firearms as two proxies for the quality of recruits – i.e. the degree to which recruits were likely to be loyal to chiefs and local elders.

While most of the analysis in this chapter is cast at the regional and micro-level, we also need to take into account important national-level contexts, considering their potential to influence the quality of individuals recruited into militias over time. The following section describes national-level increases in the centralization and bureaucratization of militia organization, as well as extremely negative trends in the balance of power between militias and their military opponents. While the influence of bureaucratic corruption and national-level crises helps to explain a general trend toward less selective militia recruitment, these factors cannot explain significant regional-level variations in recruitment selectivity and recruitment outcomes. Several militias experienced extreme reductions in recruitment selectivity, while others managed to retain relatively high levels of selectivity. Having identified the relevant national-level contexts, I then provide a series of regional-level case studies to explain differentiation among militias.

National-Level Crisis and Change: Better Organized, but Worse Off

Sierra Leone is a small country, and the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias were all similarly subject to major shifts in power of their enemies.[2] In many cases, macro-level events translated to the local level through militia leaders who interpreted trends in the conflict and accordingly adjusted their perceptions of the amount of time that could be dedicated to screening processes, given changing circumstances. From 1995 to early 1997, all three militias benefitted militarily from an alliance with state-hired counterinsurgency experts – a private military company known as Executive Outcomes (EO) – and then all three militias were seriously shaken by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military coup in May of 1997, which followed shortly after the departure of EO. All three militias

[2]The area of Sierra Leone is just under 28,000 square miles – slightly smaller than the US state of South Carolina.

also experienced a period of organizational consolidation under the umbrella organization known as the Civil Defense Forces (CDF). The formation of the CDF bureaucracy had the potential to improve the capacity of the militias fighting under its leadership, but the CDF never lived up to its promise. Ultimately, the combined effect of EO assistance, followed by the disastrous AFRC coup, produced a sort of whiplash in terms the shared fortunes of civil militias in Sierra Leone. Collectively, militias swung rapidly from a major apex to an unprecedented nadir in terms of their military power and their expectations of successfully defeating the rebel forces, with the inflection-point for that change centering on the year 1997.

Executive Outcomes operators significantly increased the military effectiveness of civil militias (especially the Kamajors) by injecting them with force-multiplying factors, including communications technology, air support, and high levels of strategic and tactical expertise (Johnston, 2008, 133). Executive Outcomes contractors were highly trained former members of South African special forces units, many of whom had recent experience conducting counterinsurgency operations in Angola. The military advising and tactical support that they provided led to a series of significant victories of combined counterinsurgent forces over the RUF rebels, but EO contractors did nothing to modify militia recruitment procedures. Rather, EO involvement affected the selectivity of militia recruitment by temporarily lowering the intensity of demand for manpower, especially in militia forces that directly benefitted from the force-multiplying aspects of EO involvement. The benefits of EO intervention were such that, by early 1996, combined counterinsurgent forces had the RUF rebels on the run. Elections in March of 1996 paved the way for peace talks between the newly elected president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and the rebel leader, Foday Sankoh. Although the peace talks were short-lived and probably lacking in sincere commitments on both sides, they mandated and accomplished the withdrawal of Executive Outcomes contractors from the momentarily simmering conflict.

The military coup in May of 1997 occurred shortly after Executive Outcomes had ceased its operations, and the violent power-grab rapidly reversed all of the military gains that counterinsurgent forces had made in the recent past. The coup was launched by dis-

gruntled elements of the Sierra Leone Army who broke into the Pademba Road Prison (the main prison in the capital city of Freetown), and released hundreds of inmates, including Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who became the new head of state under the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council junta. President Kabbah, who had been in power for little more than a year, fled to Guinea, and the newly installed military junta outlawed civil militias and offered the RUF rebels a power-sharing agreement. It is worth noting that the coup was as much an anti-militia coup as it was an expression of discontent with the results of the 1996 election. The soldiers who led the coup were motivated, at least in part, by the fact that Kabbah's administration had not only legalized civil militias, but had diverted significant financial resources from the Sierra Leone Army in order to provide civil militias (mostly the Kamajors) with increasing logistical support (Hoffman, 2011, 42-3). The rebel-junta alliance that resulted from the coup represented a major shift in the military balance of power away from civil militias (who remained loyal to the exiled President Kabbah) and toward their newly combined enemies. The leaders of the Tamaboro, Donso, and Kamajor militias reacted to what they saw as increasing demand for military manpower, produced by a major increase in both the strength and proximity of their enemies.

The period leading into the 1997 coup also witnessed a major, national-level organizational change in the civil militias in Sierra Leone. In 1996, the newly elected president Kabbah tried to consolidate his control over disparate regional militias by bringing them under a single, national-umbrella organization, dubbed the Civil Defense Forces, or CDF. Despite semblances of regional bureaucracy, de facto leadership in early militias was typically highly diffuse and commanders exercised power and derived authority through the delivery of patronage rather than by virtue of their formally titled rank in a mostly notional military-style hierarchy. At best, the creation of the CDF may have led to marginal increases in the coordination among militia commanders and the control that national politicians could exercise over pro-government militias. The new umbrella organization also came with a staff of civil-political bureaucrats who attempted to impose a higher degree of hierarchy and conscious institutional design on sets of militias that had been little more than sets of militarized social networks. These organizational developments bear mention, given the theory of social

bases and institutional design, elaborated by Paul Staniland (2012), which suggests that armed organizations perform best when they are highly centralized and institutionalized.[3]

Contrary to the predictions of this theory, the empirical discussion below will reveal that militias were the least selective in their recruitment when they were at their most organized. Both the Tamaboros and Kamajors went from better to worse in terms of their recruitment strategies during the period following CDF institutionalization. Part of the problem was that the new members of the CDF bureaucracy were rapidly corrupted by opportunities to distribute available materiel according to logics of political loyalty and ethnic patronage, often in direct contradiction to logics of military efficacy.[4] These dynamics may have countered any gains in terms of bureaucratic centralization and efficiency that were made as a result of the creation of the CDF. In addition, the contingencies of escalating conflict destabilized existing recruitment strategies in ways that the centralized CDF bureaucracy was not prepared to address.

The 1997 coup and its violent aftermath led to the displacement of numerous civilian communities as well as local militias. Civil militias throughout the country were forced to flee into the bush and to seek refuge in border regions. Some of the chaos that ensued was an unintended consequence of a foreign military intervention in March of 1998 that was meant to bring peace and restore civilian rule to the country. A Nigerian-led force, fielded by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), entered Freetown and drove the AFRC-RUF forces out. The success of ECOMOG fighters in capturing Freetown from the AFRC-RUF and reinstalling the exiled President Kabbah was

[3]Staniland (2012, 142-177) argues that "the foundational social base of an armed organization dominates its leadership cadres and establishes, or fails to establish, central organizational processes to make and implement decisions and to create local institutions for disciplining and socializing influxes of new fighters." Organizations formed around divided social bases have flawed organizational structures and fragmented leadership, resulting in the mismanagement of material resources, and lax discipline, whereas groups formed around overlapping social bases will build coherent institutions that allow for the effective utilization of resources and greater capacity to carry out logically complex tasks associated with the management of an armed organization.

Staniland's social-institutional theory was not devised to specifically explain recruitment processes and outcomes, and so it does not directly address the question of access to information that would affect the severity of adverse selection problems. However, the theory clearly implies that groups built on coherent institutions will have greater organizational and managerial capacity, and that capacity should presumably extend to the task of collecting private information about would-be fighters. Thus, groups founded on overlapping social bases should be better at solving problems of adverse selection than groups with divided social bases.

[4]Author interview: 4001, March 2012.

ostensibly a victory for civil militias (loyal to Kabbah) throughout the country. However, the success of the intervention meant that displaced AFRC and RUF fighters flooded out of Freetown and scattered into the countryside in angry disarray. Disorganized and on the defensive, gang-like contingents of the AFRC and RUF took refuge in a number of regions of the country that they had not occupied in the recent past (or ever), and expressed their fear and frustration through the abuse and killing of local civilians. From the standpoint of militia recruiters, AFRC-RUF incursions into the countryside meant that militia recruitment often took place with enemy forces in very close proximity. Time was of the essence because nearby enemies could blend in with local civilians and strike at any moment with minimal warning.

From the perspective of militia recruiters, the negative consequences of the 1997 coup compounded in such a way as to prompt increasingly hasty recruitment of new members. The (nominal) unification of civil militias under the newly created CDF did little to soften the blow of the coup. Although the immediate consequences of the coup were relatively uniform across the country, local leaders experienced different levels of success in coping with the crisis.

Regional variations in recruitment selectivity emerged as a result of different underlying local conditions. No regional militia or civilian community made it through the war unscathed, but the levels of death, infighting, and consequent disruption of local leadership structures and information networks varied widely. Only by understanding these more local-level dynamics can we hope to explain the diversity of recruitment outcomes among the late-war descendants of the Tamaboro, Donso and Kamajor militias. The following section traces the historical processes that led to divergence.

Death, Displacement, Intrigue, and Divergence

At the beginning of the war, chiefs acting as militia recruiters had privileged access to vast social networks. With the passage of time and the escalation of conflict, the death or flight of well-connected individuals within those networks (especially chiefs) significantly

reduced the size and continuity of those networks, hence reducing the quality and quantity of information that could be extracted by recruiters when screening. In some cases, chiefs lost their positions as recruiters and the people who replaced them did not have the same level of privileged access to social networks – hence information – as the chiefs. In an extreme case, the individuals replacing chiefs had interests that differed significantly from their predecessors, leading them to completely abandon the enterprise of screening in favor of more indiscriminate recruitment.

In both the Tamaboro and Kamajor militias, recruitment strategies eventually shifted away from the intensive use of information networks to screen would-be fighters. These changes were catalyzed by the military intensification of the conflict, and the forced migration of civilian populations. However, in each case, the proximate causes of breakdown, and especially the conditions that sustained those breakdowns, were different. Recruiters in the northern region (where the Tamaboro formed) permanently lost numerous chiefs who were hubs of clientelistic exchanges, and the loss of those chiefs severely disrupted information networks. Screening in the North continued, but it was cursory, at best. Recruiters from a large part of the South (especially in the districts of Bonthe and Bo) had access to networks, but a small number of profit-seeking initiators – specialists in the administration of bullet-proofing "medicines" – completely circumvented those networks, thwarted chiefly authority, and established themselves as the main arbiters of militia membership. As recruiters, Kamajor initiators made no attempt to screen recruits. However, initiators did subject recruits to ceremonial inductions that, while beneficial (in terms of magically protecting recruits against bullets), were also costly to new recruits, many of whom had to pay significant amounts of money to undergo Kamajor initiation (Hoffman, 2011, 236).[5] These costs may have discouraged more opportunistic individuals who would have otherwise joined, given the absence of screening processes.

In the East, the Donso militia was unique in the extent to which its leaders were able to maintain screening procedures that leveraged relatively intact social networks. In

[5]Like earlier Kamajor initiation ceremonies, it is likely that these later ceremonies also involved some level of hazing. Given the high level of secrecy surrounding initiation, there is no way to collect reliable evidence on this point.

December 1998, the Donso militia was split in two by a rebel incursion that forced communities and militia members to flee to the east to Guinea, or to the south to the neighboring district of Kenema (Gberie, 2005, 122). Despite the severe displacement of eastern communities, civilian leaders and their militarized counterparts largely managed to stay together as they fled to Guinea. Once President Kabbah had been reinstalled, his administration in Freetown helped to coordinate the Guinean mobilization, with networks of chiefs mobilizing and screening fighters in Guinean refugee camps. In what became known as the "Kenema Axis," the displaced Donsos fused their systems of recruitment with those of the Kenema-based Kamajors – the organization descended from Dr. Alpha Lavalie's Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee (ERECDCOM). This fusion was not perfect, but it allowed for the continuation of screening, even of the displaced Konos, preventing a descent into the cursory level of screening that was the only option in the North, where networks of chiefs had been irreparably disrupted. Militia leaders in Kenema had established a significant bureaucracy to govern local militias, including processes of recruitment of both local Mende peoples and displaced people from Kono. The strength of the Kenema bureaucracy helps to explain why recruiters in the Kenema Axis, unlike Kamajors farther to the south and west, did not lose control to rogue initiators; however, the strength of the Kenema bureaucracy also minimized the role that displaced chiefs (from Kono) could play in the screening of their people.

The following sections provide four case studies detailing the important determinants of recruit quality – the supply of volunteers, the selectivity of screening, and the costs of induction – in the four different militia recruitment areas mentioned above. At the end of each section, I evaluate the correspondence between determinants of recruit quality and observable indicators of recruit quality.

Northern CDF Recruitment: Screening with Disrupted Networks

Northern militias (successors to the Tamaboro) halted recruitment in 1994 and did not resume until late 1996 or early 1997 in response to President Kabbah's call for the formation of a national Civil Defense Forces (CDF). These later recruitment drives were

strongly affected by the fact that numerous civilian leaders and militia leaders had been killed during the interim. By late 1993, the Tamaboro militia, working alongside government troops, had successfully cleared the rebels out of Kono District as well as parts of Kailahun District (further south and east). At the time, the war seemed all but won, and Tamaboros promptly resumed their civilian lives. In November of 1994, a resurgent RUF colluded with officers of the national military to launch a vengeful offensive on the home of the Tamaboro in Koinadugu District (Keen, 2005, 126).[6] Rebels and defectors from the military reached as far as the major northern city of Kabala, which had served as the recruitment center for the Tamaboro. Along the way, the rebels killed hundreds of civilians (including chiefs), abducted several foreign aid workers, and assassinated some of the recently demobilized leaders of the Tamaboro militia, including the legendary female fighter Marie Keita and the powerful Tamaboro leader and medicine-man Daembaso Samura (Gberie, 2005, 83).

The Northern CDF was, by most accounts, a separate organizational entity from the original Tamaboro militia. There may have been some minimal continuity in membership and leadership from the Tamaboro to the Northern CDF, but most Sierra Leoneans, including the members of those groups, thought of them as two distinct organizations. Some former militia members still referred to the group as "Tamaboro" or "phase two" of the Tamaboro, but leaders of the Northern CDF as well as rank-and-file fighters and civilians suggested that the similarities were nominal.

Recruitment in the Northern CDF was also a departure from earlier Tamaboro recruitment to the extent that renewed recruitment drives did not involve the offer of bags of rice (or any other material incentives) to attract recruits. The (re)formation of the Northern CDF was encouraged by the previously exiled President Kabbah, but with minimal government sponsorship. To the degree that the Northern CDF received material support, this came from ECOMOG peacekeepers who were stationed in the area and who were willing to share food and ammunition. Recruiters did not try to convert this marginal level of logistical support into recruitment incentives. Given low material resource endowments and

[6]Paul Kortenhoven asserts that he and other civilians living near Kabala were aware of the obvious collusion between soldiers and rebels in the November attack. Author interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.

the non-offer of recruitment incentives, the resource-curse theory suggests that the pool of individuals who volunteered for membership in the Northern CDF was probably of higher quality, on average, than the pool of individuals who volunteered for membership in the Tamaboro (when bags of rice were offered as recruitment incentives). If variations in recruitment selectivity were irrelevant, or if the levels of selectivity were equivalent between the two groups, we would expect to see higher quality recruits into the Northern CDF than into the Tamaboro.

Nyamakoro Sesay (Coordinator of the Northern CDF, based in Kabala Town) explained that control of recruitment was left in his hands, and the hands of other local Coordinators.[7] Civilian chiefs were generally not involved in the screening of new recruits in the Northern CDF, because many of the chiefs had either died or fled the area by that time.[8] A rebel incursion during late 1994 resulted in the assassination of several civilian chiefs who were probably involved in Tamaboro recruitment, as well as some of the recently demobilized leaders of the Tamaboro militia. In 1998, another wave of rebel invasions into the North drove many of the remaining Paramount Chiefs and lower-level Section Chiefs to flee Koinadugu District for the safety of the capital city or for Guinea. The overall commander of the northern wing of the CDF recalls how higher ranking chiefs scattered later in the war, "Some ran away, some pulled out, some stayed. [...] Normally, what was happening, maybe the head – the paramount chief – would run away but the second in command or the third in command would stay."[9] From 1998 to 2001, rebels controlled large stretches of the roads leading in and out of Koinadugu District, (to the point that humanitarian aid and ECOMOG military supplies had to be flown into Kabala Town by helicopter) making it impossible for chiefs who had fled to return to their homes.

The recruitment of new members in the Northern CDF reflected the serious disruption of earlier recruitment networks. Given the death and flight of local civilian leaders, the task of gathering private information about would-be militia members fell almost exclusively to militia commanders. A police officer who was based in Kabala during the war suggested that

[7] Author interview with Nyamakoro Sesay, November 2011.
[8] Author interview: 5052, May 2012.
[9] Author interview with former Colonel M.S. Dumbuya (representing the government forces in ECOMOG), June 2012.

the recruitment of the Northern CDF was much more haphazard than that of the Tamaboro, and that very few (if any) civilian chiefs or elders were involved in the vetting of recruits for the Northern CDF. He described the cursory nature of the screening process that he witnessed, including the fact that civilian leaders were not involved:

> Their recruitment is only, they come to the table: "You, can you fight? Can you go to the front?" "Yes." "Do you know how to fire a gun?" "No." Somebody would take a gun [...] put it up in the air and fire, pow, pow. "Now you can do it?" "Yes." "Come... and take the gun." Pow, pow. "OK, you are a soldier." That is the recruitment. [...] The only panel was within themselves [i.e. individuals who were within the CDF].[10]

Interviews with individuals recruited from 1997 to 1999 provide independent confirmation of the fact that many new recruits were interviewed, but only by men who were inside the CDF, and few (if any) of whom were chiefs. Parents and guardians who could have vouched for the character of would-be fighters were generally not involved in those interviews. Several recruits from 1997 onward recall that they were not interviewed at all.

The problem of disrupted chiefly networks was exacerbated by the close proximity of rebel and AFRC junta forces. When the AFRC was flushed out of Freetown in 1998, Solomon (SAJ) Musa's forces – a conglomerate of RUF rebels and AFRC junta members – fled to the north of Sierra Leone. The American missionary, Paul Kortenhoven remembers SAJ Musa's forces as being based in Mongo Chiefdom shortly after fleeing the ECOMOG invasion of Freetown, which would have placed them within 60-70 miles of the center for militia recruitment in Kabala.[11] Other AFRC-RUF contingents may have been even closer. Much of the recruitment from 1998 to 2000 took place under the imminent threat of attacks by combined AFRC and RUF forces. Commander Sesay described recruitment as having been somewhat hasty, given the ongoing threat of attack. Another militia commander who was close to Sesay also recalls the fact that recruitment procedures changed somewhat after the liberation of Kono (i.e. after 1996), given the need to rapidly mobilize additional militia members to counter the rebel threat:

> That [recruitment] changed when we liberated Kono and we needed more manpower. That was when they [new volunteers] started scrambling to join.[12]

[10] Author interview: Kabala_Police, November 2011.
[11] Author phone interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.
[12] Author interview: 2002, November 2011.

Commander Sesay insisted that ECOMOG officers had worked with him and local militia commanders to try to interview fighters to assess their loyalty and motivations, but recruiters found that they could do little with the limited time and information at their disposal. Northern screening processes may have still excluded some undesirable individuals, but qualitative evidence suggests that few, if any, of the individuals who tried to join were actually rejected. Screening in the Northern CDF appears to have been mostly cursory, especially as compared with the careful screening (with ample time and information) carried out by the Tamaboro.

If we look only at the selectivity of screening processes in the Northern CDF (as compared with the earlier Tamaboro) we would expect the quality of recruits to be significantly lower during the post-1996 recruitment period. However, the underlying supply of volunteers for the Northern CDF should have been of much higher quality than the volunteers for the earlier Tamaboro. Recall, from chapter 3, that the Tamaboro offered recruitment incentives that attracted a very large number of volunteers, many of whom were probably primarily motivated by these incentives. In contrast, the Northern CDF did not offer incentives and relied entirely on appeals to patriotism or social responsibility in order to attract volunteers. If the supply of volunteers and the selectivity of screening are of equal causal importance, it may be the case that the countervailing influence of these two variables simply cancels out and that we will see no significant change in recruit quality between the Tamaboro and the Northern CDF. On the other hand, if one of the two variables is more influential than the other, this should be reflected in recruitment outcomes. The comparison of differential recruitment between the Tamaboro and the Northern CDF is thus of critical importance in assessing interactions between the supply of volunteers and the selectivity of recruitment.

Northern Recruitment Outcomes: The Tamaboro versus the Northern CDF

Evidence from the Tamaboro and Northern CDF cases suggest that Tamaboro recruits were of significantly higher quality, despite the fact that the underlying pool of volunteers from which recruits were selected was of lower quality during Tamaboro recruitment. By many accounts, the original Tamaboro consisted mostly of "big men," – meaning men who were considered mature adults and accomplished members of their communities – many

of whom were also hunters. In contrast, fighters who joined the new Northern CDF were generally much younger than their Tamaboro predecessors and did not have a background as traditional hunters. A former member of both the original Tamaboro and (later) the Northern CDF lamented the influx of volatile youths into the Northern CDF:

> The only problem was that youths are hard to control. Later, when they came from the battlefront and there was no food, for example, they would get annoyed and they'll get so angry that they fire in the air and threaten to kill everyone present.[13]

Paul Kortenhoven also recalls that the Northern CDF recruited large numbers of youths, in contrast with the earlier Tamaboros who completely excluded youth from their recruitment.[14]

Reductions in the average quality of fighters from early Tamaboro recruitment to late Northern CDF recruitment are reflected in a respondent-driven sample of former northern fighters who participated in a survey conducted from October of 2011 to July of 2012.[15] Within the sample of northern militia members, the average age for recruits who joined during Tamaboro recruitment was 34 (95% c.i. = [31.8 – 36.5]), while the average age for recruits into the Northern CDF was 19 (95% c.i. = [18.9 – 19.3]).[16] Approximately 47% (95% c.i. = [0.74 – 93.0]) of Tamaboro recruits had prior experience with firearms (in most cases, because they were traditional hunters, but also because some of them had served as soldiers or policemen prior to the start of the conflict), as compared with only 6% (95% c.i. = [2.80 – 8.86]) of recruits into the Northern CDF.[17] The differences between the quality of Tamaboro and Northern CDF fighters are large and statistically significant (age, at the 0.01

[13]Author interview: 2002, November 2011.

[14]Author interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.

[15]The details of sampling strategies and survey design will be covered in Chapter 5. All of the statistics below use weights derived from RDSAT software (Volz et al., 2012). These sampling weights are meant to compensate for network, homophily, and differential recruitment biases that arise from the Respondent-Driven Sampling process that generated these data. RDSAT software generates unique weights for each population characteristic being estimated, thus I use one weight derrived for estimating the ages of respondents and a different weight derrived for estimating the number of respondents who had prior experience with firearms. For each calculation below, I report the relevant weighted estimation-population sizes in the footnotes. For a detailed explanation of the derravation of the sampling weights, please see the appendix to this chapter.

[16]For Tamaboro and the Northern CDF together, N = 42. The age-weighted population size for the Tamaboro is 14.3, and for the Northern CDF is 30.7. The difference in sub-population means is significant at p = 0.001.

[17]For the Tamaboro and the Northern CDF together, N = 42. The firearms-weighted population size for the Tamaboro is 13.4 and the firearms-weighted population size for the Northern CDF is 34.6. The differences between the weighted and unweighted population means are relatively small in this case, but weighting does significantly affect variance estimates. The difference in sub-population means is significant at p = 0.06.

level, and prior firearms experience at the 0.10 level).

Taken together, these measures suggest that decreases in the selectivity of recruitment produced significant reductions in the quality of individuals inducted into the Northern CDF as compared with the quality of recruits into the earlier Tamaboro. These reductions in quality occurred despite the fact that leaders in the Northern CDF did *not* offer recruitment incentives (in contrast with the Tamaboros), meaning that the overall quality of volunteers during Northern CDF recruitment was probably higher than during Tamaboro recruitment. The comparison of Tamaboro and Northern CDF recruitment thus provides strong support for the theory of recruitment selectivity. Reductions in the selectivity of recruitment manifested as measurable reductions in the quality of recruits despite the fact that the underlying supply of recruits actually increased in quality.

Recruitment of Displaced Donsos

Like Tamaboro recruitment in the north, Donso recruitment had stopped by 1996. The Donsos were disbanded as a result of a confusing set of orders issued by high-ranking members of the newly installed Kabbah administration. Filip OT Sorboeh, a former chairman of the KONDECOM (aka. Donso) militia, was directly affected by the political maneuvering that occurred shortly after the election of Kabbah in 1996:

> The then Vice President, [...] Albert Joe Demby – he came up to Kono and told us here, at a meeting, that the Executive Outcomes must go and we the Kono Donsos – the KONDECOM – must also put down our arms and leave everything to the Kamajors. He said the Kamajors were now in position to take care of the entire country and will finish the war. Well, people had different [bad] feelings. [...] In KONDECOM [we] were not happy at all. [...] He [Demby] came back a second time. [...] He said, "you must put down your arms." [...] The SDO [Senior District Officer, from the police] that was there [...] was instructed to take the office keys from me, because I was the chairman of KONDECOM. So, he came to me and said, "well Filip, there is no way, you have to give me the keys." So, I surrender the office keys to him, and that was it.[18]

Sorboeh's account highlights the serious misgivings that he and other Donsos had upon hearing of their impending demobilization, along with the withdrawal of Executive Outcomes forces. Notwithstanding the assurances of Vice President Demby, Kamajor forces were not

[18]Author interview with Filip OT Sorboeh, May 2012.

sufficiently organized and effective to police the entirety of the country. In retrospect, it appears that no one really believed that the Kamajors were ready for such a task. It is likely that the demobilization of the Donso was engineered, or at least heavily encouraged, by Defense Minister Norman who was trying to consolidate his power over the CDF – mainly the Kamajors – in the hope of "someday" leveraging his power to become president of Sierra Leone (Hoffman, 2011, 46).[19]

Irrespective of the political motivations behind the Donso demobilization, the simple and immediate consequence was that Kono was left completely undefended and was easily taken by the combined forces of the AFRC junta and the RUF rebels. The first AFRC-RUF incursion occurred shortly after the May 1997 coup in Freetown. Because of the strategic significance of its diamond fields, Kono changed hands several times during 1998, as ECOMOG peacekeeping forces took, and then lost, and then re-took Kono from the AFRC-RUF forces. Civilian populations in and around Koidu Town fled the ongoing violence. Some communities made their way to the east, eventually entering Guinea. Other communities fled to the south, making their way to Kenema. [20] Given the danger of being caught between two unpredictable, armed factions, very few civilians remained in Kono. The nearly complete displacement of Kono communities meant that Donso (re)mobilization in 1997 involved two separate centers for recruitment – one among refugee communities in Guinea, and one among the internally displaced communities that had fled south from Kono into Kenema District.

The Guinea Axis: Screening through Intact Networks

The initiation of militia recruitment in Guinea was encouraged by both the Guinean government and the recently restored Kabbah administration in Sierra Leone. The chief who was in charge of overseeing recruitment in what became known as the "Guinea Axis" describes how he and other chiefs were central to the process of coordinating Donso remobilization:

> When we were there at the border, the Guinea government called on us, the chiefs, to send us to Freetown [...]. So, fourteen Paramount Chiefs sat down, and they said let me

[19] Multiple sources interviewed by the author reinforce the notion that Norman had designs to use the Kamajors as an ethnic militia, capable of manipulating post-war politics, or even seizing political power by force.

[20] Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.

> – as a young man and deputy – let me go and supersede [means intercede] in that area on the border. [...] So, the president and his chief of staff put me into a helicopter, and sent me to the Guinea border.[21]

Having been nominated by his colleagues, the chief was flown out by helicopter to the border between Kono and Guinea, where he coordinated with other displaced chiefs to start recruiting Donsos from among the population of Kono refugees. Filip Sorboeh, who had been chairman of KONDECOM when it was demobilized (see block quote above) was also among those displaced to Guinea. Although he did not re-join the militia, he helped to coordinate aspects of recruitment and organization among refugee communities in Guinea.[22] Thus, a significant number of chiefs and other local leaders (many of whom had experience with the initial phase of Donso recruitment in the early 1990s) were present and involved in the recruitment and mobilization of the Guinea Axis, giving recruiters access to a relatively intact set of chiefly networks.

Recruits in Guinea were presumably screened using the same standards that had been applied to those who volunteered to join the original Donso. The screening process was probably more hasty than screening in the original Donso because of the close proximity of rebels. As of December 1998, when the AFRC-RUF captured Koidu Town from ECOMOG forces, the Guinea axis was located in refugee camps that were within 60 miles or less of Koidu Town (Gberie, 2005, 122). Probably closer still were rebel positions on the borders of Kailahun District, where they were regrouping after being driven back by ECOMOG advances. These were Sam "Maskita" Bockarie's positions(Gberie, 2005, 120). The distance may have been as short as 30-40 miles from those rebel positions.

Notwithstanding the close proximity of rebel positions, the chief who coordinated recruitment in Guinea described screening processes as being analogous to earlier inquiries into the backgrounds and reputations of individuals volunteering to join the Donso militia. He suggests that one of his principal directives, after meeting with other chiefs and officials in Freetown, was to return to the border to coordinate recruitment and screening processes:

> That's why I was there as chief on the border. Like I sit down, like I am sitting here. Somebody will come inside, who is Kono, and you don't know him. But if I know his

[21] Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.
[22] Author interview with Filip OT Sorboeh, May 2012.

> background, I know his past, I know his family, I'm going to say "yes, this is a gentleman." That's the way. And any chief, if you're there in your chiefdom and your community, you need to do your research to know [who you are recruiting].[23]

All eight of the respondents who joined in Guinea reported having been screened by a chief. This uniformity provides further evidence of the high level of chiefly control over recruitment, suggesting that recruits into the Guinea Axis were subjected to a fairly high level of selectivity, even if the process was somewhat degraded by the fear of imminent rebel attacks.

With the availability of time and the availability of networks taken together, we would expect a relatively small reduction in the quality of recruits between early Donso recruitment and later recruitment in the Guinea Axis. Overall, it seems that information networks were minimally degraded (if at all) by the displacement of communities to Guinea. Incentives were not offered in the early Donso, or the Guinea Axis, so the supply of volunteers can be treated as relatively constant between the two periods of recruitment. Any measurable reduction in the quality of recruits will be attributable to the close proximity of AFRC-RUF forces that were well-armed and on the offensive.

Eastern Recruitment Outcomes: The Early East versus the Guinea Axis

In assessing changes in the quality of fighters between the early period of Donso recruitment to the time of recruitment in the Guinea Axis, I group together the early stages of recruitment in Kono and Kenema. The incipient Donso movement was heavily influenced by the leadership of Alpha Lavalie of Kenema, and recruitment and administration in the two militias reflected the sharing of information and expertise between the leadership cadres of the two groups.[24] Given the close geographic proximity of the two militias and their history of early organizational collaboration, we can meaningfully compare early Kono-Kenema recruitment to later (post 1997) recruitment carried out by displaced communities of Konos in Guinea and in Kenema.

Despite the physical displacement of communities, the volunteers recruited into the

[23] Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.
[24] Author interview: 5004, May 2012.

Guinea Axis were only of slightly lower quality than the individuals recruited into early militias in Kono and Kenema. The average age of early recruits across Kono and Kenema was 29 (95% c.i. = [15.5 – 42.2]), and approximately 78 percent of early recruits had prior experience with firearms (95% c.i. = [-184 – 339]). On the Guinea Axis, the average age of new recruits was 32, and approximately 17 percent of those recruited in Guinea had prior experience with firearms. As compared with recruitment in early Kono and Kenema, the average age of recruits in Guinea was actually slightly higher (by three years) and the level of prior experience with firearms was much lower (having decreased by over 60%).[25] These differences are not statistically significant, and the fact that there was no reduction at all in age (even though there was a reduction in prior firearms experience) suggests that any reduction in the quality of recruits in the Guinea Axis was minimal. These outcomes are in keeping with the theory of recruitment selectivity – a very small reduction in the selectivity of recruitment led to a correspondingly small reduction in the quality of recruits.

Recruitment in the Guinea Axis is the exception that proves the rule. Recruiters in the Guinea Axis managed to maintain a relatively high level of recruitment selectivity despite nearby violence and the physical displacement of communities. These high levels of selectivity and correspondingly high levels of recruit quality were only possible because a large number of chiefs and elders remained with their communities throughout the process of displacement, and were thus able to facilitate renewed militia recruitment from within Guinea. The case of Guinean recruitment demonstrates that a gradual deterioration in the quality of militia recruits is not simply an inexorable consequence of ongoing warfare. Changes in recruitment selectivity and recruit quality are a product of relatively unique constellations of local and regional contexts, which determine the availability of time and information during recruitment processes.

[25]For early eastern militias and the Guinea Axis together, N=27. The age-weighted size for early Kono and Kenema is 8.95 and the age-weighted size for the Guinea Axis is 4.88. The firearms-weighted size of for early Kono and Kenema is 10.2, and the firearms-weighted size for the Guinea Axis is 4.32. The difference in means for age and prior firearms experience are not statistically significant. The confidence intervals and standard error estimates for the Guinea Axis are unavailable because they are based on a single cluster of data – i.e. a "singleton" primary sampling unit.

The Kenema Axis: Screening through Strangers

Communities from Kono that fled to the south eventually crossed into Kenema District and made their way toward the local administrative capital city of Kenema (bearing the same name as the district). These groups of displaced Konos encountered an already well-established district-wide militia that was the direct continuation of Alpha Lavalie's early efforts to organize local hunters (Kamajors) into a defensive force. When Konos arrived in Kenema around 1998, the Kenema Kamajors were headquartered in the city of Kenema and had established a CDF office there, complete with a small bureaucratic staff of administrators and logistics officers. The city of Kenema was also already well-established as the seat of recruitment for the Kenema Kamajors.

Having been demobilized in 1996 (on the orders of the Vice President), Donsos who were displaced to Kenema were invited to remobilize and to open an office there, fusing their network with that of the existing Kamajor-CDF administration.[26] This conglomerate of militias based in Kenema came to be known as the "Kenema Axis." "Bureaucracy" would be a misleading term to describe the relatively informal sets of patronage-based relationships that community leaders and elders wove together in the Kenema Axis. Yet, the pre-existing networks of Kenema Kamajors were well codified, even if they were informal and minimally hierarchical. The weakened networks of displaced Donsos were thus grafted onto the stronger organization of indigenous Kamajors, resulting in fairly unified organizational efforts, alongside an obvious disparity in power that favored the Kenema Kamajors.

Administrative collaboration between displaced Donsos and Kenema Kamajors extended not only to the patronage politics of distributing government-provided logistics, but also to the processes of recruiting additional fighters. The fusion of recruitment systems resulted in the continuation of screening, which was already common practice among both Donsos and Kenema Kamajors. A displaced Donso, who became a high-level administrator in the Kenema Axis suggested that screening processes after 1997 continued to resemble those of earlier periods:

"Anybody, when he joins the Donso or the Kamajor, he must pass through the chief –

[26] Author interview: 5002.

> meaning that he must be somebody who doesn't have a criminal record. So that was the kind of screening that they were doing." [27]

Given the high relative power of the Kenema Kamajors vis-a-vis the displaced Donsos, local networks of indigenous chiefs and elders held primary control over recruitment processes, even when displaced people from Kono were the prospective militia members in question. One of the symbolic manifestations of the power of local Kamajors was the fact that displaced Konos who were recruited into the Kenema Axis became *Kamajors* (not Donsos), in the sense of undergoing the protective ceremonies that were distinctive of Kamajor initiation. Some individuals who had already been Donso fighters since the earlier years of the war also chose to become Kamajors in order to gain access to the social power and protective-magical benefits of Kamajor membership.[28]

The practical result of the dominance of Kenema Kamajors and local chiefs was that displaced Konos who proposed to join the Kamajors were being screened by civil administrators who were outside of their social networks. The majority of Konos who joined in Kenema reported that they either were screened by someone who was an administrator in the Kenema Kamajors, or were not screened at all. Chiefs within Kenema had only the most limited ties with chiefs in neighboring Kono. The Paramount Chiefs from the two regions certainly knew each other, but Chiefs from Kenema would not have had privileged access to lower-level networks of Town Chiefs and elders who could reliably vouch for the character of prospective militia members from Kono. In some cases, Kenema recruiters may have consulted with Kono chiefs during the screening of displaced Konos. However, the paucity of networked ties between Kenema Chiefs and Kono Chiefs suggests that screening in Kenema after 1996 was less selective than it could have been had Kono Chiefs consistently screened their own people.

Local networks of civilian leaders and chiefs within Kenema had also been degraded by violence earlier in the war. The deterioration of networks in Kenema began with the death of the extremely influential Alpha Lavalie in early 1993 (Hoffman, 2011, 38). Strasser's unilateral ceasefire in December 1993 provided an opportunity for the RUF to regroup and

[27] Author interview: 5049, May 2012.
[28] Author interview: 5014, May 2012.

go on the offensive in early 1994. Elizabeth Lavalie, Alpha Lavalie's wife, recalled how targeted killing by the RUF in early 1994 was detrimental to recruitment efforts later the war: "The trained or professional hunters were limited. Because Strasser had a ceasefire [...] and it was during that ceasefire that the rebels remobilized and attacked and killed prominent people."[29] By 1996, most local recruits in Kenema were still being screened, but not by civilian chiefs and elders. As in the Northern CDF, screening functions were typically performed by CDF administrators because most high-ranking chiefs had already died or fled the area to escape being targeted by the rebels.

These problems with disrupted information networks were further exacerbated by the fact that the amount of time available to gather information through social networks was severely limited, given the close proximity of resurgent AFRC-RUF forces. As of December 1998, the closest enemy forces were in Koidu Town, placing them less than 70 miles away from the center for recruitment in the Kenema Axis (Gberie, 2005, 122). Also nearby, and on the advance, were AFRC-RUF forces in the border regions of Kailahun District (Gberie, 2005, 120). Given the imminent threat of enemy attacks, screening in the Kenema Axis was more hasty than during the earlier years of the conflict, which may help to explain why Kono chiefs were less involved in screening processes than they could have been. Some Donsos who operated in the Kenema Axis recall the fact that in their desperate attempts to re-capture territory from the AFRC-RUF, they would sometimes recruit on the front-lines with no screening at all: "When we captured [some] area, those who came to hold the ground [i.e. to help] was recruited immediately without going through the chiefs."[30] This type of non-selective recruitment was rare in the Kenema Axis, but it is worth mentioning because it provides further evidence of the extent to which the the leaders of militias tended to lower the selectivity of recruitment in response to the increasing threat of enemy attacks.

Independent of the selectivity of recruitment, recruiters in the Kenema Axis probably faced a uniquely low-quality pool of volunteers, many of whom were primarily motivated by the opportunity to mine diamonds. Beginning as early as 1996, members of the Kenema

[29] Author interview with Elizabeth Lavalie, widow of Dr. Alpha Lavalie, chairman of the Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee (ERECDCOM), June 2012.

[30] Author interview: 5001.

Kamajors mined diamonds in Tongo Field – the largest diamond mining area in Kenema District. Militia commanders and their fighters (who often doubled as miners) typically understood diamond mining as a means of generating revenue necessary to purchase arms and ammunition. While a few commanders may have had the necessary international connections to sell diamonds to enrich themselves, rank-and-file fighters had no opportunity to do so. There was effectively no local economy for the exchange or barter of diamonds. Still, the mining activities of Kamajor militias were no secret, and the mere knowledge of those operations may have attracted prospective militia members who imagined that they could profit through mining. Displaced Konos who joined the Kenema Kamajors generally remember diamonds as having been present within their groups after they joined, and it was understood that, in most cases, these diamonds had come from local diamond fields. Some of the former Kenema-based fighters interviewed had been directly involved in the diamond mining at Tongo Field. They described the mining as "fiti-fata" – an idiomatic expression in the Krio language, referring to the fact that mining was widespread, haphazard, and illicit (or at least unauthorized). [31] Even individuals who did not participate in the mining were aware of the fact that Kenema Kamajors were mining constantly during the later stages of the war, which suggests that civilians were also probably aware of the intensive mining that was taking place.[32]

Contrary to what the resource-curse theory would lead us to expect, militia recruiters did not use diamond wealth to provide recruitment incentives, yet the presence of diamond wealth probably still attracted a significant number of opportunists (albeit less directly than through offers of material recruitment incentives). Civilians who knew about mining at Tongo Field probably imagined that joining militias would provide them with access to diamond mining sites, where they could find ways of hiding away diamond wealth for themselves. These motivations were especially likely to arise among individuals who already had experience in mining diamonds (and many of the displaced Konos fell into this category), but who found that they could only gain access to diamond deposits by joining an armed faction. Marginal youths (especially those who had been involved in illicit mining during

[31] Author interview: 5035, May 2012.
[32] Author interview: 5042, May 2012.

peacetime) were the most likely to join militias in order to gain access to diamond deposits.

For the Kenema Kamajors, decreases in the selectivity of screening (especially when displaced Konos were the prospective militia members) along with decreases in the quality of volunteers should have combined to lead to large decreases in the quality of recruits who were admitted to militias in Kenema after 1996. Displaced Konos who joined the Kenema Kamajors were sometimes screened, but most of that screening was carried out by strangers who had severely limited time to make inquiries into the networks of displaced Kono chiefs. Even screening of local recruits had to take place with limited information flows through degraded social networks. To make matters worse, the presence of local diamond wealth probably attracted a significant number of opportunistic young men who viewed militia membership as an opportunity to become involved in the thriving black market for blood diamonds.

Southeastern Recruitment Outcomes: The Early East versus the Kenema Axis

Militia members who were recruited in Kenema Axis after 1996 were of significantly lower quality than individuals who had been recruited in Kono and Kenema during the first half of the war. Individuals who were involved in militia administration in Kenema suggested that large influxes of volunteers after 1996 strained existing administrative systems, both in terms of screening volunteers on the front-end, and in terms of controlling new recruits on the back-end:

> There were a lot of administrative problems. The more the number [of recruits], the more, [. . .] difficulties – one, the control; two, command structure; [. . .] three, since they were [. . .] native [uneducated] people who were not trained, we expected a lot of casualties.[33]

As a point of reference, early recruitment within Kono and Kenema took place under near-ideal conditions – with high levels of selectivity, and without the added problem of widespread illicit mining. Under those conditions, the age of early recruits across Kono and Kenema was 29 (95% c.i. = [26.1 – 31.6]), and approximately 78 percent of early recruits had prior experience with firearms (95% c.i. = [24.2 – 131]). In comparison, the average age of recruits

[33]Author interview: 5001. Note, when a Sierra Leonean refers to another Sierra Leonean as "native" (as in this quotation), the usage hearkens back to colonial uses of the term "native" which imply primitivity and lack of literacy more than they imply indigeneity.

in Kenema after 1996 was 16 (95% c.i. = [16.2 – 16.7]) years, and only 3% (95% c.i. = [0.98 – 4.38]) of recruits during that period had prior experience with firearms. Thus, the average age of recruits decreased by 13 years, and the average number of recruits who had prior experience with firearms decreased by over 70 percent.[34] These reductions in recruit quality are very large and are statistically significant despite a relatively small sample size.

The case of Kenema Axis recruitment provides simultaneous support for the resource-curse hypothesis and the theory of recruitment selectivity. Civilians responded to the availability of material resources, in the form of alluvial diamonds (that could be mined by teams of people with minimal equipment) by volunteering in large numbers. Many people who had already been involved in black and grey market diamond extraction during peacetime saw mining in Tongo Field as an opportunity to re-enter the diamond market and turn a profit. Militia recruiters in the Kenema Axis thus had to sift through a large number of volunteers, many of whom were minimally interested in defending communities. To make matters worse, recruiters had to screen recruits using sets of networks that frequently did not encompass the displaced communities of Kono people who constituted a significant portion of the pool of recruits.

Kamajor Recruitment and Rogue Initiators in the Deep South

In contrast to the Tamaboro and Donso militias, the Kamajors never demobilized or halted their recruitment in the middle of the war. As the favored ethnic militia of President Kabbah (elected during a brief ceasefire in 1996), the Kamajors were allowed (even encouraged) to continue their recruitment and operations even as the Vice President ordered the Donsos to disarm. As a result, militia leadership and recruitment practices had a high degree of continuity from the early 1990s into the middle years of the war.

The deterioration of recruitment selectivity among the Kamajors was a very gradual process, and had almost nothing to do with decreases in the capacity of recruiters to screen

[34]For early Kono and Kenema combined with late Kenema, N = 27. The age-weighted size for early Kono and Kenema is 8.95, and the age-weighted size for late Kenema is 6.16. The firearms-weighted size for early Kono and Kenema is 10.2 and the firearms-weighted size for late Kenema is 7.80. The difference in ages is significant at the 0.01 level. The difference in firearms experience levels is significant at the 0.05 level.

prospective militia members. By the beginning of 1997, Kamajor initiators, who were responsible for performing protective ceremonies on new recruits, were increasingly engaged in what has been described as, "the commercialization of the initiation process" (Arthy, 2007). As ritual specialists in the creation of bulletproof warriors, initiators occupied a uniquely powerful set of positions within the Kamajor organization, and found that their services were in increasingly high demand as they continued. At least one or two initiators experimented with selling bulletproofing (and Kamajor membership) as a service to anyone who was willing to pay. These entrepreneurial initiators circumvented the control of civilian leaders and established a steadily growing stream of new initiates who were allowed to join as unscreened individuals (without anyone to vouch for them), provided that they were able to pay the gradually increasing initiation fees.

Already under threat by the commercialization of Kamajor initiation, systems of chiefly screening broke down completely as a result of the AFRC coup in May of 1997, which forced loyal militia members to flee into the bush. Even as Kamajors began to recapture territory from rebel occupation, systems of chiefly screening were not restored. By late 1997, the military and administrative wing of the Kamajor CDF had completely lost control over some of their initiators. Most notoriously, the Kamajor initiator, "High Priest" Allieu Kondewa, had thousands of cult-like followers whose status as militia members was not subject to chiefly approval, and who were convinced that they were superior not only to civil authorities but also to other Kamajor fighters (Arthy, 2004). Perhaps learning from Kondewa's example, a number of other initiators also began to sell bulletproofing ceremonies to individuals who were not approved by the chiefs.

By 1998, most of the chiefly information networks in the South had been restored (although a few chiefs had lost their lives during the AFRC upheaval), but there was no screening of recruits in regions where initiators had strong influence. Initiators had completely hijacked the process of creating Kamajors, and they had no particular interest in the quality of the individuals whom they were initiating. As a result, recruitment of Kamajors from mid-1997 onward was effectively indiscriminate in areas controlled by initiators. These initiators inducted anyone who could afford to pay, and those new initiates would attach

themselves to an existing militia unit, or simply start their own.

Given the indiscriminate nature of commercialized initiation, we would expect the quality of Kamajor recruits after 1996 to be quite low. However, the costs associated with initiation may have had a moderating influence on the number of low quality fighters who joined the Kamajors later in the war. Initiation into the Kamajors always involved a combination of costs and benefits to would-be militia members. Prospective members presumably weighed the benefits of becoming bulletproof against the physical and psychological trauma of ritual hazing, which was widely known to be a part of the Kamajor initiation process (Hoffman, 2011; Wlodarczyk, 2009). These aspects of Kamajor initiation do not seem to have changed significantly over time. The main alteration of the cost-benefit calculus involved the added requirement, as a result of the commercialization of initiation, that recruits pay a significant amount of money in order to join. This additional cost of joining may have discouraged some more opportunistic individuals whose only reason for joining was to become bulletproof. Presumably prospective members who were strongly motivated to join the Kamajors in order to defend their communities would be more willing to pay the fee necessary to be initiated, and would also have been more likely to find local patrons within their communities who would be willing to help them pay the fee. Intuitively, the costs of induction probably mattered, but there is no qualitative evidence that speaks directly to the question of whether or not increased costs of induction into the Kamajors reduced the number of low quality individuals who volunteered to join.

Quality of Kamajor Recruits

The result of highly selective screening procedures during the early 1990s was that the classes of Kamajor initiates from 1993 through 1996 were typically of very high quality. Major recruitment drives following the overthrow of Kabbah in 1997 were problematic in terms of both the low quality and high quantity of individuals who entered the Kamajors, especially during the post-1997 period. Elizabeth Lavalie, cited earlier, draws a stark contrast between the experienced men who joined before 1997 and the wayward young people who joined afterward. She also cites the commercialization of initiation as having been the primary

cause of the precipitous decrease in recruit quality over time:

> They [early Kamajors] had their principles, and you will not be recruited as a civil defense force if you had any tainted character. Which, in later years could not be contained, because then you had these [...] priests coming in [claiming]: "I can make you bulletproof." You see, so, most of [the initiator-priests] were not Kamajors [traditional hunters], they just come [and say] "I can make you bulletproof so you can go and fight in the war." And it was then you had so many young people coming in with various shady characters – good ones, bad ones, ugly ones – they all came into the Civil Defense Force.[35]

Along similar lines, a senior CDF administrator recalled how the unregulated initiation of Kamajor fighters only accelerated over time until, "By 1999 to 2000, we had this number of Kamajors that were not under control, because the commanders didn't know how many Kamajors were under their command."[36] The rapid influx of recruits during the later years of the war is further evidence of the increasingly indiscriminate nature of recruitment processes in the South.

The measurable decreases in the quality of Kamajor recruits (from early recruitment to later recruitment) are surprisingly small, considering the fact that initiators made no effort to ensure the quality of the individuals who they inducted. In my sample of former militia members, the average age of recruits into the early Kamajors was 23 (95% c.i. = [13.6 – 32.2]), while the average age of recruits from 1997 onward was 21 (95% c.i. = [19.8 – 22.8]).[37] Among the early Kamajors, nearly 25 percent (95% c.i. = [-11.4 – 60.7]) of recruits had prior experience with firearms, while only 2 percent (95% c.i. = [-0.25 – 3.36]) of those who joined after 1996 had such experience.[38] These changes in recruitment selectivity are quite small and are statistically insignificant.

Why do lower levels of selectivity not correspond to significantly lower levels of recruit quality in the case of the Kamajors? The most obvious explanation is that recruit quality in the Kamajors had already started to decrease before 1997 due to the actions of profit-seeking initiators. The average age of pre-1997 recruits in the Kamajors, which was 23, is significantly lower than the average age for pre-1997 recruits in the rest of the country,

[35] Author interview with the Honorable Elizabeth Lavalie (widow of Dr. Alpha Lavalie, chairman of the Eastern Region Civil Defense Committee – ERECDCOM), June 2012.

[36] Author interview: Bo_Workshop1_Kamajor, January 2012.

[37] N = 47. The age-weighted size of the early Kamajor sub-population is 38.7, and the age-weighted size of the late Kamajor sub-population is 12.1. The difference between the two means is not statistically significant.

[38] N = 47. The firearms-weighted size of the early Kamajor sub-population is 39.9, and the firearms-weighted size of the late Kamajor sub-population is 12.0.

which was 32 (95% c.i. = [27.8 – 36.4]).[39] The underlying problem is that recruit quality is being measured at too high a level of aggregation. Militia recruitment spanned nearly a decade, and the selectivity of recruitment may have changed over time in gradual ways that are masked when we simply partition recruitment into pre- and post-1997 periods. Along these same lines, Kamajor recruitment spanned a much larger geographical area and involved more independent recruitment centers than in the other militias considered above. Some recruitment centers in the South were dominated by the influence of entrepreneurial initiators, while other recruitment centers allowed chiefs a moderate level of control, resulting in higher levels of selectivity in those locations. Analyzing recruit quality across the entire southern region has the effect of masking potentially important local-level variations. Another possible explanation is that the heightened costs of induction during later Kamajor recruitment (as a result of recruits having to pay significant amounts of money to be initiated) may have discouraged some lower quality recruits who otherwise would have joined, given the indiscriminate nature of recruitment in much of the South. The over-aggregation explanation and the costs-of-induction explanation are not mutually exclusive, and the following chapter will provide a set of statistical tests that address the need to disaggregate recruitment locations as well as the need to consider the simultaneous effects of multiple factors on the observed quality of recruits.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter provides the historical background necessary to understand how and why militia recruitment processes diverged over time in terms of their levels of selectivity. In all of the militias considered, recruiters reacted to the intensification of conflict and the increased power of enemy forces by engaging in recruitment that was somewhat more hasty and thereby less selective than when militias had been in a more advantageous military position. However, the general intensification of the conflict cannot explain why, for example, Guinea Axis recruitment was so much more selective than Kenema Axis recruitment. Explaining regional variations requires consideration of varying regional-level contexts. The

[39] This difference in means is significant at the 0.10 level.

case of the Kamajors in the deep South suggests the importance of understanding not only recruiters' capacities, but also their preferences. Initiators in the South – most of whom were small-time "traditional" healers who only rose from obscurity as a result of the war – were poorly networked and would have had difficulty using information networks to screen recruits. However, initiators never even tried to screen recruits because their primary interest was in selling membership in a militia in order to make a profit.

This chapter also provides preliminary evidence supporting the central hypothesis of the theory of information-gathering and recruitment selectivity: decreases in the selectivity of militia recruitment are typically associated with decreases in the quality of militia members. However, the magnitude of decreases in selectivity are not necessarily proportional to the magnitude of decreases in quality, which suggests that the quality of recruits is conditioned by a number of factors including not only recruitment selectivity, but also the quality of the underlying pool of volunteers, the costs of induction, and probably a host of other, more idiosyncratic and unobservable factors.

One of the biggest shortcomings of this chapter is that it is challenging to use the qualitative data presented above to simultaneously consider all of the aspects of local contexts and processes that potentially affect the quality of recruits. A parallel problem, highlighted in the Kamajor case, is that the analysis in this chapter takes place at a relatively high level of aggregation in both temporal and spatial terms – lumping together measurements over multiple years, and sometimes also lumping together measurements over significant geographic expanses. The next chapter (Chapter 5) addresses the shortcomings of this chapter by presenting a set of multivariate regression models that use micro-level data on militia recruitment to predict recruit quality – effectively testing the same sets of hypotheses explored in this chapter, but using a different method to do so. The statistical models in Chapter 5 have the benefit of enabling the simultaneous analysis of the combined influences of numerous potentially important variables. In addition, those models enable the comparison of militia recruitment across smaller geographic units (at the level of the administrative District rather than the region) and across shorter spans of time (at the level of the calendar-year).

Appendix: Generating Sampling Weights to Adjust for RDS

The primary variable that affects the probability of selection into a respondent-driven sample is the size of an individual's social network (specifically, the number of connections they have with other members of the target population of former militia members). The larger the number of connections an individual has with other members of the target population, the higher their probability of receiving a referral and entering the sample. Each respondent was asked to estimate the number of local former militia members with whom he has frequent contact. Self-reported network sizes vary from 0 to 500; mean = 34.1; SD = 73.4. A respondent network size of zero indicates that even the individual who referred the respondent was a stranger to the respondent. Such values for network size are extremely rare – 2 out of 135 observations.

RDSAT software generates weights that take respondent network size into account, while pulling in network-size outliers by 5% (in order to avoid applying extreme weighting values). The weights generated by RDSAT also take other aspects of the RDS process into account, creating an individualized sampling weight that is a composite of multiple weighting schemes. On its own, the weighted adjustment for network size is referred to as the "degree component" (DC). The degree component for an individual respondent is given by $DC_i = K\frac{1}{D_i}$, where D_i is the self-reported network size of the individual respondent (with outliers pulled in by 5%) and K is a positive constant such that the sum of the total number of weights equals the total sample size. Under this weighting scheme, an individual with a very large network size (hence high probability of entering the sample) is weighted down, relative to an individual with a very small network size (hence low probability of entering the sample) who is weighted up.

The group-based identities of respondents (e.g. age grades and ethnic groups) are also a possible source of sampling bias due to *homophily* and *differential recruitment.* Homophily describes the tendency of individuals to form and maintain relationships with others who are like them. Differential recruitment describes the fact that some sub-groups may be more effective at recruiting than others, which will tend to amplify any homophilious biases in their

recruitment patterns. RDSAT produces sampling weights that compensate for differential recruitment in addition to the adjustment for differences in degree or network size, explained above. This sampling weight is referred to as a dual-component RDS sampling weight DW_i. The dual-component weight for a given individual is given by $DW_i = DC_i \cdot RC_i$, where RC_i is the "recruitment component" weight which uses metadata on within- and across-group recruitment counts to make adjustments for differential recruitment. The recruitment component can only be estimated (and used to generate individualized sampling weights) based on a single group characteristic at a time (e.g. age, ethnic identity, or prior experience with firearms). Thus, when analyzing differences in age, I use dual-component weights based on age, and when analyzing prior firearms experience, I use different dual-component weights based on that characteristic.

Chapter 5

Predicting Recruit Quality: Statistical Tests

What explains significant shifts in the quality of militia recruits over time? The previous two chapters have presented a combination of qualitative and descriptive statistical evidence suggesting that the careful screening of prospective militia members is an important determinant of recruit quality. Screening acts like a filter during the processes that volunteers pass through in order to become full-fledged recruits or members of a militia. When militia recruiters have the capacity (and the will) to gather information about prospective militia members, recruiters can identify some of the undesirable types of volunteers and exclude them from militia membership.

Screening may be important, but it is only one part of a complex recruitment process, typically involving multiple steps that potentially affect the quality of individuals who become members in a given group. Theories of recruitment in armed groups suggest that the kinds of incentives recruiters offer, the capacity of recruiters to gather information (screening), and the costs borne by members when being initiated will all affect the quality of individuals who become members of a given group (Weinstein, 2005; Hegghammer, 2013).[1] Case study evidence from Sierra Leone suggests that these different factors do not imply rival hypotheses; rather, they are the constitutive elements of most recruitment processes. In Sierra Leone, one finds high levels of independent variation in the levels of incentives that recruiters offer, the selectivity of screening, and the costs of induction passed on to recruits. The relevant question is not *if* these variations are important, but rather *how*

[1] See Chapter 2 for a review of this literature, and a detailed rehearsal of the deductive foundations of those theories.

these variations combine to determine the quality of individuals recruited at a given time and place.

This chapter uses micro-level survey data to compare the relative influence of three main determinants of recruit quality. The following section provides an overview of a typical recruitment process, and presents a set of testable hypotheses about how the elements of that process affect recruit quality (for a more lengthy treatment, see Chapter 2). I then discuss the nature of the survey data, the underlying research design, and issues with the measurement and operationalization of key variables. The hypotheses about recruit quality are tested using a series of linear regression models that predict recruit quality.

Understanding Recruitment Outcomes

A complete model of voluntary recruitment in armed groups requires an account of the supply of, and demand for, fighters: i.e. who volunteers to join, and who (among the volunteers) is actually admitted into the organization. Recruitment is an iterative process involving three selection mechanisms: self-selection, screening, and attrition. The process begins when recruiters request additional manpower, and decide what kinds of incentives (if any) to offer in order to attract recruits. The leaders of armed groups assess the resources available to them and choose the level of recruitment incentives to be offered (Weinstein, 2005, 2007). Civilians then self-select into, or out of, an armed group on the basis of the potential benefits of joining (given the incentives offered) versus the potential costs. Not all of the costs of joining will be known to the civilians who contemplate volunteering, but rumors may circulate if some aspects of the process of joining are particularly "costly" – for example, if recruits are required to undergo traumatic hazing rituals. If induction costs are high and this becomes public knowledge, some individuals who are considering volunteering may decide to remain a civilian. Given the pool of individuals who actually show up and volunteer to join, recruiters must then decide whom to admit into the group. Recruiters have the option of screening new members, or of simply accepting every volunteer into their group. If recruiters decide to engage in screening, their abilities to do so are contingent

on the availability of private information about the quality of individual volunteers, and on the availability of time to collect and utilize said information to exclude unwanted types of volunteers. In addition to screening, volunteers may be required to undergo a transitional phase that may include forms of training, indoctrination, and hazing before they become full-fledged members of the group. If these transitional requirements impose high costs – e.g. physical and psychological trauma – there may be some attrition as volunteers drop out once confronted with the full costs of joining the group. The individuals who make it through the transition then become full-fledged recruits (or new members) of the armed group. The quality of this pool of new recruits is ultimately conditioned by each part of the recruitment process illustrated above.

The most prominent micro-level theory dealing directly with the question of recruitment incentives and the self-selection of volunteers is Jeremy Weinstein's theory of the rebel "resource-curse," which focuses on the structural determinants of recruiters' incentive choices (Weinstein, 2005, 2007). His theory suggests that recruiters who have access to significant material resources will tend to offer recruitment incentives (in money, diamonds, or other goods). The offer of incentives attracts a large proportion of low-quality volunteers, called "consumers," whose primary motivations for joining are opportunistic – focused on self-enrichment, rather than furthering the goals of the armed organization (Weinstein, 2005, 603). In contrast, recruiters without access to material resources rely on social ties and promises of future rewards to entice volunteers. The absence of material incentives discourages opportunists and attracts high-quality "investors," whose primary motivations for joining are intrinsic and rooted in solidarity with the underlying identity or goals that characterize the armed organization. [2] The resource-curse theory directly implies two, sequential

[2]According to the resource-curse theory, recruiters gain information about new recruits through a signaling mechanism: individuals signal whether they are investors or consumers when they accept the offered incentives to join an armed organization, but recruiters only receive this signal after the individual has already joined, and thus cannot use this information to include desirable joiners and exclude undesirable joiners. According to Weinstein, strategies of proactively reducing informational asymmetries through "information gathering, vouching, and costly induction are more likely to be used by rebel organizations that rely on social endowments" (Weinstein, 2005, 607). The corollary of this assumption is that groups with significant material resource endowments are less likely to engage in proactive strategies for reducing informational asymmetries. These implications are paradoxical to the point of being unrealistic. They suggest (without explaining the decision-making processes behind recruiters' choices) that recruiters will employ information gathering strategies when they need them least and will eschew such strategies when they need them most.

hypotheses:

H1: When the leaders of armed groups have access to significant material resources (e.g diamonds or government sponsorship), they will tend to offer recruitment incentives.

H2: When the leaders of armed groups offer recruitment incentives, they will tend to attract lower quality recruits relative to non-incentivized recruitment.

A third hypothesis about the relationship between available resources and recruit quality can be derived from part of the underlying logic of the resource-curse theory. This hypothesis is not developed and tested in Weinstein's work, but it is consistent with one of its fundamental intuitions – that more opportunities for material gain will tend to attract larger numbers of opportunistic (hence low quality) volunteers. The case studies in the previous chapter suggested that recruiters do not always convert available material resources, such as diamonds, into recruitment incentives. However, if it is widely known that membership in an armed group entails the ability to mine diamonds, opportunistic recruits may disproportionately self-select into groups near diamond mines. This means that the opportunity implicit in diamond mining may attract opportunists even if recruiters do not hand out incentives or make explicit promises regarding mining-rights. Thus, the following hypothesis:

H3: Armed groups that are actively mining diamonds will tend to attract lower quality recruits.

If the leader of a given armed group made no attempt to screen volunteers and imposed no costs on volunteers, the quality of volunteers would be directly equivalent to the quality of the individuals recruited, because everyone who volunteered would be allowed to join the organization. Assuming some level of screening takes place, the population of volunteers passes through the metaphorical filter of screening processes, and the fineness of that filter is dependent on the availability of time and the availability of information for the recruiters in charge of screening processes. I assume that no screening process is ever 100% effective, and so highly selective screening can reduce, but never completely eliminate, the effects of

the supply of volunteers on the quality of the individuals who are ultimately recruited into the organization.

The table of recruitment selectivity (from Chapter 2) is reproduced below. It represents the combined effects of the availability of time and the availability of information on recruitment selectivity. The two variables are assumed to have a simple, additive effect on the selectivity of recruitment. Other things being equal, recruitment will be most selective when reliable information is abundant, and when time is minimally restricted. In the special case when the leaders of armed groups decide to give up on screening recruits, the availability of information and time becomes irrelevant. Under indiscriminate recruitment, the number and quality of recruits is entirely a function of the underlying determinants of the supply of volunteers.

Table 5.1: Recruitment Selectivity

		Availability of Time	
		low	high
Availability of Networks	high	2	3
	low	1	2
	indiscriminate	0	0

The theory of screening selectivity as a filter-mechanism implies the following hypothesis:

H4: Higher levels of recruitment selectivity during screening will enable better filtering of the population of volunteers, leading to higher quality recruits.

When prospective members are considering whether or not to go through with the process of joining, they consider the costs of induction. Depending on how much is publicly known about initiation or induction processes, there may be one or two points at which members can take the costs of induction into account, although variations in public knowledge do not change the overall predicted effects of induction costs on recruit quality. If hazing and other costs are public knowledge, then civilians may self-select out of the recruitment process and may never enter into the pool of volunteers. Irrespective of prior knowledge of the costs of joining, some prospective members may choose to drop out once they are directly confronted

with the costs of induction. These self-selection and attrition mechanisms can also affect the quality of individuals who ultimately become members in an armed group.

For the costs of induction to have predictable effects on the quality of recruits, it needs to be the case that costs (or the correlative benefits) are discriminating in terms of the quality of the individuals joining. That is, high quality individuals must be more willing, on average, to bear the costs of joining than low quality individuals (for more on this, see Chapter 2). If this assumption holds, we can make the following hypothesis:

H5: When costs and benefits are discriminating, higher induction costs will discourage some low quality recruits (either before ever volunteering, or after directly encountering the costs, or both), leading to higher quality recruits.

The remainder of this chapter uses newly gathered data from Sierra Leone to test the hypotheses laid out above.

Data and Research Design

Since civil militias in Sierra Leone formed independently and remained essentially autonomous throughout the war, I selected three militias – the Tamaboro, Donso, and Kamajor – as subjects for a micro-level study through a survey of former members of those militias. These militias were selected because they arose in three different major regions of the country, meaning that they exhibit a high level of diversity on potentially important explanatory variables, including ethnic identities and political allegiances (which are highly regionalized in Sierra Leone), as well as access to easily mined diamond deposits. The fact that all of these militias operated within the same conflict and the same country helps to control for a host of social, political, and economic factors that might vary from one conflict to the next.

Re-enacting Militia Recruitment: Constructing a Respondent-Driven Sample

The goal of my survey design was to generate a representative sample of members of the three militias in question. The survey took place from October 2011 to July 2012,

roughly ten years since the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, and within a year of the conclusion of the Special Court proceedings. Studying a conflict many years after its conclusion presents distinct tradeoffs. The largest benefit is in terms of minimizing emotional effects on respondents' objectivity and minimizing non-response bias as a result of fear of being indicted for war crimes by the Sierra Leone Special Court.[3] The largest detriment is in terms of the near impossibility of constructing a sampling frame (i.e. a relatively comprehensive list of potential respondents) for combatants who have completely demobilized and for whom the government has issued no veteran status and maintains no ongoing documentation.[4]

Instead of relying on a pure convenience sample, I utilized Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS), which is a systematic method for constructing representative samples of "invisible" populations – i.e. populations for which no pre-existing sampling frame exists. RDS builds a sample in a "snowball" fashion, in which initial or "seed" respondents refer other members of the target population who are within their social network (Heckathorn, 1997, 2002). Like a snowball sample, initial respondents or "seeds" are selected non-randomly (by convenience) and all subsequent respondents are selected through referrals from earlier respondents. Unlike a snowball convenience sample, Respondent-Driven Sampling procedures are designed to minimize the sources of bias that arise when referrals are the primary mechanism of selecting new respondents into the sample.

The fundamental problem with a snowball convenience sample is that referrals are a non-random mechanism for selecting respondents into a sample.[5] Different members of a target population can have very different probabilities of being sampled based on a referral from another respondent. These different sampling probabilities are primarily a function of the size of an individual's social network and an individual's degree of *homophily* (i.e. the

[3]This fear was very real for most militia members. Sam Hinga Norman, who was said to have command responsibility for the Kamajor militias in the south, was indicted and tried by the Special Court along with Allieu Kondewa, another high-ranking figure in civil militia hierarchies.

[4]Surveys that take place immediately following a conflict can take advantage of ongoing Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) programs to create sampling frames of DDR participants from which individual subjects can then be randomly selected. For a description of one such survey, see (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008, 443-445)

[5]For a sample to be representative of the underlying target population, it is ideal for every member of a target population to have an equal probability of being sampled. A randomized sampling process is the easiest way of ensuring equal sampling probabilities, but this is not feasible when a sampling frame does not already exist.

general tendency for people to know and affiliate with other people like them) with regard to initial respondents (Erickson, 1979; Heckathorn, 2002). Network sizes matter because the larger a given individual's social network, the higher the likelihood that the individual will know someone who will refer him or her into the sample. In the context of a snowball sample, homophily means that any given respondent is likely to provide referrals to other people who are similar to him or her. Thus, typical snowball samples end up over-sampling people who have large social networks and people who are similar to (i.e. homophilious with) initial respondents. These two fundamental problems can be exacerbated by a third feature of snowball samples – *differential recruitment.* Differential recruitment is the tendency for some people in a snowball sample to provide more referrals than others. Imagine a scenario in which five initial respondents all provide two referrals, and a sixth initial respondent provides fifty referrals. In this case, differential recruitment combines with homophily to produce a sample in which the majority of respondents resemble the sixth initial respondent because they were all recruited by that person.

Respondent-Driven Sampling manages these three sources of bias by collecting meta-data on respondent's social networks, incentivizing referrals in such a way as to create long referral chains, and limiting the number of referrals allowed per respondent. Estimates of respondents' social network sizes provide a direct measure of the degree to which their selection into the sample may have been influenced by social network bias. This measure can be used to adjust survey results in such a way as to compensate for network biases. Long chains of referrals overcome the homophily problems that are inherent in a single referral. Notwithstanding peoples' tendencies to associate with other people like them, the process of respondent referral has been empirically demonstrated to be a highly stochastic and "memoryless" process. In other words, each referral involves a moderate degree of randomness, such that only one or two referrals in a recruitment chain are necessary to achieve conditions under which the recruitment probability of the *next* individual referred is completely unrelated to any traits of the *first* respondent in the chain of referrals (Heckathorn and Jeffri, 2001; Salganik and Heckathorn, 2004).[6] The inherent randomness in the referral process

[6]In more technical terms, referrals are assumed to be a first-order Markov chain – i.e. a stochastic, memoryless process. Take the example of a short recruitment chain with two waves or links: R_0 is the seed

means that sufficiently long recruitment chains begin to resemble random samples in terms of their representativeness of the underlying traits of the population being sampled. In order to facilitate the creation of long referral chains, respondents are offered incentives to refer additional respondents into the study (note that these referral incentives are in addition to the monetary compensation that each respondent is provided for their own participation). Finally, RDS minimizes problems with differential recruitment – e.g. the one over-zealous respondent who recruits 50 others – by arbitrarily limiting each respondent to referring only three additional respondents, with referrals being regulated through a coupon system.[7]

Respondent-Driven sampling is highly appropriate for surveying former civil militia members because, although those individuals were long-ago demobilized, they tend to maintain close networked ties with each other.[8] I selected sampling locations non-randomly, recruiting seeds within areas that were at, or near, wartime recruitment centers for each of the three civil militias in question. This strategy leveraged the high-density of ex-militia member networks in those locations, creating long and surprisingly diverse chains of referrals that affirm the underlying stochasticity of the referral process. Mimicking the geography of militia recruitment processes used during wartime, my sample includes seeds and referral chains for five clustered samples, located in and around the Sierra Leonean cities of Freetown, Bo, Kabala, and Koidu Town, and the Liberian capital of Monrovia. I included a clustered sample from the Monrovia area of Liberia in order to capture a population of combatants who have generally been assumed to be more opportunistic than average (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008, 444).[9]

respondent, and he recruits R_1, and R_1 then recruits R_2. The referral process is stochastic and memoryless, such that the recruitment probability associated with R_2 is somewhat related to R_1, but effectively unrelated to R_0.

[7]Readers will note that RDS, like a snowball sample, is subject to bias from the *initial sample* of "seed" respondents (Heckathorn, 2002). RDS procedures do not provide a method for controlling for, or eliminating, this bias. However, if recruitment chains are sufficiently long, seed respondents will make up a very small proportion of the overall sample and thus introduce negligible bias.

[8]Although RDS builds a sample that is, in many ways, second-best to a probability sample, recruitment through respondent referrals minimizes a two significant biases that have affected probability samples constructed from disarmament program sampling frames: 1) DDR processes – with the process in Sierra Leone being no exception – tend to target insurgents and notoriously violent groups most strongly, leading to inherent underrepresentation of other combat groups, especially groups thought to be benign (Hoffman, 2004); 2) combatants who joined groups early in the war but then dropped out in the middle of the conflict will not be eligible for DDR programs and thus will be excluded from a DDR-based sampling frame.

[9]Many young ex-combatants from all factions made their way to Liberia following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone. It is possible that some of them did this to escape indictment by the Special Court of

If the underlying assumptions of the RDS process hold for the case of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, my sample should be reasonably representative of the original populations of individuals who joined those militias during the course of the war.[10] For the most important variables in the analysis, I used RDSAT software (Volz et al., 2012) to estimate the number of waves of referrals necessary in order for the sample to reach an equilibrium mix of recruits – i.e. the point at which the characteristics of the sample mean for a given variable stabilize around a point that is independent of the the set of seed subjects from which recruitment began (Heckathorn, 1997, 183-186). For most variables, an equilibrium was reached within two to three waves.[11] The average length of referral chains in my sample is three waves, which suggests that an equilibrium was reached on the most important variables in the analysis and that the overall representativeness of the sample is high. An important caveat is that recruitment waves in Bo Town and Freetown were shorter than average, meaning that estimates based on observations gathered in those areas will not necessarily have reached equilibrium, and may suffer from some level of selection bias toward the traits of seeds in that sample. I tried to minimize bias in the Bo Town sub-sample by gathering as many seeds as possible and trying to ensure their diversity on important observable traits, including age and ethnicity.

Sierra Leone. Many of them were also motivated by the ability to participate in illicit diamond mining in the border regions between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Both sets of motivations identify the group of Sierra Leonean ex-combatants in Liberia as a population that was probably disproportionately opportunistic, as compared with their peers who stayed in Sierra Leone.

[10]Salganik and Heckathorn (2004) have formally proven that the RDS estimates result in negligible bias in samples of meaningful size. This proof is based on the following 6 assumptions: "1. Respondents know one another as members of the target population, so ties are reciprocal. 2. Respondents are linked by a network composed of a single component. 3. Sampling occurs with replacement. 4. Respondents can accurately report their personal network size, defined as the number of relatives, friends, and acquaintances who fall within the target population. 5. Peer recruitment is a random selection from the recruiter's network. 6. Each respondent recruits a single peer" (Heckathorn, 2007, 162).

Assumption number six is commonly violated in most studies that utilize RDS, including this one. The regressions below include variables representing the ethnicity of the individual respondents, which helps to adjust for sampling biases that may arise from differential recruitment along ethnic lines – i.e. the violation of assumption six. For a more extensive explanation, see Heckathorn (2007).

[11]Under normal conditions, samples approach equilibrium at a geometric rate, and the rate appears to be faster for dichotomous variables as compared with continuous variables or categorical variables that can take on many different values. For example, ethnicity is a categorical variable that can take on one of seven values given high levels of ethnic diversity in Sierra Leone. It would have taken more than 10 recruitment waves and a very large overall sample size for the ethnicity variable to have reached equilibrium. Ethnicity was of minimal salience in the conflict in Sierra Leone, and my pre-survey discussions with ex-combatants all indicated that ethnicity did not play a significant role in militia recruitment. As a result, I did not focus on constructing samples that would reach equilibrium on ethnicity variables.

Empirical Strategy

To test the theory of recruitment selectivity, I present three linear regression models to predict the quality of individuals recruited into a civil militia at a given time and location during the war.[12] Each of the three models presented includes measures representing the hypothesis that more selective recruitment leads to higher quality recruits (H4), as well as variables that control for differential sampling probabilities that result from referral-based sampling. Model 2 and 3 include variables representing the resource-curse hypotheses (H1, H2 and H3) and the hypothesis that costly induction leads to higher quality recruits (H5). Model 3 also includes a series of dummy variables that represent the district in which each respondent was recruited. All estimates in the regression analyses below are calculated with conservative standard errors and confidence intervals that take into account the clustered nature of the five primary sampling units, which consisted of the urban and surrounding rural areas of the following cities: Freetown, Bo Town, Kabala, Koidu Town and Monrovia.

Following Heckathorn (2007), the regression models reported below do not use any form of post-survey weighting.[13] Instead, the models account for known variations in the probability of selection into a respondent-driven sample (i.e. known sources of sampling error) by including key variables that are associated with biases arising from differences in respondent social network size, differences in homophily, and differential recruitment.

The primary variable that affects the probability of selection into a respondent-driven sample is the size of an individual's social network (specifically, the number of connections they have with other members of the target population of former militia members). The larger the number of connections an individual has with other members of the target population, the higher their probability of receiving a referral and entering the sample. To control for this social network bias, every respondent was asked to estimate the number of people

[12]These models use Taylor-linearized variance estimation, which is the default estimation method in the set of survey data tools for Stata 13. In non-survey contexts, Taylor linearization is also known as the delta method or the Huber–White sandwich variance estimator. This estimation method is ideal for dealing with data that may have heteroscedastic errors.

[13]Since weighting typically has very little effect on regression analysis, Winship and Radbill (1994) recommend that researchers run a series of weighted models and a parallel series of unweighted models. If the two sets of models are convergent in their results, Winship and Radbill suggest that researchers report the unweighted results (which typically have smaller confidence intervals).

they currently knew (within the clustered sampling area) who were members of the target population. This self-reported network size was then transformed by $\log_{10}$to reduce skew in the distribution of network sizes. [14] The inclusion of the log-transformed network variable controls for these differing probabilities of selection.

The group-based identities of respondents (e.g. age grades and ethnic groups) are also a possible source of sampling bias due to homophily and differential recruitment. The Respondent-Driven Sampling Analysis Tool (RDSAT) software (Volz et al., 2012) provides a means of analyzing an RDS dataset, along with metadata on recruitment patterns, in order to identify sources of sampling bias from homophily and differential recruitment.

Any population will have multiple group-identity traits (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity) that are typically associated with high levels of within-group homophily and may also be associated with differential recruitment patterns. Since there is effectively zero variation in gender within the sample of militia members, the three major identity traits that could generate bias are age, prior experience with firearms, and ethnic identity. There are strong theoretical and empirical reasons to expect that recruitment patterns will be influenced by ethnic-group and age-group homophily as well as homophily associated with membership in hunting societies. In many cases, respondents will have more networked links with (and are more likely to refer) individuals of their same ethnicity, or of similar age, as compared with individuals of different ethnicities or ages. It is also possible that individuals who are traditional hunters (since prior firearms experience is a proxy for membership in male hunting societies) may have an affinity for each other, and thus produce homophily bias in referrals and patterns of differential recruitment according to prior membership in local hunting societies.

What becomes clear in an analysis of these three identity-group traits is that age and prior firearms experience are not associated with high levels of homophily that would lead to significant biases as a result of differential recruitment. The graphs below show boot-strap estimates of variations in homophily according to the age groupings used to construct the

[14] Self-reported network sizes vary from 0 to 500; mean = 34.1; SD = 73.4. A respondent network size of zero indicates that even the individual who referred the respondent was a stranger to the respondent. Such values for network size are extremely rare – 2 out of 135 observations.

dependent variable (<18, 18-25, 26-45, >45), and according to whether or not the respondent had pre-war experience with a firearm. Levels of homophily are positive, but low ($\leq$0.24) in all groups, and are nearly equivalent in most cases, indicating minimal threat of homophily bias as a result of age and pre-war firearms experience. Note that homophily varies between 1 and -1, with values farther from zero indicating a higher potential for homophily and differential recruitment biases.

Table 5.2: Homophily Estimates by Prior Firearms Experience

Group	No Prior Experience with Gun	Prior Experience with Gun
Homophily	0.195	0.143

Table 5.3: Homophily Estimates by Age Grouping

Group	<18	18-25	26-45	>45
Homophily	0.156	0.036	0.236	0.207

In contrast, levels of ethnic homophily are high, especially among majority ethnic groups for the regions sampled (>0.6 for Kono, Koranko, and Mende). The following table summarizes variations in the degree of recruitment homophily by ethnic group.

Table 5.4: Homophily Estimates by Ethnic Group

Group	Fula	Guinean	Kono	Koranko	Mandingo	Mende	Yalunka
Homophily	0.173	0.135	0.774	0.605	-0.98	0.828	-1.0

Readers should note that the values for Fula, Guinean, and Mandingo, and Yalunka are all based on a very small number of observations, and so these estimates are unstable. The most important estimates are those for Kono, Koranko, and Mende ethnic groups because those groups constitute 86% of the dataset – 119 of 138 observations, omitting missing values. These three ethnic groups are also the majority ethnic groups within the regions sampled, which helps to explain both their frequency within my dataset and their particularly high levels of homophily. Given the potentially important effects of ethnicity on individual recruitment probabilities, I include dummy variables for Kono, Koranko and Mende ethnicity in the models below in order to control for any substantial biases introduced by ethnicity.

Measurement and Operationalization of Variables

The empirical tests that follow are premised on a somewhat controversial claim – that it is possible to measure recruit quality. Jeremy Weinstein (2005, 607) has observed that the issues of asymmetric information that give rise to adverse selection problems during recruitment also give rise to problems of measurement during social scientific analysis. The true "type" or quality of recruits is private information that is not necessarily related to observable traits of individuals.

In contrast to previous studies that have arrived deductively at abstract definitions of recruit quality, I proceed inductively to a historically contextualized specification of the types of individuals whom chiefs sought to include in, or exclude from, militias. This analysis results in the identification of two easily measured traits that militia recruiters saw as predictors of the quality of individuals whom they were evaluating: age and prior experience with a firearm. These two measures serve as the basis for my construction of the dependent variable of recruit quality.

Readers may recall from Chapter 3 that the chiefs and community elders who were in charge of militia recruitment were primarily worried about "young men who [were] wayward," and who had the potential to "turn their guns against their own people" (especially the chiefs) if they were inducted into militias and armed.[15] Chiefs understood that young men were the most readily available and physically capable sources of military labor, but they also knew that many of those same young men had much to gain by overthrowing chiefly authority. As one former Kamajor explained, being willing and fit for combat was not sufficient: "If you are so worthy [but] you can't take no control [in the sense of obeying authority], the chief cannot appoint you to go [join]."[16] For chiefs, a high quality recruit was a loyal recruit.

[15]Author interview: Bo_Workshop1_Kamajor, January 2012.

[16]Author interview: 3009, February 2012. It is important to keep in mind that all of these quoted characterizations of adverse selection problems are retrospective, and thus should never be taken as perfectly representative of the decision making processes that took place at the time of militia formation. Part of the reason why one finds such a strong emphasis on the potential problem of betrayal in early Kamajor recruitment is probably because of the benefits of hindsight. Later on in the conflict, the Kamajors would suffer from major problems of internal dissent and misbehavior by young fighters. With that said, I demonstrate in the discussion below that there was a strong pre-war historical precedent of constructing unemployed youths as potentially violent, criminal and subversive, which suggests that expressed fears of "wayward" young men are not exclusively a product of hindsight.

Chiefs explicitly sought individuals who were friendly to governmental authority and had earned positive reputations in their communities, because such individuals were the least likely to abuse their power:

> You're not going to take somebody who talks against the government, who is against his people. No. [If] you're a citizen – you have [good] family, you have [good] background – we pick you, because you're not going to betray your people.[17]

Men who were past their mid twenties were far more likely to fit chiefs' descriptions of the ideal traits of a loyal militia member. Such men had probably borne children and become embedded in their communities – having been integrated into local patronage networks as well as secret networks of social accountability embodied in the regional, male initiation-societies that are common throughout Sierra Leone (Leach, 1994; Ferme, 2001). At some point around 45-50 years of age, increases in age will not be associated with further increases in loyalty, but may actually be associated with some losses in physical capacity as a fighter. Hence, the following coding scheme, which creates an ordinal ranking of recruit quality as predicted by the respondent's age at the time of recruitment:

quality	0	1	2	1
age	<18	18-25	26-45	>45

In addition to age, prior experience with a firearm was an even more reliable indicator of a recruit's potential loyalty to chiefly authority. Most of the individuals who legally owned guns during peacetime in Sierra Leone were "traditional" hunters who owed their ability to hunt to chiefly authority. The Chiefdom Council Act from the 1960s, established systems of informal character references in which "firearms permits were issued by police authorities on the recommendation of village headmen and the local chief" (Alie, 2005, 74). Chiefs showed a strong preference for recruiting local hunters, not only because they could easily adapt their hunting skills to the task of stalking human prey, but also because they were already embedded in networks of chiefly patronage. Hunters derived their right to own guns from chiefly authority, and acknowledged that authority any time they hunted by sharing a portion of their bounty with their chief.[18] Pre-war experience with firearms thus serves as a

[17] Author interview: Kono_ChiefGuinea, May 2012.
[18] Author interview: 5001, May 2012.

proxy for being a traditional hunter (or possibly also a policeman or a former soldier, which would also have been viewed positively by chiefs), i.e. an individual who was highly likely to be loyal to local chiefs.

Age and prior experience with firearms are less-than-ideal measures of the underlying construct of the loyalty (i.e. quality) of prospective recruits. Chiefs who had ample information and time would have delved much deeper in terms of assessing the potential loyalty of would-be fighters – inquiring about a candidate's family background, criminal record, and community status. As a foreign researcher, I could not hope to gain access to the same levels of private information as chiefs.[19] Thus, I employ age and prior experience with firearms as proxies for recruit quality because they are readily measurable traits that are likely to be correlated with the underlying trait of loyalty, which formed the basis for chiefs' recruitment decisions. To the extent that chiefs were able to engage in selective recruitment we would expect to see chiefs' preferences for more loyal recruits being reflected in variations in the age and the levels of prior firearms experience within the pool of individuals recruited.

I combine the age-quality measure with the prior-firearms-experience measure to create an aggregate variable that is the sum of the two variables. This assumes that an individual's quality, in the eyes of the chief, is a simple summation of positive traits that are thought to be predictors of loyalty. The variable is a ranking of a recruit's quality, ranging from 0 to 3, with 3 being a person of optimal age who also had prior experience with a gun, and zero being someone under 18 who never had any experience with firearms. This quality ranking serves as the dependent variable in the regressions below.[20]

Consistent with the original framing of the resource-curse hypothesis, I treat offers of material incentives as the most proximate and dependable determinant of the quality of the individuals who volunteer to be recruited. Each respondent was asked whether or not he was offered incentives (in the form of money or any other material compensation) when he joined the group. This provides a simple and direct measure of (H2) whether a respondent's

[19]Just as chiefs sought out references and tried to not rely on direct testimonies from prospective recruits, I could not simply ask recruits about, e.g. their criminal background (prior to joining a militia), and expect an honest answer. Given time restraints and restraints inherent in my identity as a foreign researcher, I could not propose to track down character references for each of the individuals whom I interviewed.

[20]Note: All analyses performed with the summed quality variable were also performed independently with the age variable and the firearms-experience variables.

decision to join was driven by material incentives or not.

The models below do not specifically test (H1) the hypothesis that recruiters are more likely to offer incentives when material resources are available in abundance. Readers will recall from Chapter 4 that this hypothesis appears to be qualitatively false. The case of the Tamaboro militia (in the north) is consistent with the resource-curse hypothesis. The Tamaboros had access to government sponsorship and used those resources to offer recruitment incentives. In contrast, the Kamajors and Donsos in the south and east had access to significant diamond wealth, and on several occasions also had access to government sponsorship, but never (to my knowledge) used those resources to offer recruitment incentives. Militia leaders' decisions to offer recruitment incentives are obviously not determined by the mere availability of resources. Paul Staniland (2012) has made this point theoretically and empirically, demonstrating that leaders' decisions about how to utilize resources are highly contingent on underlying organizational factors. Dummy variables for the location (administrative District) in which a respondent was recruited will help to control for unobserved organizational differences that might have affected the utilization of resources for a given set of militia leaders and recruiters.

Even though none of the militias located in diamond-rich areas offered recruitment incentives, some groups (especially those located in Kenema District) engaged in diamond mining. Hypothesis 3 suggests that militias that were actively engaged in mining may have attracted higher numbers of low-quality volunteers – i.e. individuals who were primarily motivated by the presumption that militia membership would enable them to engage in mining for personal benefit. I measure the effects of diamond mining on militia recruitment by including a variable representing whether or not a given recruit ever saw diamonds within their group during the war. Occasionally, diamonds were taken from rebels who were captured or killed, but in most cases diamonds only appeared in militias as a result of ongoing mining operations. Thus, respondents' reports of the presence or absence of diamonds within their group are a fairly direct measure of whether or not those groups were engaged in diamond mining that could have attracted opportunistic volunteers.

In most theorizations and most empirical settings, recruits encounter induction costs

in the form of ritual hazing (costly in terms of physical and psychological strain), and periods of extended training and education/indoctrination (costly in terms of time and because they delay access to the benefits of membership) (Hegghammer, 2013; Weinstein, 2005). In most militias in Sierra Leone, the costs of induction were consistently low, involving no hazing and very limited training or indoctrination. Only one out of the three militias included in the sample (the Kamajor militia) was known to subject their members to traumatic initiation ceremonies, but those induction costs were, to a significant degree, counterbalanced by the fact that the Kamajors were also the only militia that made bulletproofing into a uniform benefit of membership. These practices remained relatively constant within the Kamajor militia over the course of the war.[21]

The cost-benefit analysis of participating in the Kamajor militia shifted significantly when some of the initiators (who were in charge of performing bulletproofing ceremonies) began charging significant amounts of money for their services (more on this in Chapter 4). These (very literal) increases in the costs of induction may have shifted the cost-benefit calculations of would-be militia members in such a way as to discourage some opportunistic recruits. The costs themselves would be equally burdensome to both high- and low-quality recruits, but some of the intangible benefits of joining a militia include an opportunity for recruits to protect their communities and serve their country. Only high quality individuals will see these as significant benefits. As costs of induction rise, prospective members that are only motivated by tangible benefits will drop out, while prospective members that are motivated by combinations of tangible and intangible benefits will be more willing to bear the higher costs associated with joining. I include a direct measure of these monetary costs of induction: each respondent was asked whether or not they had to pay money in order to be initiated into their militia.

The recruitment selectivity variable was constructed using a combination of primary sources from my fieldwork, as well as secondary sources covering the history of the conflict. Individual observations received a selectivity rank based on the model of recruitment selectivity developed earlier – taking into account both the availability of time and the availability

[21]The experience of initiation (on its own) is does not have any significant effects when included in a model predicting recruit quality. This is true across a number of possible model formulations.

of information networks.[22] I reproduce the table of rankings here for ease of reference:

Table 5.5: Recruitment Selectivity

		Availability of Time	
		low	high
Availability of Networks	high	2	3
	low	1	2
	indiscriminate	0	0

The theory of recruitment selectivity does not imply that the effect of moving from selectivity level 1 to level 2 will be the same as the effect of moving from selectivity level 2 to level 3. In order to avoid assuming a linear, step-wise relationship among levels of recruitment selectivity, I created four dummy variables, one representing each possible level of recruitment selectivity from 0 to 3. Including three out of four of these variables in a regression model allows each level of selectivity to establish its own effect-size relative to the omitted variable. The decision of which variable to omit is somewhat arbitrary, and so I experimented with a number of possible models.[23] This experimentation revealed an important and unexpected characteristic of the lowest two levels of selectivity. It appears that cursory screening (selectivity level 1) is no better than no screening at all (selectivity level 0). Statistically, the effects of the two variables are indistinguishable.[24] Given this finding, all of the regression models presented below use cursory screening *and* no screening (selectivity levels 1 and 0) as the omitted or baseline category. Thus, the effects of optimal and suboptimal screening (selectivity levels of 3 and 2) are established with reference to the

[22] I blind-coded a matrix of selectivity variables by region (administrative District) and by year. The coding matrix is reproduced in the appendix. Information networks are operationalized as chiefly hierarchies. An information network is coded as being disrupted (low availability) at a given location during a given year if a number of high-ranking chiefs were killed or displaced at or before the beginning of that year. The availability of time in a given location-year is assessed with reference to the physical proximity of the nearest known enemy positions to a given recruitment location during a given year, along with an assessment of whether the enemy was on the advance or on the retreat during that given location at a given time. In reality, the tide of a conflict can change on the scale of weeks or months, and availability of time is only coded at the level of the year – introducing some level of non-systematic measurement error as a result of a simple lack of precision. The selectivity ranking of an individual observation is assigned using the matrix, based on the year at which the respondent joined and the region in which they joined.

[23] In general, I erred on the side of omitting either the highest level of selectivity or the lowest level of selectivity – which allows for more intuitive interpretation of regression results. The models reported below were chosen not only because they allow for relatively intuitive interpretation of results, but also because they tend to illustrate important trends in the data.

[24] For the statistical results establishing the functional equivalence of these two variables, see the statistical appendix.

two lower levels of selectivity that are omitted.

The following table summarizes the variables described above.

Table 5.6: Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
DV: Recruit Quality					
Age at Time of Recruitment	24.854	10.77	8	59	123
Age Ranking	1.073	0.831	0	2	123
Pre-war Experience with Firearms	0.268	0.445	0	1	138
Sum of Recruit Quality Measures	1.358	1.033	0	3	123
Independent Variables					
Optimal Screening (Selectivity 3)	0.346	0.478	0	1	130
Suboptimal Screening (Selectivity 2)	0.362	0.482	0	1	130
Cursory Screening (Selectivity 1)	0.2	0.402	0	1	130
No Screening (Selectivity 0)	0.092	0.291	0	1	130
Diamonds Present in Group	0.155	0.363	0	1	161
Incentives Offered during Recruitment	0.075	0.265	0	1	133
Recruit Paid for Initiation	0.217	0.414	0	1	161
Above Average Selectivity (Binary)	0.664	0.474	0	1	131
Control Variables					
Joined in Bonthe	0.124	0.331	0	1	161
Joined in Guinea	0.05	0.218	0	1	161
Joined in Kailahun	0.006	0.079	0	1	161
Joined in Kenema	0.075	0.263	0	1	161
Joined in Koinadugu	0.28	0.45	0	1	161
Joined in Kono	0.217	0.414	0	1	161
Joined in Moyamba	0.031	0.174	0	1	161
Joined in Pujehun	0.006	0.079	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Mende	0.317	0.467	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Koranko	0.28	0.45	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Kono	0.205	0.405	0	1	161
Population Degradation	106.497	117.158	0	343	161
RDS Metadata					
Respondent Network Size	34.089	73.424	0	500	135
Logged Network Size	2.44	1.417	0	6.215	135

Predicting Recruit Quality

This section presents a series of three models predicting recruit quality. Each of these models includes variables that control for sampling biases arising from differences in

respondent network sizes and differences in ethnic homophily. The first model tests only the hypothesis that higher levels of recruitment selectivity lead to higher recruit quality. The second model tests the recruitment selectivity hypothesis alongside the resource-curse and costly induction hypotheses. The third model includes all of the independent variables in the second model along with a set of dummy variables representing the region or district in which each individual fighter was recruited during the war. These regional fixed effects are meant to control for time-invariant aspects of regions that may affect recruit quality by affecting the underlying pool of civilians from which voluntary recruits are drawn. For example, we might expect Kono District and Kenema District to have lower quality recruits, on average, because the mining industries in Kono and Kenema attract large numbers of job-seeking youths from other surrounding districts. Other things being equal, more youths in the civilian population means more youths who may try to, and potentially succeed in, joining a local militia. Such structural, demographic differences among districts may affect recruit quality in militias by restricting or expanding the number of high-quality individuals (within the civilian population) who have the potential to volunteer to become militia members.

The results of the three models are summarized in the marginal effects plots below. On the graphs, points represent the value of regression coefficients and the lines represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 5.1: Model 1

Figure 5.2: Model 2

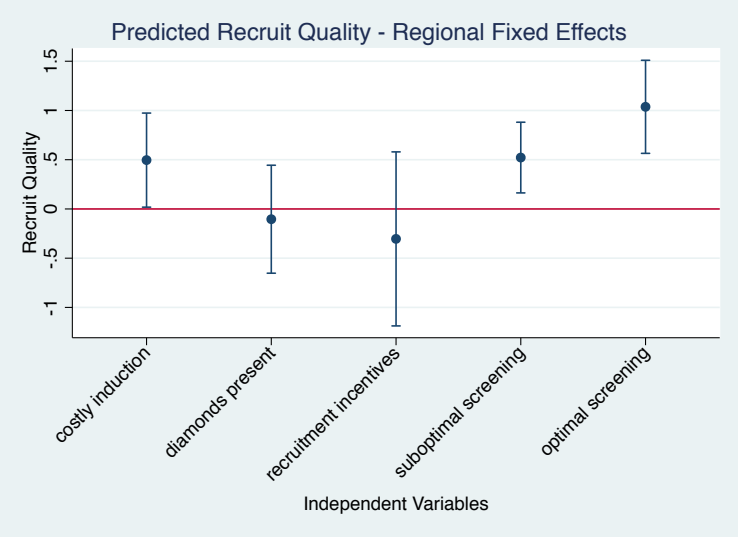

Figure 5.3: Model 3

The recruitment selectivity hypothesis (H4) finds significant support in the models presented above. Relative to the omitted categories (*cursory screening* and *no screening*), *optimal screening* predicts a large increase in recruit quality – the range of increase is between 0.85 and 1.04, depending on the other variables that are included in the model.[25] Given that the scale of recruit quality ranges from 0 to 3, an increase of 1 point on the quality scale represents a 33.3% increase in recruit quality. Thus, in the models above, *optimal screening*

[25]With standard errors between 0.19 and 0.22, depending on the model. See appendix for tables of results.

predicts an increase in recruit quality ranging between 28% and 35% as compared with the baseline established by *cursory screening* and *no screening*. The effects of *optimal screening* are also statistically significant in every model.

When screening was carried out with disrupted networks *or* with limited time for gathering information, this *suboptimal screening* also predicts an increase in the quality of recruits relative to the baseline categories of cursory or no screening, albeit a smaller increase than that predicted by *optimal screening*. *Suboptimal screening* predicts an increase in recruit quality of between 16.5% and 17%, depending on the model. The *suboptimal screening* variable is also statistically significant in every model.

These results affirm the hypothesis that higher levels of selectivity during screening will result the recruitment of higher quality individuals into militias. Screening under ideal conditions consistently produces large improvements in recruit quality, but such systems of screening are extremely fragile. Any significant disturbance of a screening systems may decrease the quality of recruits by roughly 50%. And when screening takes place with disrupted networks and with significant pressure from enemy forces, the effective selectivity of screening approaches zero (recall, the *cursory screening* and *no screening* variables are indistinguishable in all models).

The results above also provide support for the costly induction hypothesis (H5). Increased costs of joining a militia are a consistent and statistically significant predictor of increased recruit quality. When recruits had to pay a significant amount of money in order to be initiated, this predicts an increase in recruit quality of between 11% and 17%, depending on the model. Unfortunately, the *costly induction* variable does not allow us to distinguish among several possible mechanisms that can explain this positive correlation: low quality recruits may anticipate high costs and never volunteer in the first-place, or low quality recruits may volunteer and then drop out when they are confronted with the full costs of initiation. It is also possible that *costly induction* is not actually affecting recruit quality per se. It may be the case that the specific monetary costs of induction included in the models above will select for individuals who have more financial resources than others, independent of their quality. Since older men will tend to have accumulated more financial

resources than younger men, we see *costly induction* predicting older recruits. But in this case, age serves as a proxy for personal wealth rather than a proxy for the motivations and quality of those individuals.

Surprisingly, the resource-curse hypotheses find minimal support in the models above. Consistent with hypotheses 2 and 3, the presence of diamonds (within militia groups) and offers of recruitment incentives both predict lower recruit quality. However, the size of these effects is small, and the variables representing those hypotheses are not statistically significant in any of the models. These results suggest that the availability of resource wealth and the incentives offered by recruiters may condition the underlying pool of volunteers, as hypothesized. However, moderate to high levels of screening and high costs of induction have the effect of filtering out low quality volunteers in such a way as to mitigate the degree to which the average quality of volunteers influences the average quality of recruits.

These statistical results provide strong support for the hypothesis that more selective screening during militia recruitment leads to the induction of higher quality recruits. The selectivity of screening is a significant predictor of recruit quality, and these results are robust to the inclusion of variables representing a number of important alternative hypotheses as well as regional fixed effects. Even when the presence of diamonds and offers of recruitment incentives portended large numbers of opportunistic volunteers, militias with high levels of access to information and time were able to successfully exclude opportunistic joiners.

Robustness Tests

In this section, I examine the extent to which these findings are contingent on how I have constructed the independent variables measuring recruitment selectivity and the dependent variable of *recruit quality*. I present two additional sets of models to test alternative parsings of these key variables. These models include the same sets of explanatory variables and control variables as the models above, only with alternative constructions of the independent variable of recruitment or the dependent variable of *recruit quality*.

Recognizing that the ordinal index of recruitment selectivity is somewhat arbitrary in its construction, I want to make sure that the findings presented above are not merely a

result of how I have chosen to parse the recruitment selectivity variables. The table below summarizes the results of three OLS regression models in which I replace the *optimal screening* and *suboptimal screening* variables with a single, binary variable coded 1 if screening involved above average selectivity (a ranking of 2 or 3 on the original selectivity scale), and coded 0 if screening involved below average selectivity (a ranking of 0 or 1 on the original scale).

Table 5.7: OLS Regressions Predicting Recruit Quality - Binary Selectivity Variable

	(1) Selectivity Only	(2) Complete	(3) Regional FE
Above Average Selectivity	0.696**	0.672**	0.789***
	(0.18)	(0.20)	(0.14)
Recruitment Incentives		-0.172	-0.197
		(0.35)	(0.36)
Diamonds Present		-0.205	-0.219
		(0.20)	(0.23)
Costly Induction		0.283**	0.420
		(0.09)	(0.21)
Constant	0.731	0.794	0.717
	(0.45)	(0.53)	(0.55)
N	120.000	116.000	116.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Like the recruitment selectivity variables used earlier, the *above average selectivity* variable is a statistically significant predictor of increased recruit quality across all three models. Above average selectivity during recruitment predicts a 22% to 26% increase in recruit quality, depending on the model. These findings suggest that the statistical results presented earlier are not merely an artifact of my coding scheme. More selective recruitment predicts better quality recruits.

The dependent variable of *recruit quality* is a composite of two indicators – age and prior experience with firearms – and the choice to combine these indicators involves an act of interpretation (of what recruiters might have wanted) that is open to question. The table below presents a series of regressions in which the measure of *recruit quality* has been de-constructed into its component parts. The *age group* dependent variable is an ordinal ranking of recruit quality according to the following scale:

quality	0	1	2	1
age	<18	18-25	26-45	>45

The *experience* dependent variable is coded 1 if a respondent reported having prior experience with firearms, and coded 0 if a respondent reported no prior experience with firearms. I retain the fundamental structure of the models presented above, using all of the same sets of independent variables, but including *age group* or prior firearms *experience* as the dependent variable. Models with the same sets of independent variables (but different dependent variables) are placed side-by-side to facilitate a comparison of how the results differ according to the dependent variable included.

Table 5.8: Regression Results Comparing Different Measures of Recruit Quality

Model:	Selectivity Only		Complete		Regional FE	
Dependent Variable:	Age Group	Experience	Age Group	Experience	Age Group	Experience
Method of Estimation:	(OLS)	(Logit)	(OLS)	(Logit)	(OLS)	(Logit)
Optimal Screening	0.565**	1.565**	0.533*	1.735***	0.747***	1.773**
	(0.15)	(0.38)	(0.20)	(0.36)	(0.10)	(0.49)
Suboptimal Screening	0.420*	0.367	0.404*	0.415	0.373*	0.711
	(0.17)	(0.53)	(0.18)	(0.54)	(0.15)	(0.54)
Recruitment Incentives			-0.354	0.615	-0.432*	0.578
			(0.18)	(0.84)	(0.19)	(0.75)
Diamonds Present			-0.256	0.815*	-0.151	0.574
			(0.14)	(0.34)	(0.19)	(0.53)
Costly Induction			0.331***	0.030	0.490***	0.270
			(0.06)	(0.17)	(0.11)	(0.42)
Constant	0.637	-1.907*	0.687	-1.867*	0.176	-2.095*
	(0.34)	(0.72)	(0.43)	(0.79)	(0.47)	(0.89)
N	120.000	129.000	116.000	124.000	116.000	119.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

The results of these regressions show that higher levels of recruitment selectivity are positively and significantly associated with both of the variables being used to measure recruit quality. As recruitment selectivity decreases, so too does the *age group* ranking and the likelihood that recruits had prior firearms *experience*. Clearly, the findings presented earlier are not being driven exclusively by *age group* or by *experience*.

In light of the questions raised earlier about how to interpret the significance of *costly induction*, it is interesting to note that the *costly induction* variable is a consistently significant predictor of higher *age group* rankings, but is not a significant predictor of prior firearms *experience*. Substantively, this finding provides some support for the hypothesis that higher monetary costs of joining a militia are correlated with recruit age to the extent that age is a proxy for having more financial resources. If costly induction were a valid

predictor of recruit quality (and not merely personal wealth), we would expect it to be strongly correlated with the *experience* variable as well as the *age group* variable.

Both of the robustness tests presented in this section provide further validation of the findings presented earlier. Before drawing final conclusions based on these findings, I want to consider an important set of alternative explanations. These explanations have not yet been clearly articulated or theorized in the literature on recruitment in armed groups because they only arise when considering how recruit quality changes over time.

Alternative Explanations: Maturation and Endogeneity

The outcome variable displays an important trend: higher quality recruits early in the war, and lower quality recruits later in the war.

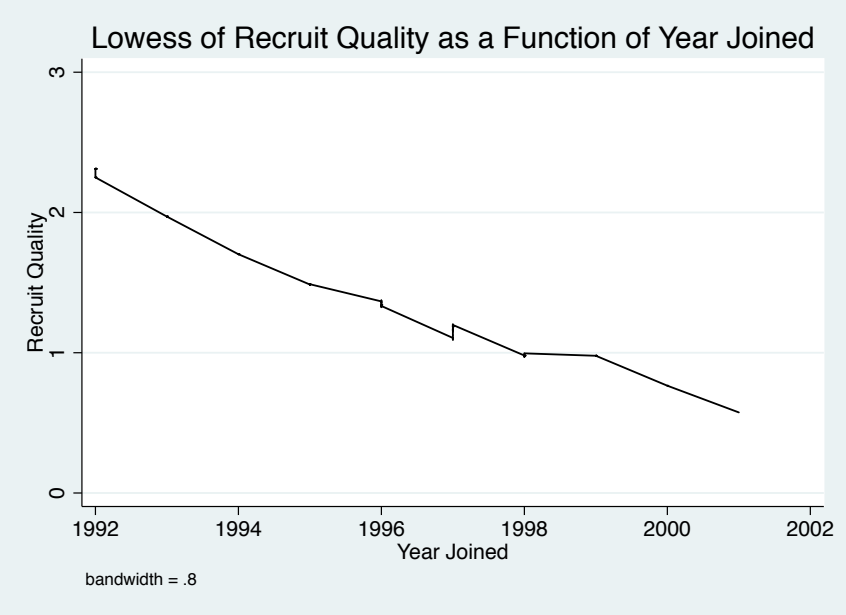

Figure 5.4: Year Joined as a Predictor of Quality

This trend suggests the possibility that maturation effects may explain a significant portion of the observed changes in quality of individuals recruited. The most obvious mechanism of maturation is the process of recruitment itself. Successful (selective) recruitment early in the war may deplete the pool of high-quality individuals in the civilian population, making it more difficult to find high-quality recruits later in the war. To explore this al-

ternative explanation, I constructed an estimate of the degree to which militia recruitment processes could have plausibly depleted the pool of high-quality individuals in the civilian population to the point that such depletion would affect subsequent rounds of recruitment.[26] As in the analysis above, age serves as a proxy for recruit quality. At its lowest point, in 1996, the population of ideal male recruits (between 25 and 45 years old) in Sierra Leone was approximately 208,960 individuals. If we take that pool of ideal recruits and subtract out the total number of individuals who joined all other non-militia factions during the entire course of the war, we get a very pessimistic estimate (roughly 197,200) of the number of ideal male recruits who might have been available to be recruited into civil militias. During the entire course of the war, civil militias recruited approximately 28,000 individuals. Let us assume that every single one of those recruits was drawn from the optimal age bracket (this is empirically false, but the assumption contributes to the construction of an estimate that favors the maturation-effect hypothesis). Under that assumption, militia recruitment for the entire duration of the conflict depleted the pool of available, ideal, male recruits by a little over 14 percent. Even based on this extremely pessimistic estimate, it is clear that the proportion of individuals recruited into civil militias was not high enough to have caused significant maturation effects as a result of depletion of the pool of optimal recruits through recruitment without replacement.

Another way of addressing the question of maturation effects is to try to include a measure of population degradation in regression models predicting recruit quality.[27] Unfortunately, there are no direct measures of demographic change during the course of the war in Sierra Leone, but there are data on civilian deaths by district and year. The death toll of war accumulates over time and decreases the overall size of the pool from which recruiters can draw new recruits. It is unlikely that wartime deaths will actually decrease the average

[26]National population estimates are from The World World Bank (2013). Disarmament statistics are from Thusi and Meek (2003, 28). Population gender-proportions were derived from Thomas, MacCormack and Bangura (2006).

[27]I experimented with including an ordinal variable (or a set of dummy variables) to control for the passage of time (at the level of the calendar year). Including a time variable or set of yearly dummy variables drastically changes the regression results. Recruitment selectivity variables are no longer significant, and their effects are much smaller. The problem is that the primary dimension of variation in recruitment selectivity is time (selectivity and time are highly correlated at the 0.99 level). Thus, controlling for time absorbs most of the variation that would otherwise be absorbed by recruitment selectivity variables.

quality of the pool of potential recruits, but significantly decreasing the overall size of pool of recruits may make it harder for recruiters to locate a sufficient quantity of high-quality recruits. Other things being equal, recruiters who have access to large pools of civilians will have more volunteers to choose from, and can afford to be more selective in their recruitment than recruiters who have limited access to very small pools of volunteers. In this way, the accumulation of civilian casualties over the course of the war may gradually reduce the number of voluntary recruits available, thus reducing the ability of recruiters to exclude low quality recruits for fear of ending up with insufficient manpower.[28] Using data gathered by the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Conibere et al., 2004), I constructed a *population degradation* variable representing the cumulative number of reported incidences of war-related civilian deaths in each District for each year of the conflict. For example, the value for *population degradation* for Kono District in 1993 is 36 deaths, which represents the war-related deaths reported for Kono District in 1993 added to the conflict-related deaths reported for Kono in 1992 and 1991 (back to the start of the conflict).

To test the hypothesis that rising civilian death tolls lead to lower recruit quality via degradation of the pool of potential recruits, I present three OLS regression models that are identical to the models presented earlier except for the addition of the *population degradation* variable. The inclusion of the *population degradation* variable does not have any significant affect on the regression results. Recruitment selectivity and costly induction are still the strongest predictors of recruit quality. This further reinforces the argument that the findings in this chapter are not driven by maturation effects.

[28]It is worth noting that the maturation-through-recruitment mechanism discussed in the preceding paragraph will also be more likely to have measurable effects when local civilian populations are smaller.

Table 5.9: Regressions Predicting Recruit Quality - Controlling for Population Degradation

	(1) Selectivity Only	(2) Complete	(3) Regional FE
Optimal Screening	0.930**	0.887**	1.149**
	(0.22)	(0.25)	(0.38)
Suboptimal Screening	0.532***	0.514***	0.565**
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.15)
Population Degradation	0.001	0.001	0.002
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Recruitment Incentives		-0.237	-0.294
		(0.32)	(0.33)
Diamonds Present		-0.151	-0.114
		(0.17)	(0.21)
Costly Induction		0.296***	0.456*
		(0.05)	(0.19)
Constant	0.637	0.745	0.367
	(0.31)	(0.43)	(0.82)
N	120.000	116.000	116.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Setting aside the issue of maturation, there are two important ways in which recruitment outcomes at a given time may feed-back on recruitment outcomes at future times. First, higher quality individuals may have larger social networks. Since selective recruitment processes leverage social networks, high levels of selectivity during early stages of recruitment may lead to increases in given group's capacities to recruit selectively in the future. Second, the behavior of militia members (once recruited and armed) may affect civilians' calculations regarding the costs and benefits of joining in the future. It is often alleged that low-quality recruits abuse civilians more frequently than do high-quality recruits. If this is true, and civilians see joining a militia as a way of avoiding abuse by militia members (as well as by other types of combatants), then low levels of selectivity in one period may increase the quantity of volunteers in subsequent periods (which will tend to exacerbate already low levels of selectivity by overwhelming recruiters with large numbers of volunteers). I examine each of these potential sources of endogeneity in turn.

The claim that higher quality recruits may also be better networked is plausible, and is empirically accurate with regard to recruit-age (but not prior firearms experience). Older recruits tend to have larger social networks, and that correlation is statistically significant (p = 0.002). Chapters 3 and 4 have established that recruitment and screening processes cen-

tered on chiefs (and their social networks) who were typically managing militia recruitment from *outside* of those organizations. The available qualitative evidence does not suggest that within-militia networks were relevant to screening processes, meaning that it is unlikely that high-quality recruits (with large social networks) actually improved the selectivity of chiefly screening processes. With that being said, it may be the case that well-networked militia members were able to assist in the recruitment process, perhaps by selectively calling upon high quality individuals among their friends and acquaintances to join the group.

If higher quality members enable more selective recruitment, this will lead to a virtuous cycle dynamic that will tend to produce stable patterns of recruitment selectivity and recruit quality over time. In other words, the positive feedback loop between recruit quality and access to social networks would mean that more selective recruitment at time 1 predicts more selective recruitment at time 2 (and vice-versa).

The hypothesis that higher quality recruits can enable higher recruitment selectivity runs counter to the dominant empirical trend. Groups that are initially able to take on high quality recruits tend to gradually take on lower and lower quality recruits, despite the high quality of initial recruits. If positive feedback loops are, in fact, active, they make the findings of this study even more surprising. Positive feedback loops would tend to produce highly homogeneous recruit quality within groups and comparatively heterogeneous recruit quality among groups. Empirically, this is not the case. As the graph at the beginning of this section shows, the primary axis of variation in recruit quality is within groups, over time.

The second possible feedback loop in recruitment outcomes involves the bad behavior of low quality militia recruits inspiring civilians to join militias in order to avoid such abuse (or, more perversely, in order to have the opportunity to be an abuser). If different qualities of recruits treat civilians differently (this question will be examined in more detail in the following chapter), then the quality of recruits in a given period will determine the number, and potentially also the quality, of civilians who might be willing to join in a subsequent period. If abuse affects recruitment, this could lead to both a cyclical and countercyclical trend. High quality individuals who had previously been reluctant to join militias could be

driven to join in order to avoid abuse – this produces a countercyclical trend. Low quality individuals who had previously been reluctant to join militias could also be driven to join to avoid abuse, and could additionally be driven to join in order to use militia membership as a platform for opportunistic violence.

Qualitative evidence suggests that the if-you-can't-beat-them-join-them mechanism did not systematically alter the average quality of the pool of volunteers because cyclical and countercyclical trends occurred simultaneously. During the late years of the war, all kinds of individuals (of varying levels of quality) were inspired to join militias in order to avoid being victimized by the same. In several cases, chiefs and community elders who had remained civilians for the first half of the conflict were inspired to join during the later years of the conflict in order to avoid victimization (or re-gain respect from) militia members.[29] It is difficult to find direct evidence of opportunistic voluntarism, but it is likely that some young men and adolescents joined militias during the later years of the war because they imagined that militia membership would present opportunities to loot and engage in other perverse and opportunistic activities with impunity. Given the simultaneity of these cyclical and countercyclical trends, it it unlikely that levels of abuse conditioned the quality of the pool of volunteers. However, abuse-inspired voluntarism does help to explain why there were still significant numbers of volunteers (of varying quality), even late in the war.

Conclusions

The preceding empirical analysis suggests that recruiters can successfully employ screening strategies to exclude undesirable types of recruits. Higher levels of screening selectivity consistently predict higher levels of recruit quality. The effects of recruitment selectivity are statistically significant and robust across numerous model specifications, with different combinations of independent and control variables, different selectivity coding schemes, and different measures of the dependent variable.

Somewhat surprisingly, the lowest levels of recruitment selectivity are indistinguish-

[29] Author interview: Kori_Town Chief, February 2012; Author interview: Kabala_YoungCivilian, December 2011.

able. It appears that *cursory screening* may be no better than *no screening*. The history of Kamajor recruitment (in the south) suggests an explanation for this finding. The abandonment of screening tended to happen in areas where initiators had begun to sell militia memberships for profit. Even as initiators circumvented chiefly screening processes, they also started charging recruits increasingly large sums of money, thus raising the costs of induction. The increased costs of induction clearly discouraged younger individuals from joining militias, even as the selectivity of recruitment decreased. Although the mechanisms underlying the effects of *costly induction* are unclear, the costs of induction may help to explain why *no screening* does not consistently predict lower recruit quality than *cursory screening*. Ultimately, a greater variety of qualitative cases and statistical observations would be necessary in order to parse the relative effects of low levels of screening selectivity versus no screening at all. In particular, it would be ideal to be able to examine one or more cases of militias in which screening was abandoned, but the costs of recruitment remained constant.

This chapter, along with the preceding two chapters, have focused closely on understanding how processes of recruiting militia members vary over space and time and how those variations affect the quality of individuals who join militias. A combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence strongly suggests that the selectivity of recruitment processes matters a great deal in the short term, as a determinant of recruit quality. What about the long term consequences of variations in recruitment selectivity? The next chapter explores how recruitment selectivity and the resultant quality of recruits affect levels of discipline within militias, and relationships with civilian populations in the areas where militias operate.

Appendix

The following tables provide all of the regression results analyzed in the paper above. In order to economize on space, I have not listed all of the regional dummy variables. In addition to the models cited above, I replicate all OLS models using ordered logistic regression.

Table 5.10: OLS Results: Determinants of Recruit Quality

	(1) Selectivity Only	(2) Complete	(3) Regional Controls
Optimal Selectivity	0.870**	0.850**	1.037***
	(0.25)	(0.30)	(0.17)
Suboptimal Selectivity	0.506***	0.495**	0.522**
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.13)
Recruitment Incentives		-0.229	-0.304
		(0.32)	(0.32)
Diamonds Present		-0.146	-0.104
		(0.16)	(0.20)
Costly Induction		0.321***	0.496**
		(0.07)	(0.17)
Network Size	0.173**	0.153*	0.119
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Mende Ethnicity	-0.383	-0.447	-0.156
	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.31)
Koranko Ethnicity	-0.370	-0.312	-0.344*
	(0.18)	(0.22)	(0.12)
Kono Ethnicity	-0.211	-0.219	-0.252
	(0.18)	(0.25)	(0.51)
Constant	0.777	0.840	0.579
	(0.40)	(0.50)	(0.48)
N	120.000	116.000	116.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 5.11: Post-Estimation Summary of Survey Design Effects for Model 2 (Above)

	Coef.	Std. Err.	DEFF	DEFT
Optimal Screening	0.85	0.30	1.74	1.32
Suboptimal Screening	0.50	0.12	0.31	0.56
Recruitment Incentives	-0.23	0.32	1.21	1.10
Diamonds Present	-0.15	0.16	0.36	0.60
Costly Induction	0.32	0.07	0.06	0.25
Network Size	0.15	0.06	1.21	1.10
Mende Ethnicity	-0.45	0.28	0.59	0.77
Koranko Ethnicity	-0.31	0.22	0.34	0.58
Kono Ethnicity	-0.22	0.25	0.46	0.68
Constant	0.84	0.50	1.76	1.33

To economize on space, I only reproduce the design effects table for model 2 in the series of OLS results above. The design effects in model 2 are the largest for any of the three major models reported, but they are still within a very reasonable range. The design effect is DEFF $= 1+\delta(n-1)$, where δ is the intraclass correlation for a given statistic, and n is the average size of the cluster. DEFT $= \sqrt{\text{DEFF}}$. All DEFT values in all models are less than

2, indicating that the design effects of the clustered sample are minimal – i.e. confidence intervals (accounting for clustering) do not need to be significantly larger than those that would be applied to a simple random sample.

Table 5.12: Ordered Logit Results: Determinants of Recruit Quality

	(1) Selectivity Only	(2) Complete	(3) Regional Controls
Optimal Screening	1.855**	1.805*	2.440***
	(0.66)	(0.73)	(0.44)
Suboptimal Screening	1.090**	1.059**	1.323**
	(0.33)	(0.38)	(0.31)
Recruitment Incentives		-0.464	-0.695
		(0.71)	(0.77)
Diamonds Present		-0.303	-0.201
		(0.39)	(0.59)
Costly Induction		0.633**	1.024**
		(0.16)	(0.35)
Network Size	0.334*	0.293	0.260
	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.15)
Mende Ethnicity	-0.682	-0.800	-0.318
	(0.39)	(0.55)	(0.59)
Koranko Ethnicity	-0.728*	-0.578	-0.802*
	(0.32)	(0.46)	(0.31)
Kono Ethnicity	-0.404	-0.372	-0.697
	(0.27)	(0.48)	(1.45)
cut1			
Constant	0.062	-0.091	0.419
	(0.78)	(1.06)	(1.12)
cut2			
Constant	1.340	1.228	1.910
	(0.99)	(1.21)	(1.18)
cut3			
Constant	3.343**	3.255*	4.211**
	(0.97)	(1.18)	(1.04)
N	120.000	116.000	116.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Establishing the Functional Equivalence of Cursory Screening and No Screening

If we omit *optimal screening* (selectivity level 3) in a model predicting recruit quality, this reveals an important and surprising characteristic of the scale of recruitment selectivity rankings: the two lowest levels of selectivity are extremely similar in terms of the levels of recruit quality that they predict. The theory of recruitment selectivity implies that *cursory screening* (a selectivity ranking of 1) would still ensure a somewhat higher level of recruit quality than *no screening* (a selectivity ranking of 0). This intuition proves to be false. As

predictors of recruit quality, a selectivity ranking of 1 is indistinguishable from a selectivity ranking of 0.

The following table summarizes 3 models, with the same combinations of control variables presented above, in which *optimal screening* (selectivity level 3) is the omitted selectivity variable. The effects of the other three recruitment selectivity variables are thus established with reference to the omitted variable – the highest level of selectivity.

Table 5.13: OLS Results: Recruit Quality, Omitting Optimal Screening

	(1) Selectivity Only	(2) Complete	(3) Regional FE
Suboptimal Screening	-0.364	-0.352	-0.516*
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Cursory Screening	-0.918**	-0.910**	-1.010***
	(0.24)	(0.27)	(0.19)
No Screening	-0.747**	-0.677	-1.103***
	(0.26)	(0.32)	(0.16)
Recruitment Incentives		-0.222	-0.307
		(0.33)	(0.32)
Diamonds Present		-0.152	-0.106
		(0.18)	(0.19)
Costly Induction		0.309**	0.499**
		(0.07)	(0.17)
Network Size	0.173**	0.156*	0.118
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Mende Ethnicity	-0.409	-0.470	-0.149
	(0.22)	(0.27)	(0.31)
Koranko Ethnicity	-0.383*	-0.325	-0.322*
	(0.17)	(0.22)	(0.12)
Kono Ethnicity	-0.246	-0.260	-0.265
	(0.18)	(0.25)	(0.50)
Constant	1.669***	1.708***	1.610**
	(0.19)	(0.25)	(0.36)
N	120.000	116.000	116.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

These results show that the relative effects of cursory screening and indiscriminate recruitment (no screening) are statistically indistinguishable and are highly contingent on which combinations of control variables are included in the regression model.[30] In Models 1 and 2, *cursory screening* predicts lower recruit quality than n*o screening*, which is counter-intuitive. The relative effects of *cursory screening* and *no screening* are unstable, and are

[30]An adjusted Wald test based on the Model 1 (Selectivity Only) suggests that the effects of *cursory screening* and *no screening* are indistinguishable from one another. F = 0.181. This finding holds for Models 2 and 3 as well.

reversed in the third model (which includes variables representing all hypotheses as well as regional dummy variables).

In substantive terms, these findings suggest that cursory screening is probably no better than indiscriminate recruitment (i.e. no screening at all). On the basis of these findings, I have treated the two lowest levels of selectivity as functionally equivalent in the regressions above. In other words, I omit *cursory screening* and *no screening* from the regressions above, meaning that the effects of *optimal screening* and *suboptimal screening* are established with reference to the combined effects of the two omitted variables.[31]

Coding Matrix for the Recruitment Selectivity Variable

Table 5.14: Selectivity Scores by Region (District) and Year

Year	Koinadugu	Kenema	Bonthe	Pujehun	Moyamba	Bo	Kono	Guinea
1992	3	3	-	-	-	-	3	-
1993	3	3	-	-	3	3	3	-
1994	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	-
1995	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	-
1996	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	-
1997	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	2
1998	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	2
1999	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	2
2000	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2
2001	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2

[31] In each of the three models presented above, the variable *suboptimal screening* predicts higher recruit quality than either of the two lower levels of recruitment selectivity. The effects of *suboptimal screening* are thus relatively consistent across models and are statistically distinguishable (using Wald tests) from select1 and select0. For this reason, *suboptimal screening* is included along with *optimal screening* in the regressions in the body of the paper above.

Chapter 6

Consequences of Recruitment: Discipline, Drugs, and Opportunistic Victimization of Civilians

Why do the relationships between militia members and local civilians change over time? This chapter is the final step in a sequential argument about the short and long term consequences of recruitment processes in the day-to-day operations of non-state armed organizations. The preceding chapters have presented qualitative and quantitative evidence suggesting that militia recruiters were interested in ensuring the high quality, i.e. personal loyalty, of militia members and that the levels of selectivity that recruiters achieved during screening processes strongly influenced the quality of militia recruits. I now turn to the question of how the varying quality of recruits influenced their levels of obedience to their commanders and their propensity to victimize civilians. I argue that militia recruitment processes had tremendous consequences in terms of the safety of local civilians. Cohorts of well screened, high quality recruits tended to be more disciplined in their daily routines as fighters (than undesirable types would have been) and ultimately refrained from victimizing civilians unless they were specifically ordered to do so by their commanders.

My argument is premised on the idea that fighters who are carefully screened and selected for their loyalty will, in fact, be more obedient to their commanders, which is exactly why local chiefs and community elders in Sierra Leone took the time necessary to screen new recruits. If well-selected fighters are easier to control, then higher levels of screening selectivity during recruitment should reduce the likelihood of a range of behaviors that involve disobedience to the commanders of armed groups. Ostensibly, not all forms of combatant

misbehavior are equally consequential, but low-stakes misbehavior, like using drugs, is likely to be correlated with high-stakes misbehavior, like raping civilian women.[1] Furthermore, low-stakes acts of disobedience often take on a larger significance that is out of proportion to their more immediate consequences. When a group of fighters learn that the low-level disobedience of their compatriots has gone unpunished, they may be tempted to follow their example, and may also be tempted to engage in higher stakes forms of disobedience. Low-stakes indiscipline can thus feed back on itself and may also fuel cycles of increasingly higher stakes disobedience.

I present quantitative evidence suggesting that higher levels of selectivity during militia recruitment affect the prevalence of both low- and high-stakes disobedience, which also affect one-another. Because drug-use (especially marijuana smoking) is not a deeply taboo subject among Sierra Leoneans, I was able to have direct discussions with former militia members about the prevalence of drug-use within their groups. I use marijuana smoking among civil militia members as a low-stakes indicator of the overall discipline of their groups. To address the more sensitive topic of high-stakes disobedience that takes the form of victimization of civilians, I use data of a fundamentally different nature. Because I suspect that civil militia members provided highly biased reports of their groups' interactions with civilians, I rely on a post-war survey conducted by the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission in which respondents (most of whom were civilians) were asked to report instances of human rights abuses that they experienced or witnessed during the war. This dataset allows for an assessment of the frequency of victimization of civilians by civil militias in different places and times during the war. I find that militia members who were subject to high levels of selectivity during screening processes were significantly less likely to use drugs that their commanders had prohibited, and were significantly less likely to opportunistically victimize civilians.

At the center of this chapter is an attempt to understand and better explain disobedi-

[1]This is not to say that behaviors like drug use will be a perfect predictor of behaviors like sexual violence against civilians. One might expect to find commanders who are lax about drug use but still strict about sexual violence, but it would be perplexing to find a commander who is strict about drug use but lax about sexual violence.

ence that takes the form of the opportunistic victimization of civilians by combatants.[2] I will clarify my use of the term *opportunistic* below. For the purpose of this chapter, victimization primarily refers to acts of physical violence as well as actions that did not necessarily involve physical violence but probably involved the (implicit or explicit) threat of violence. These less violent acts of victimization can be thought of as abusive in terms of violating civilians' human rights or violating major peacetime societal norms, e.g. theft, detention, extortion.[3]

To be clear, this chapter is not an attempt to explain large-scale massacres of civilians, which are comparatively rare events (even during long and bloody civil wars). Rather, this chapter focuses on the common, everyday abuse that occurs when powerful combatants encounter comparatively powerless civilians, typically in the absence of any significant authority figures (civil or military). The processes and logics that generate massacres are typically quite different from those that produce more isolated, but nonetheless more common, instances of violence and abuse.

The broad phenomenon of civilian victimization in civil wars has already been amply theorized, and my purpose here is not to create a new explanatory framework. Rather, this chapter connects my study of militia recruitment and organizational change to existing frameworks for explaining the victimization of civilians by combatants during civil wars. Prominent micro-level theories of opportunistic civilian victimization have tended to focus on explaining spatial variations within conflicts, while ignoring the ebb and flow of civilian victimization over time (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007).[4] This chapter contributes to a growing understanding of why the intensity of civilian victimization by armed groups varies widely over *both* time and space during the course of a civil war.

[2]I focus on civilian victimization because of its profound practical importance to the civilians in conflict zones who are in constant danger of victimization, and because of its theoretical importance within the social scientific literature on warfare, insurgency and terrorism.

[3]I do not want to suggest that interactions between combatants and civilians can or should be reduced to the dichotomy between victimization versus non-victimization. I focus on this particular outcome because civilians in war-zones live in constant fear of victimization. Even when force is not being used, all interactions between civilians and combatants are colored by the implicit threat of violence and the persistent imbalance of power between those who are armed and those who are not.

[4]Theories of strategic violence against civilians have paid much closer attention to questions of temporal variations in outcomes (Fjelde and Hultman, 2013; Kalyvas, 2006; Kalyvas and Kocher, 2009; Lyall, 2009). My theory differs from these theories both in terms of the outcome of interest (opportunistic versus strategic violence) and in terms of the locus of important causes of change over time. While most theories of strategic violence focus on structural factors and interactions of conflict groups, my theory focuses on important changes that are internal to armed organizations.

I need to briefly dissect the logics of *opportunistic* versus *strategic* targeting of civilians by armed groups in order to emphasize when and how recruitment processes and recruit quality are likely to influence levels of civilian victimization by combatants.[5] Opportunistic victimization is a product of individual-level processes of unsuccessful delegation in which fighters decide to disobey their commanders. Fighters often steal from local civilians even when their commanders explicitly tell them to not steal. The production of opportunistic violence is highly contingent on the types or quality of individuals who are members of an armed group and their predispositions to (dis)obey their commanders. In contrast, strategic victimization is the product of group-level processes and imperatives involving ongoing competition between armed organizations. Commanders order their fighters to patrol a civilian community, search for enemy collaborators, and execute them when they can be clearly identified. These processes rely on the supply of credible denunciations (of enemy collaborators) by local civilians, and the supply of denunciations is not directly related to the individual levels of obedience of a given cohort of fighters.[6]

From the standpoint of the average combatant, there are multiple rationales for detaining, harassing, robbing, raping, mutilating, and killing civilians. Depending on a given combatant's situation and disposition, civilians may be strategic targets, easy targets, or accidental targets. In strategic logics of civilian victimization, targeting civilians can be a 'productive' means for combatants to control civilian populations – incentivizing support, and punishing individuals who are suspected of providing material or informational aid to enemy forces (Kalyvas, 2006; Kalyvas and Kocher, 2009; Metelits, 2010).[7] The strategic victimization of civilians, which is not the focus of this chapter, can be productive for groups

[5]I want to emphasize the fact that opportunistic and strategic logics of victimization are not competing theories or mutually exclusive historical phenomenon. Rather, they are descriptions of two relatively distinct historical processes, both of which have similar outcomes that can be described by the broad label of civilian victimization.

[6]It is possible that fighters' levels of quality and (dis)obedience may indirectly affect the supply of denunciations. A qualitative examination of this hypothesis would require extremely detailed evidence from individual civilians about their choices to supply or withhold information from militia members about enemy collaborators. I do not have such evidence, and so I have to leave this hypothesis unexamined.

[7]According to the theory of "selective violence" presented by Stathis Kalyvas (2006), where combatants suspect that civilians are sympathetic to the enemy (and receive actionable intelligence) fighters strategically victimize (kill) subversive individuals to discourage defection, thus producing higher levels of selective violence in those areas. As a corollary, fighters only employ "indiscriminate" violence when they have minimal reliable information about defectors, and minimal territorial control. For a graphic representation of this theoretical argument, see Kalyvas (2006, 205).

of armed actors because it involves the more or less judicious application of force for deterrent effect – i.e. to deter those who would collaborate with the enemy.[8] When civilians understand the application of force as strategic (or just), they will presumably modify their behaviors in ways that are helpful to the local armed organization, or at least will not turn against local fighters. In opportunistic logics of civilian victimization, targeting civilians simply because they are easy targets is a counterproductive (desperate or perverse) way for individual combatants to get what they want from civilians by force(Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007). The opportunistic targeting of civilians is counterproductive because civilians will resent the coercive extraction of resources and will be decreasingly likely to support armed groups that are seen as treating civilians in ways that are unjust or unfair. Angry civilians may even be tempted to defect or otherwise offer their support to the enemy, an outcome which undermines attempts to control civilians and extract their support.

I do not wish to over-emphasize the amount of power that civilians have vis-a-vis armed combatants. Some theorists have euphemistically referred to armed groups as "governing" civilian populations. Among other things, the language of governance implies some level of consent on the part of the governed. When asked about the relative power of civilians vis-a-vis militia members, an informant who remained a civilian throughout the war in Sierra Leone explained the profound disparity in power and the inappropriateness of the term "governance:"

> Military is not governance – it is either protection or fighting. [...] It was not a question of negotiating [with combatants]. You had to do it – what they want – or you lose your life.[9]

Civilians can be said to have power vis-a-vis combatants to the rather limited extent that civilians can decide to provide or withhold strategically valuable information about who among them is an enemy combatant or is aiding enemy combatants in the area.

Assuming that the leaders of armed groups have a long-term interest in cultivating

[8]Some have argued that rape, especially gang-rape, may also have an instrumental justification in terms of the benefits of increased organizational cohesion (Cohen, 2013).

[9]Author interview: Bo_Workshop5_Civilian, February 2012. Readers should note that this interview was conducted in English and I had not used the term "governance" in the phrasing of the question that elicited this response.

civilian support and defeating military rivals, they will try to limit the extent to which their fighters opportunistically target civilians.[10] My contention in this chapter is that the ability of militia leaders to limit opportunistic targeting of civilians by their fighters is strongly determined by the quality (loyalty) of the individuals who they allow to become militia members. Better quality fighters are more likely to be obedient to their commanders, and are thus more likely to obey their commanders' prohibitions against the opportunistic targeting of civilians.

In the following sections, I present two sequential statistical tests. First, I test the key premise that better quality recruits are generally more obedient to their commanders. I use individual-level data from my fieldwork to analyze the relationship between the level of screening selectivity (to which a given recruit was subjected) and the likelihood that he or his compatriots would disobey their commander by using forbidden drugs, which in most cases, meant marijuana. Second, I test the central hypothesis that groups of militia members who are carefully selected will be less likely to opportunistically victimize civilians. I use aggregate district-level data to analyze the relationship between the average levels of militia selectivity in a given district and year, and the corresponding frequency of civilian victimization by civil militias in the same district-year. In both sets of statistical tests, I control for a host of factors that may potentially affect levels of group discipline and civilian victimization during civil wars. Having revealed a set of significant correlations that are in keeping with several important hypotheses, including my own, I provide qualitative evidence to illustrate the underlying historical processes that help to explain the results of my statistical tests.

[10]Mao (2005) was the first great practitioner-cum-theorist to emphasize the centrality of civilian support to successful conduct of guerrilla-style insurgency. In the vast majority of cases, non-state armed organizations will not be exceptionally well-resourced. Even if they have major foreign sponsors or access to lucrative resources such as diamonds or drugs, informal armed groups will not have efficient supply chains to provide logistical support to fighters in the field. The long-term success of an armed organization thus rests on its ability to gain access to civilian resources, and it will generally be easier for an armed group to access resources when civilians are more supportive of that group and more willing to provide the resources requested. Assuming that the leaders of armed groups have long-term interests in the survival of their organizations, they will try to maintain civilian support.

Understanding (In)discipline within Civil Militias

Many theories of civilian victimization by armed combatants are premised on the idea that a significant class of abusive behaviors – what I refer to as *opportunistic* targeting or victimization of civilians – can be explained in terms of organizational (in)discipline among a group of fighters. Despite the empirical importance of the indiscipline-causes-victimization premise, its empirical underpinnings remain largely untested. Prominent studies of civilian victimization provide measures that account for commanders' attempts to create or maintain discipline in their groups through the punishment of misbehavior. Outcomes are measured in terms of variations in the extent to which local fighters victimize civilians. In between measures of a commander's intent to punish misbehavior and his fighters' treatment of civilians is the question of whether or not groups actually vary in terms of their internal discipline – i.e. the everyday levels of obedience of fighters to their commanders. I am not aware of any previous attempts to directly assess the outcomes of commanders' attempts to control their fighters – i.e. actual instances of misbehavior – independent of variations in the extent to which fighters victimize local civilians.

This section provides a direct test of the relationships between the mechanisms of control that are available to commanders and the levels of (dis)obedience observed among their fighters. The following statistical analysis employs individual and group-level data from a respondent-driven sample of over 150 former militia members (for details of sampling methods and the characteristics of the sample, please see Chapter 5). These data allow me to concurrently test several hypotheses about the determinants of (in)discipline within civil militias. The detailed logic and literature motivating these hypotheses is presented in Chapter 2 and readers will note that several of the hypotheses below are similar to those tested in Chapter 5 (although the dependent variable has changed – from predicting recruit quality to predicting militia discipline). I briefly review the hypotheses below.

The novel hypothesis implied by the preceding chapters is that levels of screening selectivity during militia recruitment processes can affect the quality of individuals inducted into a militia and thereby affect their levels of obedience to their commanders. The theory

of screening and recruitment selectivity suggests two sequential hypotheses:

H1: Higher levels of recruitment selectivity lead to the selection of more obedient recruits and thus higher levels of discipline.

The resource-curse theory (detailed in Chapter 2) suggests that groups with access to significant material resources (such as mine-able diamonds or foreign sponsorship) will tend to have lower levels of internal discipline. The corrupting influence of resources on group discipline can occur through one of two mechanisms: 1) the recruitment process – with material resources enabling the provision of recruitment incentives, which tend to attract low quality recruits; or 2) the internal politics of militia management – with significant resources tending to corrupt leaders and their fighters, fostering profiteering, infighting, and as a result, indiscipline. These mechanisms imply the following two hypotheses:

H2: Offers of material incentives during recruitment lead to lower levels of discipline.

H3: The circulation of significant material wealth (e.g. diamonds) within a group leads to lower levels of discipline.

The corollary to the hypothesis that incentives attract low quality recruits is the hypothesis that when increased costs are borne by recruits during the process of joining, this should discourage low quality recruits from volunteering (for more details, see Chapter 2).[11] If high quality recruits are easier for their commanders to control, then:

H4: Higher costs of induction lead to higher levels of discipline.

Several theorists of insurgent organization have suggested that the internal cohesion of groups (and group discipline) is a product of networked linkages among group members and between group members and local communities (Staniland, 2012; Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2003).

[11] Readers will recall from Chapter 2 that for costly induction to filter out low quality recruits, either the costs or the benefits associated with joining a militia must be discriminating (Vigil, 1996; Spence, 1974; Densley, 2012). In most labor-market screening scenarios, the costs of induction are discriminating, e.g. lengthy periods of unpaid training are highly costly or burdensome to low-quality recruits (who are uninterested in learning their work) whereas they are not as costly or burdensome to high-quality recruits who are highly motivated and have an interest in learning the topics on which they are being trained. In the case of militias, the benefits of membership are highly discriminating because consistent wages and benefits are not offered. The main, and discriminating, benefit of membership is being able to serve one's community by defending against rebel incursions. As the costs of induction rise vis-a-vis these discriminating benefits, fewer and fewer low-quality types (who care little about defending their communities) will be interested in joining.

Whether these networks are be based on personal affinity and community ties (Taylor, 1988) or co-ethnic affiliation (Weinstein, 2007), their function is the same: they reinforce the loyalty of fighters to their superiors and facilitate supervisory processes by enabling the flow of information (about misbehavior) among combatants and between communities and local combatants (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006, 433). These theories about group cohesion suggest the following parallel hypotheses:

H5: Better-networked groups will have higher levels of discipline.

Another factor that may influence internal cohesion of militia groups (and their likelihood of obedience to commanders) is the level of training that fighters receive. Ostensibly, training is about making fighters more effective on the battlefield, but experiences of training also create within-group bonds that revolve around group members' shared experiences and shared sense of purpose or mission – often referred to as "task cohesion." Experiences that build task cohesion may have the effect of tying the members of a group more firmly to their commander and the goals of their organization. The idea that military-style training serves as a team-building mechanism that will reinforce solidarity with the group and obedience to commanders suggests the following hypothesis:

H6: Groups with better trained members will be more disciplined.

I test the hypotheses listed above using the Respondent-Driven Sampling data described in Chapter 5.[12] The incidence of drug use among groups of militia members serves as an indicator of (in)discipline.[13] I use drug-use (usually of *djamba*, the Krio word for marijuana) as a measure of indiscipline because marijuana use is not deeply taboo within Sierra Leoneans society, making it a topic that former combatants would be less likely to lie about (than, e.g.

[12]For summary statistics, please see the Appendix.

[13]Readers will note that there are a few hypotheses in the literature for which I do not explicitly control in the models below. Most importantly, Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) have argued that the most proximate determinant of discipline within a given group will be leaders' ongoing attempts to monitor and punish fighters who misbehave. Some commanders may be more or less likely to punish misbehavior among their recruits. I rule out the hypothesis that groups with lenient commanders will be less disciplined on the grounds that there was not significant variation in the propensity of commanders to punish misbehavior. Only 6 fighters out of 136 (96%) suggested that the commanders in their groups would be unlikely to punish other fighters for serious misbehaviors (N=136, SD=0.21). The instances of these lenient commanders are not correlated with any particular militia, region, or year of the conflict. There simply is not enough variation in this variable to explain variations in outcomes.

fighting with or killing one of their compatriots.[14] At the same time, smoking marijuana was explicitly prohibited by the majority of militia commanders, meaning that instances of marijuana smoking are a direct, measure of disobedience to commanders, hence a potentially valid indicator of overall levels of disobedience among a given group of combatants.[15]

I asked every former fighter and commander interviewed whether or not members of his operational group occasionally used drugs (offering "djamba" and "cocaine" as examples of the kinds of drugs to which I was referring). The question intentionally asked respondents to generalize about the activities of members of their "group" rather than about their own activities. Knowing that former fighters might be embarrassed to admit that they had directly disobeyed their commanders, I posed the question in the most innocuous terms possible – inquiring about general, group-level behaviors – to encourage fighters to respond more honestly. Fighters answers, by design, would not directly implicate themselves or any other specific individuals from their group.[16] Most militia fighters operated in fairly consistent groupings of 10-50 individuals (although some groups were as large as 100) when they would go to carry out some operational task such as patrolling, finding food, or engaging enemy forces. These groups were defined, at least in part, by the cohorts of individuals with whom a fighter was inducted into a given militia.

These operational groupings of militia members are the de-facto unit of analysis for the regression results that follow. In most cases, the relevant questions used to construct measures all asked for generalized information about a respondent's group – e.g. "Did you ever see diamonds within your group?" In a few cases, my group-level analysis uses individual traits as indicators of the average traits of the group to which an individual belonged. For example, respondents were asked whether or not they, as individuals, were offered money or

[14]Marijuana is technically illegal in Sierra Leone, but its contemporary (peacetime) production and use is extremely widespread. Marijuana production, sale and use is seldom, if ever, targeted by national police forces. During wartime, marijuana was de-facto legal.

[15]Author interview: 5001, 5002, 5019. Author interview with Nyamakoro Sesay.

[16]I phrased these questions at a high level of generality partly in order to avoid collecting sensitive data about a respondent's own drug use. As mentioned above, I also wanted to encourage the most honest responses possible. Accordingly, I placed questions about drugs in the last third of every interview so as to develop a better rapport with the respondent prior to asking such questions. Notwithstanding the precautions that I took to ensure accurate responses, respondents will still be biased toward portraying themselves and their compatriots in a positive light. In general, we can expect a systematic under-counting of incidences of group-level drug use.

other material incentives as a part of joining a given militia. In the analysis below, I assume that if one individual in a group was offered recruitment incentives at a given time and place, then the other individuals recruited into their group during the same time period were also probably offered recruitment incentives. Thus, some individual-level answers are taken as indicative of average, group-level traits.

Predicting Drug Use

This section presents a series of four logistical regressions predicting drug use within operational groups of militia members. The four regression models all include independent variables intended to represent the different determinants of militia discipline suggested by the hypotheses above. The first model includes the determinants of discipline with no additional control variables. The second model includes a variable controlling for variations in the intensity of the conflict. The third model includes the conflict intensity variable along with three variables that control for the three major ethnicities – Mende, Kono, and Koranko – of the fighters who constitute my dataset.[17] The fourth model controls for the intensity of the conflict and also includes district-level fixed effects (i.e. a set of dummy variables representing each of the major districts in which fighters were recruited).

I constructed the conflict intensity variable using data from the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which reports the total number of civilian deaths attributed to AFRC or RUF violence (i.e. violence attributed to groups fighting against the civil militias in question) in a given district during a given year. In general, RUF and AFRC fighters committed the most violence against civilians when those forces were at their most powerful and were capturing new territory.[18] Counts of AFRC- and RUF-inflicted civilian deaths thus provide a means of controlling for major spatial and temporal changes in relative power between militias and their enemies. Controlling for spatial and temporal variations in conflict

[17]Readers may recall from Chapter 5 that the ethnic identity of respondents may affect the probability that they are selected into the dataset. Including dummy variables representing ethnic groups with high levels of homophily helps to control for serious biases arising from ethnic homophily and differential recruitment along ethnic lines.

[18]This logic of violence is different from the logic of violence presented in Kalyvas (2006). The major reason for this difference is that the RUF and AFRC were not quite as interested in governing territory and cultivating civilian support as a more stereotypical Maoist-Lenninist insurgency.

intensity is important because armed groups are known to behave differently when they are strong versus when they are weak (Metelits, 2010), and my own theory suggests that the destructive and disruptive influence of violence is one of the primary causes of change in armed organizations.[19]

Empirical Results

The marginal effects plots below summarize the results of the four regression models. Points represent the value of regression coefficients and lines represent the confidence intervals for those estimates.[20]

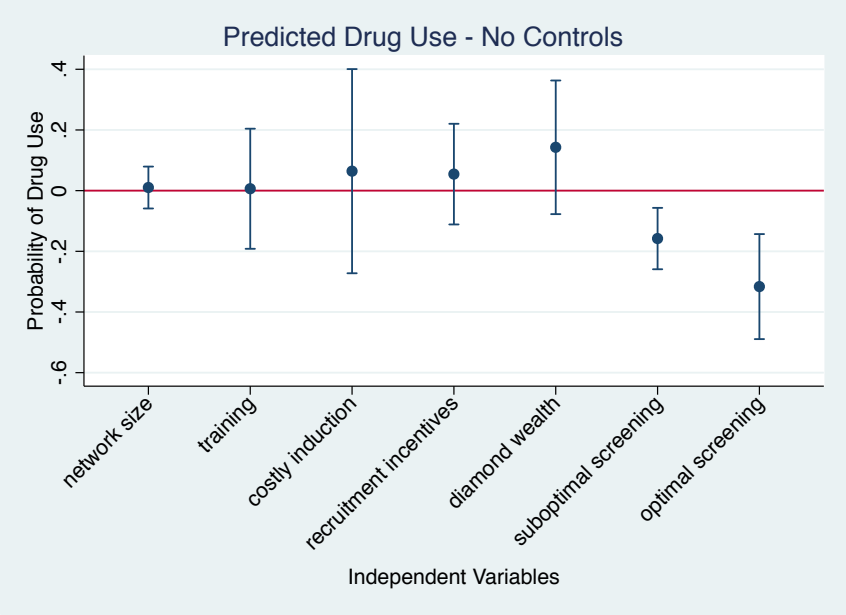

Figure 6.1: Model 1

[19]The recruitment selectivity variables are, of course, attempts to measure a specific mechanism through which conflict violence produces change in armed groups. It is entirely possible that there are other important mechanisms that I have missed, and the inclusion of the conflict intensity variable helps to control for this possibility.

[20]As in Chapter 5, the models reported below do not use any form of post-survey weighting. Instead, the models account for known variations in the probability of selection into a respondent-driven sample (i.e. known sources of sampling error) by including key variables that affect individual sampling probabilities. All estimates in the regression analyses below are calculated with conservative standard errors and confidence intervals that take into account the clustered nature of the five primary sampling units, which consisted of the urban and surrounding rural areas of the following cities: Freetown, Bo Town, Kabala, Koidu Town and Monrovia.

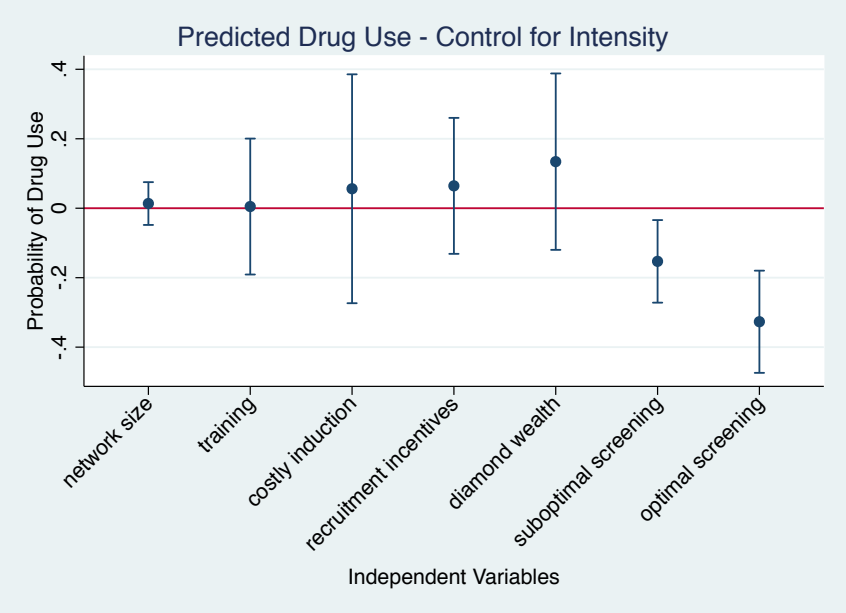

Figure 6.2: Model 2

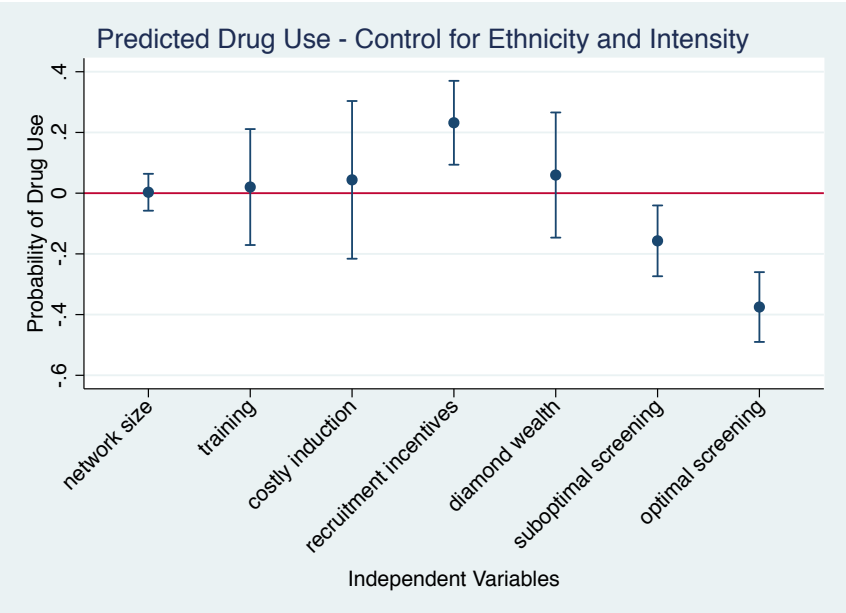

Figure 6.3: Model 3

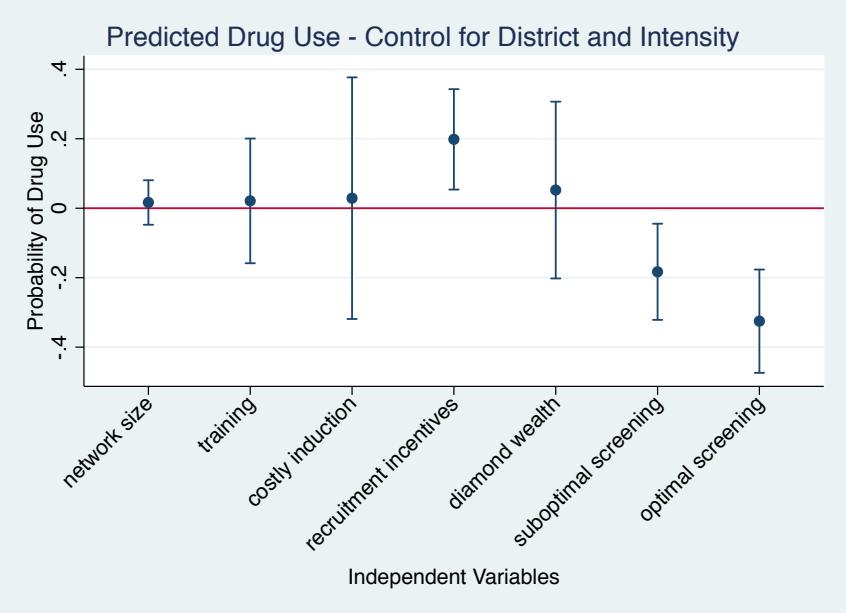

Figure 6.4: Model 4

The regression results provide strong support for Hypothesis 1 – higher levels of recruitment selectivity consistently predict lower levels of drug use (i.e. higher levels of internal group discipline). The variables measuring the selectivity of screening are measured in the same manner as in Chapter 5, using the same coding scheme. *Optimal screening* represents the screening of recruits under ideal conditions, with ample information and time with which to screen recruits. *Suboptimal screening* represents the screening of recruits with some significant limitations to either the amount of information or the amount of time available during the screening process. The omitted or baseline category is the lowest two levels of recruitment selectivity – i.e. cursory screening or no screening at all.[21] In keeping with Hypothesis 1, incremental increases in the selectivity of screening produce relatively incremental and statistically significant decreases in the probability of disobedience measured through drug use. The relationship between recruitment selectivity and drug use is consistent irrespective of the other sets of control variables included in the regressions.

Hypothesis 2 also finds some support in the regression analyses – offers of recruitment incentives are consistently associated with a higher probability of group-level drug use (i.e. lower levels of group discipline). Each respondent was asked if he was offered incentives (like

[21] See Appendix to Chapter 5 for the justification of using these as the two omitted categories.

money or diamonds) as a part of joining a militia. Respondents' yes-or-no answers appear as the *recruitment incentives* variable in the regressions above. Although there is a consistent relationship between offers of incentives and probabilities of drug use, the magnitude of the coefficient of the incentives variable (and also its levels of statistical significance) are highly contingent on the other control variables that are included in the model.[22]

The remaining hypotheses find minimal support in the regression models above. To test Hypothesis 3 – that the circulation of material wealth within groups undermines discipline – respondents were asked if they ever saw diamonds within their group. Their yes-or-no answers are represented in the *diamond wealth* variable above. Across the models, groups that had access to diamond wealth were somewhat more likely to contain fighters who used drugs, but the relationship between diamonds and drugs is not statistically significant in any of the four models. To test Hypothesis 4 – that higher costs of induction lead to higher levels of discipline – respondents were asked if they had to pay anything in order to join a militia. The *costly induction* variable has the opposite of the predicted effect: higher costs predict more drug use (i.e. lower discipline). The effects of costly induction on drugs are never statistically significant. These observations are somewhat surprising given that, in Chapter 5, costly induction was a moderately strong and statistically significant predictor of higher recruit quality.[23] To test Hypothesis 5 – that better networked groups will have higher levels of discipline – I asked each respondent to assess the size of their social network in terms of the number of networked links they have with other former militia members. I took the natural log of the network size for each respondent in order to reduce variance (since some respondents reported extremely large network sizes that have the potential to become influential outliers). The logged network size variable is included as *network size* in the re-

[22]The inclusion of ethnicity controls or district fixed effects both produce similar increases in the size of the coefficient on incentives and its variance. The problem is that offers of incentives were not common across militias, but are almost completely limited to the Tamaboro militia of Koinadugu district. Controlling for district-level fixed effects isolates and highlights the effect of within-district variations and the significant level of variation in Koinadugu district allows the variable to take on a higher level of substantive and statistical significance. Controlling for ethnicity has the same effect because, as explained earlier, different regions in Sierra Leone tend to have high levels of ethnic homogeneity. Controlling for Koranko ethnicity is very similar to controlling for Koinadugu District, since most people of Koranko ethnicity live in Koinadugu District.

[23]I can offer no clear explanation for why the effects of costly induction are so different in these models as compared with the models predicting recruit quality in Chapter 5.

gressions above. Assuming that respondents' post-war network sizes are roughly indicative of the network sizes that they had during the war, the network size variable should provide a means of assessing the relationship between fighters' network sizes and the probability of drug use among their compatriots. The network size variable has no effect on the probability of drug use in any of the four models above.[24] To test Hypothesis 7 – that groups with better trained members will have higher levels of discipline – I asked respondents whether or not they received military-style training, and to estimate the duration of any training that they received. Based on these responses, I created an index of training duration that appears as the variable *training* in the regressions above.[25] Levels of training have absolutely no effect on the probability of drug use among groups of militia members, irrespective of the other control variables included in the model.

As a whole, these statistical results suggest that changes in recruitment selectivity and resultant changes in recruit quality are a primary determinant of militia discipline as measured through low-stakes disobedience in the form of drug use. These significant effects are consistent even when we control for a large number of alternative explanations. These findings lend additional plausibility to the key theoretical premise that the quality of individuals who are inducted into an armed group is a strong predictor of their behavior once armed.

The hypothesis that carefully selected, better quality recruits will be less likely to abuse civilians hinges on the same mechanism – obedience to group leaders – as the claim that carefully selected recruits will be less likely to use drugs. The only difference is that it is much easier for a foreign researcher to collect valid, direct data on the subject of group-level marijuana use than on the taboo subject of group-level victimization of civilians. I (perhaps naively) asked each of my respondents if members of their groups ever stole from, or abused, civilians. In many cases, respondents reacted emotionally to questions about abusing civilians.[26] Some respondents refused to give direct answers. Clearly, the experience

[24]This is consistent with the findings in Humphreys and Weinstein (2006, 440).

[25]The index ranges from 0 to 4, with zero indicating no training; 1 indicating one month of training (plus or minus two weeks); 2 indicating two months of training (plus or minus two weeks), and so on.

[26]At times, I felt the need to excuse myself for rudeness after posing the questions – to smooth things over so that the interview could continue.

of watching the Special Court of Sierra Leone indict and try Sam Hinga Norman (and other militia leaders) had made some militia members bitter, and fostered in them a reluctance to talk about the less honorable aspects of militia participation.

Having established the plausibility of the mechanism in question – that higher quality recruits are more obedient to their superiors – I take up the question of civilian victimization in the next section. In order to find reliable data, I had to reach beyond my own fieldwork and survey data, which focus primarily on the oral histories of militia members. I draw on an expansive survey of civilian wartime experiences that was conducted by a team of Sierra Leonean interviewers immediately after the end of the conflict.

Understanding Civilian Victimization in Civil Wars

The subject of civilian victimization during civil wars is not new, and I am not the first researcher to test theories of civilian victimization in the context of conflict in Sierra Leone. The originality of my contribution to this ongoing debate is my focus on explaining variations in combatant behavior over time, rather than merely explaining spatial variations. Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) present a nuanced set of statistical models predicting variations in combatant treatment of civilians across Sierra Leone, but their models focus exclusively on spatial variations in civil-military relationships – effectively lumping together 11 years of conflict processes into spatially-defined observational units.[27] In contrast, the statistical analyses that I present below account for both spatial and temporal variations in the determinants of militia discipline, and their (external) treatment of civilians in the areas where they operated.

Warfare is an intensely complex and destructive historical process. It has no central

[27]It is also worth noting that the data Humphreys and Weinstein (2006, 446) use to construct their "index of abuse" contain exceedingly indirect measures of abuse. The most direct measure is a question about how combatants acquired food, with one of the response options being "we forced civilians to give it to us," which directly indicates abuse. Otherwise, questions about abuse are phrased in such a way that the respondent is asked to estimate the likelihood that someone in their group would be punished if they were to steal from, rape, or amputate a civilian. Such measures conflate the theoretical construct (actual abuse) with a group-level commanders' tolerances for various kinds of external indiscipline.

In contrast, my analysis uses direct measures of abuse, based on a sophisticated compilation of first- and second-hand accounts of civilian abuse supplied by both victims and perpetrators (a comparatively small number of respondents were perpetrators) following the end of the war.

tendency except the disruption of existing systems of social organization and their replacement with new systems ordered around endemic uncertainty and the omnipresent shadow of violence. Given that the war in Sierra Leone stretched from 1991 to 2002, change was a given. Everything changed over the course of those eleven years, including the tendencies of militias to target civilians.[28] Data from the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2003) provide an overview of changes in the frequency of civilian victimization over the course of the war. Each dot on the graph represents the number of reported instances of civilian victimization by civil militia members in a given region (aggregated to the district-level) during a given year. District names are abbreviated in the following way: Koinadugu (koi), Kono (kon), Kenema (ken), Pujehun (puj), Bo (box), Bonthe (bon), Moyamba (moy), and Freetown (fre).[29]

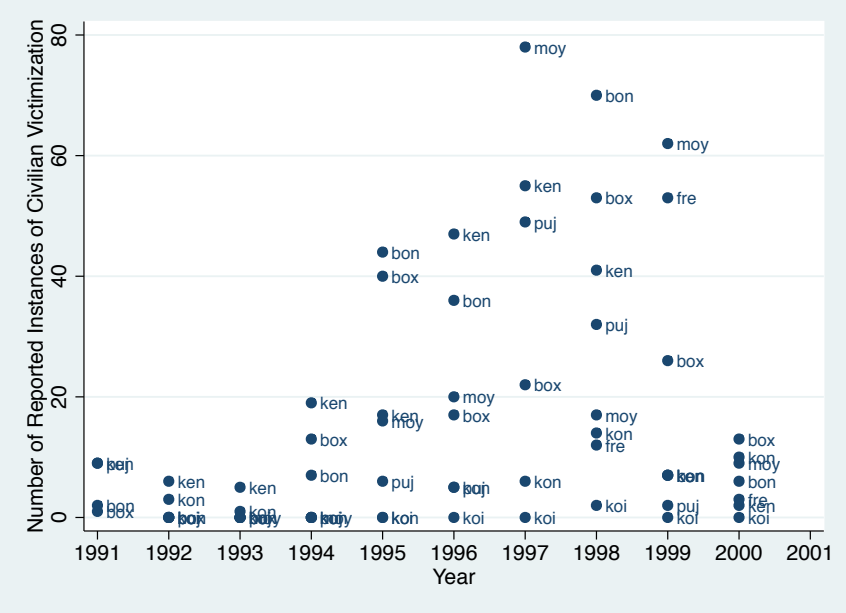

Figure 6.5: Instances of Civilian Victimization by District-Year

There are clearly significant variations in levels of civilian victimization by civil militias across the dimensions of both time and space. What explains these variations? The

[28]Humphreys and Weinstein (2006, 436) suggest that their data display "substantial variation, both over time and across space."

[29]These data include all of the districts that will be considered in the statistical tests below. Readers should note that I have excluded one extreme outlier from this graph: Bonthe District during 1997. There were 218 recorded instances of civilian victimization in Bonthe District during the year of 1997, which is more than twice the number of instances observed in any other district-year.

central argument in this dissertation – including the evidence on drug-use presented earlier in this chapter – suggests that higher levels of selectivity during militia recruitment will lead to the induction of cohorts of higher quality individuals, and those high-quality cohorts will be less likely to opportunistically victimize civilians. Thus, my primary hypothesis:

H1: Militias that engage in careful recruitment of new members will be less likely to opportunistically victimize civilians.

In addition to the recruitment selectivity hypothesis, there are several alternative explanations for the causes of variations in civilian victimization during civil wars. However, only a few of these hypotheses can plausibly explain variations in the case of civil militias in Sierra Leone.[30] First, military contests between or among armed groups tend to affect levels of civilian victimization – specifically as competition among military rivals becomes more intense, civilians tend to suffer. Several different causal mechanisms (summarized in the footnote below) have been proposed to connect conflict intensity with civilian victimization, but they all converge in supporting the following hypothesis:

H2: As conflict intensifies militias will be more likely to opportunistically victimize civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006, 432).[31]

[30]Humphreys and Weinstein (2006, 431-3) provide a nearly exhaustive list of possible determinants of civilian abuse. One of these hypotheses identifies a highly structural determinant that only has the potential to explain spatial variations in abuse: "H1: Abuse levels are likely to be higher in poorer areas" Humphreys and Weinstein (2006, 431) District-level fixed effects can easily control for significant spatial variations in poverty levels. Bo District, Kenema District and the urban area of (the capital city) Freetown have the highest population concentrations and the highest concentrations of wealth. These regions are included as dummy variables in the analyses below. Several other hypotheses are simply a poor fit for the case of civil militias in Sierra Leone: these include the hypotheses that combatants will be less abusive when they are near their homes and when they are among co-ethnics (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006, 431). My data, as well as the analysis conducted by Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) suggest that the vast majority of civil militia members operated near their homes and around co-ethnics. (Hoffman, 2011) also rejects the hometown-pacifism hypothesis on qualitative grounds based on a detailed ethnographic study of the Kamajor militia (which was, in fact, the militia that was most likely to have units that operated for significant periods of time outside of their home communities). Finally, three hypotheses identify variables that did not appear to vary significantly among militias in different places or across militias over time. These hypotheses suggest that militias will be less abusive when they have better training, or denser social networks, or more internal ethnic homogeneity (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006, 433). None of these hypotheses found any support in models predicting drug use (above), nor do civil militias show sufficient variation along the variables of social network densities and ethnic heterogeneity to explain significant variations in civilian victimization over time and space.

[31]To summarize these mechanisms as briefly as possible: competition may lead to more opportunistic or wanton victimization of civilians because lack of secure territorial control precludes the more judicious application of force and eliminates incentives for restraint (Kalyvas, 2006), or because combatants use violence against civilians to signal "resolve" when (and where) they are weak (Hultman, 2005), or because competition

One variant of the resource-curse hypothesis deserves consideration because it found some support in the regressions predicting drug-use (above). If offers of recruitment incentives result in the induction of lower quality members, and lower quality recruits are more likely to abuse civilians, then:

H3: Militias that offer incentives to attract new recruits will be more likely to opportunistically victimize civilians.

Finally, we need to also consider the fact that some militia groups may have stricter commanders than others. If there are significant variations in the strictness of commanders over time, this will probably be a result of changes in conflict intensity. This is one of the mechanisms behind Hypothesis 1 – the stress of increased military competition may undermine structures of organizational discipline. If, due to differences in commanders' personalities and leadership styles, there are significant spatial variations in the strictness of commanders, this will suggest the following hypothesis:

H4: Militias with stricter commanders will be less likely to opportunistically victimize civilians.

I use Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) data, cited earlier, to test these hypotheses regarding variations in the opportunistic victimization of civilians by civil militias. The TRC data are based on a convenience sample conducted by a team of Sierra Leonean interviewers who collected statements about human rights abuses immediately after the war in 2002. The aim of the TRC data-collection process was to "complete a census of the human rights violations experienced during the conflict" (Conibere et al., 2004, 7). Although the statement takers failed to create a true census, they achieved coverage in 141 of the 149 chiefdoms in Sierra Leonean as well as in refugee camps in Nigeria, Gambia and Guinea.[32] The dataset comprises 7,706 statements from individual respondents, with each respondent being permitted to report multiple human rights violations based on either being a direct victim,

among armed groups precludes the construction of cooperative agreements with local civilians (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006), or because increased competition drives armed groups to use increasingly desperate and violent methods for extracting resources from civilians (Metelits, 2010), or because the stress of increased competition undermines structures of organizational discipline.

[32]Note: the eight missing districts were in Port Loko District, which is not a district included in my analysis below.

being a direct perpetrator, or directly witnessing the victimization of another. After a set of matching procedures to rule out double-counting of acts of victimization, the dataset identified 40,242 distinct human rights violations.[33] It is the one of the most extensive datasets of its kind.

Since the TRC data are not based on a probability sample, their representativeness should be questioned. The primary source of bias in convenience sample data will be selection bias arising from the self-selection of respondents into the sample. In general, the primary determinant of selection into the sample will be whether or not a member of the population has stories of violations that they are willing to share. This mechanism of self-selection does not introduce any bias that would not also occur (in the form of non-response bias) in a simple random sample. In other words, people who do not want to be interviewed will refuse to be interviewed irrespective of the nature of the sampling method. In general, the primary mechanism of self-selection will lead to systematic under-counting of killings, because killings can only be recorded from eye-witness accounts, whereas all other violations can come from both first-person experiences and eye-witness accounts. Self-selection will also lead to systematic under-counting of sexual violence, since the under-reporting of sexual violence is a common problem in criminological data-gathering exercises (Allen, 2007; Clay-Warner and Burt, 2005; Bachman, 1993; Weiss, 2010). With that being said, there are very few reasons to expect that there will be systematic biases in terms of the spatial or temporal distribution of reporting on the victimization of civilians by civil militias.[34]

If my purpose were to accurately estimate the proportions of the Sierra Leone pop-

[33]Matching took individual violations as the unit of analysis and used data on the "name, age, ethnicity and sex" of the victim in order to match observations and eliminate multiple observations of the same violation (Conibere et al., 2004, 5-6).

[34]There are a number of other motivational mechanisms of self-selection into, or out of, the TRC sample. These include antipathy toward a specific group of combatants, the level of psychological trauma that an individual would suffer from participating in the study, and fear of retribution for participating in the study. Only the fear-of-retribution mechanism is likely to produce significant biases in terms of the geographic distribution of people whom would be willing to report on human rights violations by civil militias. None of these biases should affect respondents' willingness to talk about violations in one year as opposed to other years. The fear-of-retribution mechanism is likely to lead to under-counting of violations in districts where militias were the most fearsome and abusive. All qualitative evidence points to the fact that Kamajor militias in the South were, by far, the most abusive and feared by local civilians. When analyzing data, I take this potential sampling bias into account using district-level fixed-effects.

A technical source of bias is the possibility of over- and under- sampling in different areas relative to the population of those areas and relative to the actual number of violations suffered in those areas. Again, the inclusion of district-level fixed-effects helps to control for this potential source of bias.

ulation who suffered from abuses by civil militia members in a given place and time, the use of these data would be inappropriate. However, the hypotheses that I am testing have to do with significant relative differences (rather than precise absolute differences) in the magnitude of civilian victimization in a given place and time, as compared with other places and times. My contention is that the TRC data are adequate for this purpose, since the primary determinant of whether or not someone responded to the survey was whether or not they, or someone they knew, had been victimized by combatants during the war. The frequency of such victimization is precisely what I am trying to measure. Thus, the TRC data can be expected to capture significant differences in the overall frequency of civilian victimization in different locations and times during the course of the war in Sierra Leone.[35]

Using the TRC data, I created a variable that measures the number of instances (counts) of militias victimizing civilians in a given district during a given year – this serves as the dependent or outcome variable in the regression analyses below.[36] In constructing the outcome variable, I attempted to isolate opportunistic victimization (as opposed to strategic victimization) of civilians by excluding the killing of civilians by militia members. Killing was a comparatively rare form of abuse, and it is the form of abuse that is most likely to be associated with strategic victimization of civilians in order to deter collaboration with enemy forces. Most of the commanders interviewed suggested that their default strategy for dealing with rebel collaborators was to execute them. Executing enemy collaborators is a common practice across civil wars (Kalyvas, 2006), in part because it sends a strong message to civilian populations about the consequences of collaboration. Over all, killing represents approximately 10% of the total acts of victimization that civil militia members committed against civilians. Excluding killing from the quantitative analysis below helps to address the issue that civilian victimization operates on multiple logics (both strategic and opportunistic), and the hypotheses that I am interested in testing all relate to opportunistic

[35]Comparisons of TRC data with other convenience sample data collected from Sierra Leone suggest that there is a fairly high level of convergence around the frequencies and types of observed violations in a given year and district. Higher levels of divergence are seen in observations that occur in earlier years of the conflict (a bias that arises primarily as a result of the decreasing accuracy of memory as time passes).

[36]The unit of analysis for this dataset is the district-year. This is an appropriate unit of analysis because the district-year is the same level of aggregation at which the independent variable (recruitment selectivity) was coded. For the seven districts (plus the city of Freetown) under consideration, this yields a total of 59 observations, excluding district-years in which no militias were active.

victimization.

Leaving killing aside, the other types of victimization that militia members committed are much more difficult to understand or justify in strategic terms. The following table summarizes the different forms of civilian victimization by civil militias during the war. The table supplies the number of instances (counts) of each type of abuse committed by civil militia members operating in the districts considered in this study.

Table 6.1: Instances of Victimization of Civilians, by Type

Type	Count	Percent
Abduction	226	16.99
Amputation	3	0.23
Arbitrary Detention	218	16.39
Assault / Beating	178	13.38
Destruction of Property	62	4.66
Extortion	103	7.74
Forced Cannibalism	6	0.45
Forced Displacement	116	8.72
Forced Labor	18	1.35
Forced Recruitment	3	0.23
Killing	126	9.47
Looting of Goods	105	7.89
Physical Torture	138	10.38
Rape	3	0.23
Sexual Abuse	25	1.88
Total	1,330	100

Arbitrary detention is another relatively prevalent form of civilian victimization that might follow a strategic logic. Militia members might detain civilians who were suspected of collaborating with enemy forces, in which case such detentions would be strategic. I opt to include arbitrary detention in my counts of opportunistic civilian victimization because many of the qualitative reports of militias detaining civilians suggest that the primary motivation behind detentions was the extortion of money or goods rather than the strategic identification of enemy collaborators (Arthy and Moore, 1999; Arthy, 2004; Hoffman, 2011).

Using total counts of civilian victimization, minus killing, provides a dependent variable representing 1204 counts of victimization. The opportunistic victimization variable covers eight major localities (seven districts, plus Freetown) and 10 years of conflict and

has a mean of 17.7 reported victimizations per district-year (SD = 31.5). I use this variable to test different explanations for significant changes over time (and across space) in the frequency of opportunistic victimization of civilians by civil militias.

I begin by testing Hypothesis 1 using a simple visualization of the bivariate relationship between the selectivity of screening during militia recruitment and counts of civilian victimization as they change over time. Hypothesis 1 leads us to expect that decreases in screening selectivity will be associated with increases in civilian victimization (and vice versa). As in Chapter 5, I construct the selectivity variable using estimates of the availability of information and time during screening processes. Since my findings in Chapter 5 suggest that cursory screening is no better than not screening at all, I collapse these two categories into one. Thus, the recruitment selectivity variable used below ranges from 0 to 2, with 2 representing screening under ideal conditions, 1 representing screening under sub-optimal conditions, and 0 representing either cursory screening, or the absence of screening altogether. The graph below shows a clear negative correlation between selectivity and victimization over time, thus providing preliminary support for Hypothesis 1.

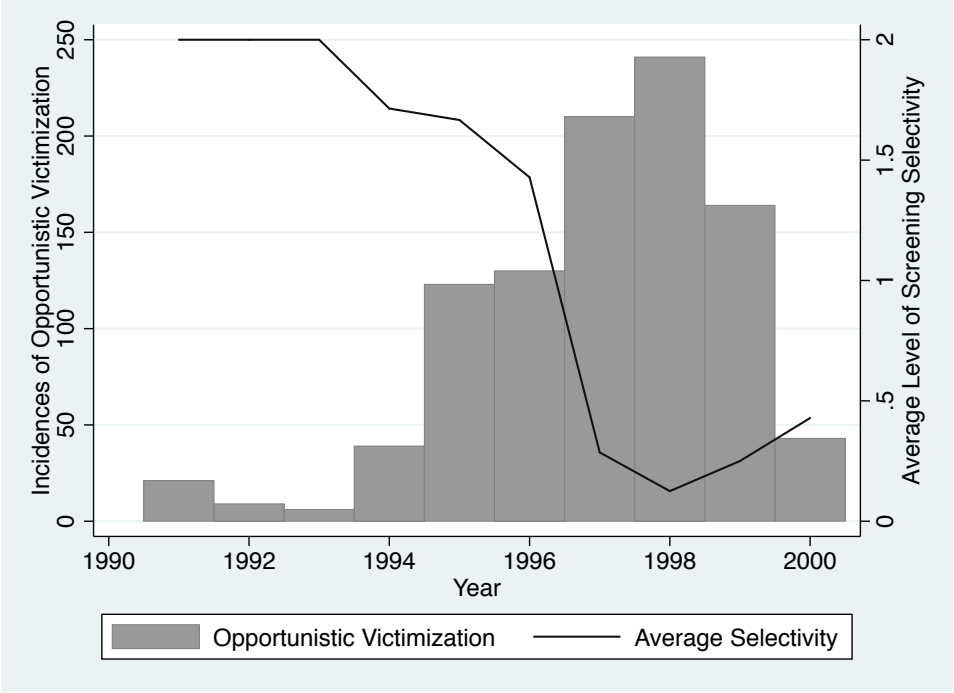

Figure 6.6: Relationship between Recruitment Selectivity and Civilian Victimization by Year

Clearly, there will be other factors beyond recruitment selectivity that will influence counts of civilian victimization. Some of these factors will be structural (hence time-invariant), like the underlying population of a given locality. Other factors will be dynamic processes (having the potential to change over time and across space), like the intensity of military contestation between militias and their rivals. The regression analyses in the next section provide a more realistic, hence rigorous, test of Hypothesis 1, controlling for important combinations of structural and dynamic-processual factors.

Predicting Civilian Victimization

In this section, I present the results of four negative binomial regression models predicting levels of civilian victimization by civil militias.[37] Each of the models contains a variable representing the selectivity of militia recruitment in a given district-year (testing Hypothesis 1) and a variable representing the intensity of conflict in a given district-year (testing Hypothesis 2). The first model includes regional fixed effects – i.e. a series of dummy variables representing each major district, with the urban area Freetown serving as the omitted category. The second model includes a lagged version of the dependent variable as a means of controlling for the fact that violence may predict violence (more on this below). The third model includes district fixed effects and the lagged dependent variable. The fourth and final model controls for a potential source of sampling bias by including a variable representing the number of survey respondents in each district (more on this below).

The first, second and third models focus on controlling for alternative empirical explanations for variations in civilian victimization, including Hypotheses 3 and 4. Models 1 and 3 contain a set of dummy variables to control for the fixed effects of different localities. Applying district-level fixed effects in this dataset is the statistical equivalent of a ceteris paribus statement about differences in locality, isolating the effects of change over time.[38] In

[37]In more technical terms, each negative binomial regression models the log of the expected count (of the dependent variable) as a function of the independent variables included. A negative binomial regression model is appropriate since the dependent variable (civilian victimization) is a count variable that is over-dispersed, making a poisson model inappropriate: mean = 20.2, SD = 33.1, variance = 1094.6. Of 59 observations, 13 (roughly 22%) take a value of zero on the dependent variable.

[38]Regression models that include district-level dummy variables will specify a unique y-intercept for each district. These dummy variables represent a combination of time-invariant traits of districts, e.g. topography and the location of major diamond mines. To the extent that a given district has a unique set of time-

other words, district fixed effects pose the following question: if we hold localities (districts) constant, what are the average effects of the other explanatory variables over time. Take Hypothesis 3 – offers of recruitment incentives increase the likelihood of civilian victimization – as an example. Koinadugu was the only district in which a significant number of militia recruits were offered recruitment incentives.[39] Observations of incentive-offers were distributed randomly over the years of the conflict, suggesting that the primary axis of variation in incentive offers is, in fact, geographic – Koinadugu District versus all other districts. If incentive offers significantly affect counts of civilian victimization, the variable representing Koinadugu District will absorb or control for these geographically specific factors. I argue that the same set of district fixed effects should also help to control for Hypothesis 4 – groups with stricter commanders will be less likely to victimize civilians. Assuming that commanders are fairly consistent over time in terms of their enforcement of rules, the primary dimension of variation will be geographic (different commanders have different disciplinary practices), and any significant variations should be absorbed by the district fixed effects.[40]

The second and third models include (as an independent variable) a lagged version of the dependent variable (*lagged DV*) in order to control for the possibility that violence begets violence (Loftin, 1986; Topalli, Wright and Fornango, 2002; Patten and Arboleda-Florez, 2004; Cohen and Tita, 1999).[41] Due to a number of contagion mechanisms, assaultive violence is a social process that tends to cluster geographically and to escalate over time (Loftin, 1986, 550-2), suggesting that levels of civilian victimization in a given district during one year of a conflict may predict levels of civilian victimization in that district during the following year. In the case of militia members victimizing civilians, the primary mechanism of concentration and escalation over time is that civilians who are heavily abused (but not killed) by militias in one year will have increasing animosity toward civil militias and will

invariant traits that significantly correlate with the dependent variable, this correlation will be reflected in the coefficient and the level of significance of the dummy variable for that district.

[39] In Koinadugu, 9 out of 34 recruits (roughly 26%) were offered incentives, as compared with 1 out of 19 (roughly 5%) in Bo District. There were zero reported offers of incentives in all other districts.

[40] As mentioned earlier, if a given commander's strictness were to change over time, it would probably be a result of changes in conflict intensity. The inclusion of the conflict intensity variable helps to control for this mechanism.

[41] While criminologists have been studying violence as a contagious social process for many years, the application of contagion and diffusion theories to micro-level studies of civil war violence is a fairly recent development (Schutte and Weidmann, 2011).

be less likely to willingly provide logistical support to militias during the following year. In turn, militia fighters are likely to respond to increased animosity and the withdrawal of support by abusing civilians at least as much, or even more, during that following year. In order to control for the contagion of violence (i.e. the potential for violence to function as an autoregressive process), I include *lagged DV* as an explanatory variable. To give a substantive example of how this variable functions, the *lagged DV* effectively uses the victimization count for Kenema in 1993 to predict the victimization count for Kenema in 1994 (and performs this same calculation for each district-year observation).

Finally, there are two important sources of bias that need to be addressed – survey sampling error arising from response bias (mentioned above) and differences in district population size. First, consider the situation in which interviewers in one district were (for unknown reasons) able to recruit many more respondents than in another district. Assuming the reasons for differential response-rates in the two districts are not a function of differences in the actual frequencies of victimization in the two districts, this response bias will inflate estimates of the number of violations in the district with more responses vis-a-vis the district with fewer responses. As discussed earlier, one of the primary problems with using a convenience sample is that respondents self-select into (or out of) the sample. Unfortunately, I cannot control for respondents' underlying motivations for selecting into the sample. I can, however, control for major differences in the frequency with which respondents selected into the sample. In order to assess whether or not different rates of respondent self-selection have biased the sample in systematic ways, the fourth regression model includes a variable controlling for the number of survey responses collected in each district. Now, consider the situation in which one district has a much higher population than another district. One might expect the more populous district to have more acts of victimization and more reports of victimization than the less populous district, irrespective of the other causal factors that were in play. There are no accurate data on wartime population change (due to death and displacement), however, there are census data that allow for an estimate of overall district population proportions (Thomas, MacCormack and Bangura, 2006). I use these data, gathered during a post-war census in 2004, in order to assess whether or not major disparities in

district population sizes were a primary determinant of victimization counts. I do not include the *population size* variable in the regression models presented below because this variable is highly collinear with district-level dummy variables, and its inclusion in other models does not affect the significance of other explanatory variables. For regressions including the population size variable, please see the Appendix to this chapter.

Table 6.2: Negative Binomial Regressions Predicting Civilian Victimization

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
recruitment selectivity	-0.935***	-0.334	-0.889***	-0.626**
	(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.25)	(0.25)
conflict intensity	0.001**	0.001	0.001**	0.001
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
kenema	2.230***		2.425**	
	(0.84)		(1.05)	
bo	1.396*		1.586*	
	(0.73)		(0.92)	
bonthe	2.285***		2.467**	
	(0.75)		(0.96)	
moyamba	2.290***		2.584**	
	(0.82)		(1.03)	
pujehun	0.966		1.187	
	(0.79)		(1.00)	
kono	0.399		0.543	
	(0.82)		(1.03)	
koinadugu	-3.242***		-3.001**	
	(1.03)		(1.17)	
lagged DV		0.019	0.000	
		(0.01)	(0.01)	
respondent count				-0.000
				(0.00)
constant	1.899***	2.600***	1.657*	3.503***
	(0.68)	(0.48)	(0.95)	(0.63)
lnalpha	-0.108	0.629***	-0.132	0.730***
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.19)
N	59.000	54.000	54.000	59.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Regression results above contain the outlier observation of Bonthe District during 1997. The victimization count for Bonthe-1997 is 218, which is more than double the count for any other district-year. I have no reason to believe that this count is inaccurate, so I include it in the models above. To make sure that the Bonthe-1997 observation is not an influential outlier, I also replicated each of the models above without that observation (see Appendix for results). The exclusion of Bonthe-1997 does not significantly affect the regression results.

The results above provide support for Hypothesis 1. To test Hypothesis 1, I included a single ordinal variable representing the selectivity of recruitment in a given district-year.[42] As described earlier, the *recruitment selectivity* variable ranges from 0 to 2, with 0 representing cursory screening or no screening, and 2 representing screening under ideal conditions. As in the bivariate graph presented earlier, higher levels of selectivity during militia recruitment predict lower levels of opportunistic civilian victimization. That negative correlation is consistent across all four models, and is statistically significant in every model with the exception of Model 2.[43] In Model 2, the inclusion of the lagged version of the dependent variable, *lagged DV,* reduces the size of the coefficient on *recruitment selectivity* and drains it of its statistical significance. Although the *lagged DV* is not statistically significant (P = 0.111), it is positively correlated with the dependent variable, *civilian victimization,* and its inclusion reduces the significance of the *recruitment selectivity* variable (P = 0.204). These findings suggest that *civilian victimization* is, to some extent, a contagious process that is correlated with itself over time. To the extent that the *lagged DV* captures the autoregressive aspects of the dependent variable, *civilian victimization*, the *lagged DV* absorbs variance that would otherwise be captured by the *recruitment selectivity* variable. A conservative interpretation of these statistical results is that models 1 and 2 define the upper and lower bounds in terms of the coefficients and significance of the the *recruitment selectivity* variable. In terms of conventional standards of statistical significance, Model 2 suggests that we cannot completely reject the null hypothesis that recruitment selectivity does not matter (i.e. does not predict civilian victimization counts with a level of accuracy that is significantly different from random chance). In substantive terms, model 2 (in which *recruitment selectivity* is not significant) does not necessarily imply that recruitment selectivity has no real effect. In light of qualitative evidence that I will present below, I offer the following substantive interpretation of Model 2: initial decreases in the selectivity of militia recruitment, and the increased civilian victimization that resulted from reduced selectivity, set in motion vicious cycles of

[42]Given the findings of Chapter 5 and the results above, it appears that changes in recruitment selectivity have a stepwise effect on recruit quality and group discipline. For this reason it does not seem necessary to use multiple dummy variables for each level of selectivity.

[43]Regression coefficients in a negative binomial model represent logged likelihood ratios, and thus do not lend themselves to meaningful substantive interpretations. For this reason, I only comment on the direction of the relevant correlations (positive versus negative) and their statistical significance.

(contagious) civilian victimization that were, to some extent, self-sustaining and thus not entirely predictable or explainable with reference to ongoing changes in the selectivity of militia recruitment.

The regression results also provide some support for Hypothesis 2. To test Hypothesis 2, each model includes a variable representing conflict intensity in a given district-year. Conflict intensity is a measure of the counts of enemy killing (i.e. killing of civilians by the military enemies of civil militias) in a given district-year.[44] Consistent with Hypothesis 2, higher levels of conflict intensity predict higher levels of civilian victimization. However, the relationship between conflict intensity and civilian victimization is only statistically significant when district fixed effects are included in the model.

The inclusion of a fixed effect for Koinadugu District in Models 1 and 3 provides a test of Hypothesis 3, because Koinadugu was the only district in which a significant number of fighters were offered incentives during their recruitment. If recruitment incentives were an important determinant of civilian abuse, we would expect the coefficient for Koinadugu to be positive – i.e. more offers of incentives predict more victimization of civilians. However, the coefficient for Koinadugu is negative and highly significant. Clearly offers of recruitment incentives did not have a major effect on militia members' treatment of civilians in Koinadugu District.

Unfortunately, the district fixed effects in models 3 and 4 do not provide a direct test of Hypothesis 4. Several of the district fixed effects are highly significant, including positive coefficients for Kenema, Bonthe, and Moyamba, and negative coefficients for Koinadugu. Clearly, there are other important, unobserved factors at work that help to explain why there were so many more reports of civilian victimization in the southern districts of Kenema, Bonthe, and Moyamba, and there were so many fewer reports of civilian victimization in Koinadugu. These factors may relate to regional variations in the strictness of commanders (a la Hypothesis 4), or they may relate to underlying regional biases in the sampling process, or they may related to as-yet-unidentified determinants of civilian victimization.

As a whole, these results provide further support for the argument at the center

[44]This is the same variable used in the models predicting drug-use above.

of this dissertation – that variations in the care with which fighters are selected have far-reaching consequences in terms of how those fighters behave, including how fighters treat civilians in the areas where they operate. The chiefs who were in charge of managing militia recruitment implemented screening policies explicitly out of a concern that poorly selected recruits would be more likely to turn on the communities they were sworn to protect. The regression results presented above suggest that chiefs were correct in fearing that militia members might turn on them, and that the screening solutions that chiefs initially adopted were, in fact, efficacious in terms of reducing levels of indiscipline once recruits were inducted into militias and armed.

Yet, these statistical correlations ultimately do not reveal why recruitment selectivity is such a good predictor of both low- and high-stakes indiscipline. Only qualitative evidence describing processes of delegation and (in)discipline can affirm that these correlations are causal in the ways that I have hypothesized. The next section examines the individual testimonies regarding the processes that produced indiscipline and civilian victimization, incorporating perspectives from militia commanders, fighters, and civilians.

Losing Control

The above data on civilian victimization show a clear trend toward increasing frequency of victimization with a peak in 1997 and 1998, immediately following the AFRC coup. Individual testimonies about changes in militia discipline and increases in civilian victimization are consistent with these data, and cite the coup as a major turning point in relationships between militia members and local civilian communities. I use snippets of oral histories to piece together how people who were inside and outside of civil militias understood the changes that were occurring in local militia organizations. These individual-level observations suggest that many commanders did, in fact, lose control of their fighters in 1997 and 1998, and that loss of control was a direct result of influxes of poorly vetted new militia members.

Elizabeth Lavalie was the wife of the late militia commander Alpha Lavalie who

helped to found the Kenema axis of the Kamajors. I take Lavalie to be a particularly credible informant given her position as someone who was never a militia member, but who had a distinctly insider perspective on militia operations by virtue of her husband's deep involvement with the management of southeastern militias.[45] Lavalie recalled that major changes took place in civil militias throughout the southern region as a result of the AFRC coup and recruitment drives that were carried out without any attempt to screen new members:

> It was then you had so many young people coming in with various shady characters – good ones, bad ones, ugly ones – they all came into the Civil Defense Force. [...] They [initiators] would not check on your character or anything. [...] In that case now, we saw that civilians were the targets. The rebels will come target civilians; the military will come target civilians; CDF [civil militias] will come, they target civilians.[46]

Lavalie explicitly connected the demise of screening systems and the introduction of "shady characters" into the Civil Defense Forces (CDF) with the increasing targeting of civilians by members of the CDF throughout the southern region. Lavalie went on to explain that the coup not only disrupted screening systems, but also generated profoundly high levels of demand for manpower among CDF militias – as the defection of a large number of Sierra Leone Army soldiers meant that militias throughout the country had effectively lost an ally and gained an enemy. As Lavalie went on to explain, the open-door recruitment policy throughout the South caused a massive influx of new members who were hard for their commanders to control, partly because they were so numerous, and partly because they were less obedient.

Exploding numbers of new Kamajor militia members in the South destabilized already informal and tenuous systems of command. A CDF administrator in the southern region recalled that, "By 1999 to 2000, we had this number of Kamajors that were not under control, because the commanders didn't know how many Kamajors were under their command."[47] Civilians were also aware of the fact that local units of militia members had grown large and

[45]Her identity as a woman and as a prominent peace activist further complicates her relationship to civil militias, making her perspective highly distinct from the perspectives delivered by militia members.

[46]Author interview with Elizabeth Lavalie, June 2012.

[47]Author interview: Bo_Workshop1_Kamajor. Discussions with individual Kamajors initiated from 1998 to 2000 suggest that hundreds of individuals could be initiated in a single ceremony, and that commanders might have upwards of 3,000 individuals under their command.

intractable: "They lost control of their battalions. In the first place... they were not under any, like the military, any controlled system [of discipline]. So, they do not even know who and who belongs to their unit." [48] Discipline within Southern militias wavered and then collapsed precipitously. Commenting on the motivations of newly initiated Kamajors during the period from 1997-99, J.B. Korseh-Hindowa – who had commanded legions of Kamajors within Bo District – suggested that new, young recruits tended to use their Kamajor status as an opportunity to settle personal vendettas against local chiefs and elders.[49] He remembered hearing newly armed Kamajors encounter elders against whom they held grudges, exclaiming: "That pa [old man] no like me!" or "I worked for that pa, and he never paid me!"[50] Differences in age and social status tended to place young recruits at odds with their older commanders and with local civilian leaders.

Northern militias encountered similar problems. Militia commanders as well as civilians from the north suggested that the Northern CDF, which recruited and operated in Koinadugu District, had to expand recruitment significantly in response to massive rebel incursions during the post-coup period. These recruitment drives drew on eager youths who recruiters and commanders had previously tried to avoid recruiting.[51] According to a Northern commander, the primary problem was that "youths are hard to control."[52] He went on to explain that loss of control as a result of intractable youths frequently manifested itself as the wanton victimization of local civilians:

> Later when they came from the battle front and there was no food for example, they [younger recruits] would get annoyed and they'll get so angry that they fire in the air and threaten to kill everyone present.[53]

M.S. Dumbuya was the overall commander of the northern wing of the Civil Defense Forces, and attempted to use his formal military training (in Cuba) and his 20 years of experience as a police officer in order to train and control militia members in the north. He admitted that he was never fully satisfied with the results of his efforts:

[48] Author interview: Bo_Workshop9_CivilianF, February 2012.
[49] Author interview with "Chief" J.B. Korseh-Hindowa, February 2012.
[50] Author interview with "Chief" J.B. Korseh-Hindowa, February 2012.
[51] Author phone interview with Paul Kortenhoven, September 2012.
[52] Author interview: 2002, November 2011.
[53] Author interview: 2002, November 2011.

> It is difficult to be happy with the level of discipline that they [northern militia members] had. [...] For example, I went to the academy for four years to train somebody else for one month, two month, [and then] put [him] into battle.[54]

Dumbuya suggested that short periods of military-style training may have led to some overall improvements in discipline, but there were simply too many new and inexperienced recruits for their commanders to handle. Northern commanders and civilians alike complained about newly recruited "boys" or "youths" whose rash actions undermined formerly amicable relationships between militias and local civilians. A former commander explained that "One time our men went to one village and we had run short of rice and the boys went and took someone's rice and the owner came and complained to me.[55] The reference to "boys" here is not just a commander's familiar way of referring to his rank-and-file fighters. In Sierra Leone, there is a well-established dichotomy between "boy" and "man," and the reference to boys here is commentary on both the youth of the offenders as measured in years, and their unreliable character.

As in the northern and southern regions, commanders and CDF administrators in the eastern district of Kenema suggested that there were "a lot of administrative problems" following the coup in 1997.[56] They generally described the problems as arising from large influxes of new recruits who were of dubious quality. As one commander explained, "The more the number [of recruits], the more [. . .] difficulties – one, the control; two, command structure. [. . .] Three, since they were [. . .] native people who were not trained, we expected a lot of casualties."[57] Like the southern Kamajors and the Northern CDF, the members of the Kamajors based on Kenema increasingly intimidated and stole from the local civilians whom they were supposed to be protecting.

As a result of the erosion of discipline in local militias, the problem of militia members stealing from civilians (especially food) became ubiquitous later in the war. When I asked former militia members about their wartime relationships with civilians, the throwaway

[54]Author interview with former Colonel M.S. Dumbuya (representing the government forces in ECOMOG), June 2012.
[55]Author interview: 1042, November 2011.
[56]Author interview: 5001, May 2012.
[57]Author interview: 5001, May 2012.

answer was that relationships with civilians were "good" or "cordial."[58] Expecting that nearly all former fighters who I interviewed would summarily deny that their groups ever had conflict with civilians, I was surprised to find that approximately 37% of my respondents admitted that there had been times when their groups' interactions with civilians were less than cordial.[59] Among the former militia members who were willing to admit that relationships with civilians had become strained, the most frequently reported civilian complaints were against militia members who had either intimidated local civilians or stolen their property. Even in the Guinea Axis, where fighters were, on average, of much higher quality than their peers elsewhere (during that same stage of the conflict), commanders reported minor problems with fighters stealing food from civilians. There was no such thing as a militia that had a perfect record in terms of refraining from victimizing local civilian populations, but as the TRC data suggest, there were massive differences in the frequency of the abuses that different militias committed in different areas.

In areas where militias had the highest levels of indiscipline and civilian victimization, these problems appear to have been further amplified as acts of indiscipline and civilian victimization fed on themselves in a vicious cycle. Un-punished infractions led fighters to calculate that they could engage in further infractions with impunity.[60] To make matters worse, large cohorts of young fighters began to undermine the power of their older commanders. Some commanders started to refrain from punishing their men out of fear of "backfiring" – the practice of a disgruntled fighter literally shooting his superior in the back during combat, and later claiming that it was an accident.[61] The reluctance of commanders to punish their fighters probably had the effect of further emboldening individuals who were already prone to test their commanders' authority. Especially where these dynamics were in play, rank-and-file militia members increasingly victimized civilians with impunity, a problem of

[58]One sees these general positive answers across nearly all interviews in all areas.

[59]N=128, SD=0.49. It is worth noting that this percentage is much lower than the percentage who were willing to admit that members of their groups had used drugs. It is also worth noting that these admissions of non-cordial relationships with civilians were, as one might expect, correlated with lower levels of recruitment selectivity (although not at a statistically significant level).

[60]Author interview: Bo_Workshop3_Civilian, February 2012.

[61]Author interview: 5037, May 2012. Especially when old shotguns and "traditional" blacksmith-made firearms were the armaments in use, it was easy to claim that a weapon had accidentally gone off or that the weapon had accidentally been fired in the wrong direction.

which civilians were painfully aware:

> It was a war, and during that time, nobody was disciplined for any bad act. The Kamajors were not disciplined because they have done something bad, so it continued. If I hit you, and you cannot take me anywhere [to be punished] because I have hit you, I will continue hitting you.[62]

Assuming that individual fighters observed each other's behaviors and knew when someone misbehaved with impunity, it was possible for misbehaviors to spread contagiously through militia ranks as fighters increasingly realized that the rules presumably governing their behavior were not actually being enforced. The qualitative evidence of these positive feedback loops helps to explain the statistical findings in Model 2 presented above. In combination, these quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that the introduction of a number of poorly vetted recruits into a given militia can rapidly overwhelm supervisory systems within that armed group, leading to spirals of increasing indiscipline with dire consequences for local civilians.

Conclusions

Recruitment processes matter because they determine the underlying propensity for fighters to obey their commanders. The quantitative tests presented above provide two different ways of assessing the same fundamental claim that recruitment influences obedience. At a practical level, combatant drug use is far less consequential than combatant treatment of civilians. I include the test of drug use because if recruitment selectivity is a good predictor of low-stakes indiscipline, then this reinforces our confidence that recruitment selectivity can also be a good predictor of high-stakes indiscipline.

The convergence of the two sets of statistical results presented in this chapter is remarkable given the number of plausible explanations in play and the fundamental differences in the underlying data. Gathering unbiased data on more or less stigmatized behaviors is notoriously difficult, given the predisposition of respondents to seek to portray themselves in a positive light. While I tried to minimize and control for known biases in both datasets, it

[62] Author interview: Bo_Workshop3_Civilian, February 2012.

would be foolish to assume that I have been completely successful. Both of the data sources utilized may be biased, but they are almost assuredly biased in orthogonal directions given the fact that the target populations and the sampling strategies for the two datasets are completely different. That fact that these two datasets to deliver convergent results suggests that those results are a product of the real, underlying empirical trends that the data are intended to describe.

One of the primary implications of this dissertation is the need to more closely examine the temporal dimensions of conflict. The largest problem with the data that I have used above is that the processes being analyzed probably change month by month or even week by week, but the available observations are limited to the level of the year. In future studies, additional temporal disaggregation will be essential to building a more accurate understanding of the causal processes that that produce theoretically and practically important outcomes like civilian victimization. Given the coarseness of my quantitative data, I have tried to use qualitative data to verify that the broad statistical correlations identified were a product of the mechanisms hypothesized. The qualitative evidence suggests that major increases in the victimization of civilians were a result of commanders losing control over their fighters. However, a number of important questions will remain unanswered, and will await the collection of higher quality data. In particular, how much (unpunished) disobedience is enough to start cycles of increasing misbehavior that will eventually overwhelm supervisory systems within militias? Is there a tipping point? If so, what are the factors that define the tipping point? In the concluding chapter, I raise these and other unanswered questions, suggesting ways that future researchers can shed additional light on the important conflict processes investigated in this dissertation.

Appendix

Table 6.3: Summary Statistics for RDS Dataset – Predicting Drug Use

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
DV: Indiscipline					
Drug Use within Group	0.504	0.502	0	1	135
Independent Variables					
Optimal Screening (Selectivity 3)	0.346	0.478	0	1	130
Suboptimal Screening (Selectivity 2)	0.362	0.482	0	1	130
Cursory Screening (Selectivity 1)	0.2	0.402	0	1	130
No Screening (Selectivity 0)	0.092	0.291	0	1	130
Diamond Wealth	0.155	0.363	0	1	161
Incentives Offered during Recruitment	0.075	0.265	0	1	133
Costly Induction	0.217	0.414	0	1	161
Months of Training	0.523	0.846	0	4	130
Control Variables					
Joined in Bonthe	0.124	0.331	0	1	161
Joined in Guinea	0.05	0.218	0	1	161
Joined in Kailahun	0.006	0.079	0	1	161
Joined in Kenema	0.075	0.263	0	1	161
Joined in Koinadugu	0.28	0.45	0	1	161
Joined in Kono	0.217	0.414	0	1	161
Joined in Moyamba	0.031	0.174	0	1	161
Joined in Pujehun	0.006	0.079	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Mende	0.317	0.467	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Koranko	0.28	0.45	0	1	161
Recruit Identified as Kono	0.205	0.405	0	1	161
Conflict Intensity (Counts of Enemy Killing)	20	32.883	0	147	161
RDS Metadata					
Respondent Network Size	34.089	73.424	0	500	135
Logged Network Size	2.44	1.417	0	6.215	135

Table 6.4: Summary Statistics for TRC Dataset – Predicting Civilian Victimization

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
DV: Counts of Civilian Victimization					
Victimization	18.539	30.576	0	218	76
Logged Victimization	1.349	2.361	-2.303	5.384	76
Independent Variables					
Recruitment Selectivity	0.983	0.861	0	2	59
Conflict Intensity	22.921	30.964	0	147	76
Control Variables					
Kenema	0.145	0.354	0	1	76
Freetown	0.053	0.225	0	1	76
Bo	0.145	0.354	0	1	76
Bonthe	0.145	0.354	0	1	76
Moyamba	0.118	0.325	0	1	76
Pujehun	0.132	0.34	0	1	76
Kono	0.132	0.34	0	1	76
Koinadugu	0.132	0.34	0	1	76
Lagged DV	19.082	32.931	0	218	61
Population Size	6.8	3.195	2.8	15.5	76
Respondent Count	636.566	225.435	434	1357	76

Regression Results

Table 6.5: Logit Models Predicting Drug Use

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Optimal Screening	-1.430**	-1.812**	-1.681**
	(0.45)	(0.41)	(0.49)
Suboptimal Screening	-0.714*	-0.759*	-0.946
	(0.28)	(0.35)	(0.45)
Diamond Wealth	0.646	0.288	0.270
	(0.52)	(0.52)	(0.69)
Recruitment Incentives	0.246	1.120**	1.024*
	(0.38)	(0.32)	(0.37)
Costly Induction	0.290	0.212	0.149
	(0.78)	(0.65)	(0.92)
Training	0.028	0.098	0.109
	(0.46)	(0.47)	(0.47)
Network Size	0.046	0.015	0.085
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.17)
Conflict Intensity		0.005	0.005
		(0.00)	(0.01)
Mende Ethnicity		0.476	
		(1.38)	
Kono Ethnicity		1.408	
		(1.42)	
Koranko Ethnicity		-0.213	
		(1.45)	
Kenema			0.747**
			(0.26)
Kono			0.622
			(0.51)
Bo			1.451**
			(0.47)
Koinadugu			-0.626*
			(0.23)
Moyamba			-0.202
			(1.15)
Guinea			0.312
			(0.60)
Bonthe			-0.638
			(0.51)
Constant	0.335	-0.079	0.106
	(0.41)	(1.31)	(0.35)
N	115.000	115.000	115.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 6.6: NB Regressions Predicting Victimization – Without Bonthe 1997 Outlier

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Recruitment Selectivity	-0.821***	-0.139	-0.648**	-0.428*
	(0.23)	(0.25)	(0.26)	(0.25)
Conflict Intensity	0.001***	0.001	0.002***	0.001
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Kenema	2.057**		2.158**	
	(0.81)		(0.97)	
Bo	1.337*		1.561*	
	(0.71)		(0.86)	
Bonthe	1.770**		1.678*	
	(0.76)		(0.95)	
Moyamba	2.166***		2.424**	
	(0.79)		(0.96)	
Pujehun	0.960		1.307	
	(0.76)		(0.93)	
Kono	0.266		0.465	
	(0.79)		(0.95)	
Koinadugu	-3.269***		-2.869**	
	(1.01)		(1.13)	
Lagged DV		0.016*	0.005	
		(0.01)	(0.01)	
Respondent Count				0.000
				(0.00)
Constant	1.875***	2.329***	1.394	2.913***
	(0.65)	(0.41)	(0.89)	(0.65)
ln alpha	-0.166	0.520**	-0.233	0.656***
	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.24)	(0.20)
N	58.000	53.000	53.000	58.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 6.7: OLS Regressions Predicting Logged Victimization Counts

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Recruitment Selectivity	-0.943***	-0.239	-0.809**	-0.660*
	(0.28)	(0.36)	(0.31)	(0.34)
Conflict Intensity	0.002**	0.002*	0.002**	0.001
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Kenema	1.813		2.097	
	(1.16)		(1.36)	
bo	1.158		1.514	
	(1.14)		(1.33)	
Bonthe	1.959*		2.032	
	(1.16)		(1.36)	
Moyamba	1.398		2.111	
	(1.22)		(1.42)	
Pujehun	0.282		0.756	
	(1.21)		(1.41)	
Kono	0.018		0.356	
	(1.17)		(1.38)	
Koinadugu	-3.063**		-2.666*	
	(1.15)		(1.37)	
Lagged DV		0.028***	0.009	
		(0.01)	(0.01)	
Respondent Count				0.002
				(0.00)
Constant	1.600	0.878	0.912	0.830
	(1.01)	(0.57)	(1.31)	(0.99)
N	59.000	54.000	54.000	59.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table 6.8: Regressions Predicting Victimization – with Controls for Population Size

	(1) NB	(2) OLS	(3) NB	(4) OLS
Recruitment Selectivity	-0.631**	-0.764**	-0.593**	-0.741**
	(0.25)	(0.34)	(0.25)	(0.34)
Conflict Intensity	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.001
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Population Proportion			-0.048	0.076
			(0.06)	(0.10)
Constant	3.341***	1.960***	3.611***	1.445*
	(0.30)	(0.48)	(0.47)	(0.81)
ln alpha	0.732***		0.720***	
	(0.19)		(0.19)	
N	59.000	59.000	59.000	59.000

* p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Chapter 7

Conclusion: How Things Fell Apart

Civil warfare is a mechanism of change. Best known for the destruction left in its wake, warfare can also be a generative social process. Endemic uncertainty and the shadow of violence tend to weaken institutions of governance and dissolve social adhesive, but they can also facilitate collective action, giving rise to new organizations and creating opportunities for the restructuring of power relations in society. This dissertation is focused on understanding the overlapping creative and destructive aspects of warfare as a violent social process. In Sierra Leone, warfare led political patrons and their clients to create civil militias through the militarization of peacetime patronage networks, embedded in centuries-old mechanisms of exchange and social control. The very same violent processes that led to the creation of militias then destabilized the strategies that the creators of militias had used to control their armed agents.

This dissertation challenges scholars to better understand the internal dynamics of warfare as a set of violent and highly endogenous social processes (Wood, 2008). How does the conduct of warfare affect the very circumstances under which warfare is conducted? How do the resources and strategies available to civilians and armed actors change over the course of a conflict? The theory of social networks and recruitment selectivity attempts to address these questions by focusing on a single, important mechanism of wartime change – the increasing scarcity of information, and resultant decreases in the quality of individuals who join informal armed groups. The death and displacement of people, and threats of impending violence place limits on the availability of information, which is a critical resource during

peacetime and is even more scarce, hence valuable, during times of violent crisis. As we have seen in the case of civil militias in Sierra Leone, when the patrons of armed groups cannot gather enough reliable information to screen new recruits, the results can be disastrous. In the worst cases, civilians become the victims of the very organizations that were created to protect them.

I use this chapter as an opportunity to reflect about the broader implications of my research as it relates to pressing macro-historical questions about the causes and consequences of violent national crises (often characterized as state "failure" or "collapse") as well as important micro-economic questions about the nature of organizational stasis and change. I also highlight some of the most important shortcomings and omissions in this dissertation in the hope that scholars can learn from my mistakes and pursue the questions that I have left unanswered. On a more practical level, I address questions about the generalizability of my findings by briefly exploring the case of counter-insurgent militias in Afghanistan under US occupation. The Afghan Local Police (an informal, militia-like force) carried out their recruitment and screening of new members in ways that were remarkably similar to the recruitment strategies of civil militias in Sierra Leone. These similarities affirm the broad applicability of the theory of social networks and recruitment selectivity and also provide a basis for exploring some of the policy-relevant implications of my findings.

Implications for the Study of State "Failure" and Informal Armed Groups

Staring at the empty hulks of "failed" and "collapsed" states at the turn of the 21st century, scholars nearly missed the action. This dissertation moves beyond a focus on political structures that were conspicuously absent and draws attention to how ordinary people reacted as corrupt national officials gutted state infrastructure, filled their pockets, and then presided over purely nominal nation-states. People created civil militias to fill the increasingly large voids left by the recession of state infrastructural power (Mann, 1986, 2013). The fact that government officials in Sierra Leone (and elsewhere) often facilitated militia forma-

tion suggests that they were aware of their increasingly powerless position vis-a-vis rebel or insurgent groups. Robert Bates (2008, 23-4) has noted a precipitous increase in the number of African militias between 1970 and 1995, but he portrays militia formation as a cause of state failure in Africa – undermining the Weberian-state's monopoly over the legitimate use of force (Weber et al., 1946) – rather than as a defining symptom of growing power vacuums that scholars of "failure," "collapse," and "anarchy" have struggled to describe in analytically substantive terms. By focusing on the militarization of social networks and the local politics of creating and controlling militias, this dissertation has attempted to replace the study of national-level political disorder with a study of the fluid local-level political orders that people create and renegotiate under the shadow of violence.

In studying the complex life-cycles of civil militias in Sierra Leone, this dissertation sheds new light on how armed organizations, like businesses and political parties, change in more or less incremental ways over time as a result of the external dynamics of competition with other organizations and the internal dynamics of changes in leadership and personnel. My findings suggest that theorists of armed groups – and of political organizations more generally – need to be cautious about predicting organizations' trajectories based solely on the initial conditions surrounding their formation. In particular, analysts of armed groups need to question the frequently invoked assumption that political organizations and institutions tend toward homoeostasis or "path-dependence" (Collier and Collier, 1991; Pierson, 2000). Especially in the study of rebel and insurgent groups, assumptions of stasis often (implicitly or explicitly) serve as the premise for focusing on structurally determined, spatial variations in organizational phenomena while largely ignoring the fact of organizational change and failing to explore its multiple causes and implications (Weinstein, 2007; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006, 2008). When analysts take temporal change into account, assumptions of path-dependence enable relatively static, event-focused descriptions of change over time as a function of major disruptions of the status quo, described as "critical junctures" or "punctuated equilibria" (Eldredge and Gould, 1972; Gould and Eldredge, 1977; Gould and Gould, 2009).[1] These assumptions and descriptions rely on theories developed with reference to

[1]The social-institutional theory developed by Paul Staniland (2014) falls into this category, assuming that violent organizations are structured by their social bases and only change in response to major crises.

phenomena in evolutionary biology as well as economic firms and technological innovations in which change over time appears to be abrupt, rather than gradual. These theories are questionable, especially when applied to inherently unstable political and social phenomena, such as warfare (Schwartz, 2004; David, 2001). Assumptions of path-dependence often mask the more gradual and sometimes pedestrian aspects of micro-level processes that eventually culminate in macro-level, hence more remarkable, historical changes.[2]

To some extent, I have also fallen into the same analytical trap (related to path-dependence and critical junctures) by focusing on the crisis of the 1997 coup in Sierra Leone as a critical, destabilizing moment for civil militias around the country. However, the empirical evidence that I present shows that some militias were changing prior to the coup, and some militias continued to change well after the coup. By analyzing the varying local conditions that preceded the coup and their relationship to the varying consequences of the coup, I have attempted to show how local micro-histories – played out on the order of weeks and months – intersect with slower-moving macro-historical processes. The theory of recruitment selectivity presented in this dissertation has the benefit of being able to account for both gradual and abrupt changes over time. Information and time are determinants of recruitment selectivity the availability of which can change in more or less gradual ways over the course of a conflict. Given the nature of the theory, the primary limitations on exploring the nature of change over time are empirical rather than theoretical. The problem is one of measurement. As suggested above, important micro-level changes probably take place on the scale of weeks and months, but my ability to measure these changes was limited to the level of the calendar year.[3] In the absence of temporally finer-grained evidence, I cannot accurately capture the (potentially) more gradual aspects of changes in militia recruitment and the behavior of fighters.

[2]In this regard, political scientists have much to learn from sociologists, who have made significant progress in terms of understanding violent crime as a potentially contagious social process with mechanisms of production and re-production that tend to gradually intensify violence over time and propagate it across space (Centola and Macy, 2007; Loftin, 1986; Topalli, Wright and Fornango, 2002; Cohen and Tita, 1999; Schutte and Weidmann, 2011).

[3]Fundamentally, these limitations were imposed by the (in)accuracy of my respondents' memories. At times, it proved difficult during interviews to even pinpoint the year of an important occurrence. Parsing people's memories of the war down to the level of the week and month would have introduced a profound degree of measurement error.

Shortcomings of My Analysis and Avenues for Further Research

This dissertation (and the literature with which it engages) faces a problem with aggregation – understanding how micro-level behaviors compose macro-level phenomena. How does a collection of poorly selected and misbehaving fighters become an uncontrollable, predatory organization, the leaders of which can be indicted for war crimes? Does each new low-quality recruit incrementally lower the levels of discipline in an organization, or can leaders hold low-quality recruits in check until their number grows so large that extant disciplinary strategies are no longer viable? My intuition points to the latter – that discipline within organizations has a tipping-point defined by member-traits and disciplinary practices. But the social scientific literature currently lacks the sets of formal theoretical models and direct ethnographic studies that would be necessary to explore these dynamics. This aggregation problem – how the traits of individuals come to characterize the traits of an organization – is an important and potentially fruitful field for further research, sitting at the intersection of economics, sociology, and political science.

Empirically, this dissertation falls short in terms of presenting direct evidence from the chiefs and elders who created militias and initially exercised control over militia membership. Despite their central importance to my argument, I managed to interview only four wartime chiefs and elders. The reason for the dearth of chiefly testimonies is that most of the individuals who were chiefs during the war – especially those who were Paramount Chiefs – are now dead. A number of them were killed during the war, and this resulted in the degradation of local patronage networks, which plays a key role in my theory. In addition, a few chiefs fled the country and never returned, and several more chiefs survived the war, but died of old age prior to the start of my fieldwork (Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson, 2013). Given the resultant shortage of direct testimonies during my fieldwork, I did my best to reconstruct chiefs' preferences and choices based on testimonies from people who were close to them, as well as from rank-and-file militia members and civilians who were first-hand observers of chief-led recruitment and screening processes.

Looking beyond these shortcomings, this dissertation has presented new and com-

pelling evidence about how people are selected to be members of armed groups. The resulting analysis raises new questions for future research, in particular, about the special category of individuals who make abortive attempts to join armed organizations. What happens to people who try to join an armed faction and are rejected? One hypothesis is that prospective fighters who are rejected by one faction will simply go and join an opposing faction. Another hypothesis is that individuals who are rejected by a given faction during a period of high recruitment selectivity may be able to find their way into that same faction during a later period of lower recruitment selectivity. The literature on recruitment and membership in armed organizations has a large empirical gap surrounding the question of prospective fighters who make bids for membership in an armed group and are then rejected. Most empirical studies that pose the question "Who fights?" tacitly assume that everyone who attempts to join an armed organization does so successfully (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008; Lee, 2011). Such studies shed light on the question of individual-level motivations – "Who wants to fight?" – but they do not satisfactorily address the question of why some people ultimately become members of armed groups while others do not.

It did not occur to me until well after the conclusion of my fieldwork, that I should have asked my respondents not only about their successful attempts to join militias, but also about whether or not they had, in the past, made failed attempts to join that same militia or another armed group. Such questions might have shed some light on the issue of rejection – both its frequency and its logic. This is an extremely important question for future studies of recruitment and especially for attempts to falsify my theory of recruitment selectivity in informal armed groups. The more or less frequent rejection of candidates is implicit in the claim that armed groups engage in more or less selective recruitment of new members. Currently, all of my evidence of the rejection of candidates for militia membership comes indirectly, from civilians and militia commanders, not directly from the rejects themselves.

Along these same lines, scholars also know very little about why people sometimes leave or desert armed groups.[4] We have very little direct evidence regarding the attrition mechanisms associated with costly induction and disciplinary practices involving the expul-

[4]A notable exception are studies of desertion during the US Civil War (Bearman, 1991; Lonn, 1928; Weitz, 2005).

sion of misbehaving members. My discussions with the leaders of armed groups and with non-deserters provide a one-sided and thus incomplete account of such practices and their underlying logics. It may be the case that direct evidence will be impossible to collect; when asked, individuals may simply deny that they deserted or were expelled.[5] Assuming that some respondents would confess to having deserted and are willing to discuss the topic, the question of constructing a sample of such respondents is a perplexing one. Deserters are likely to be an extremely well-hidden population of potential research subjects – small (relative to the overall population), unidentifiable, untraceable through lists or records, and unlikely to be networked with one another in ways that would enable a chain-referral sampling strategy such as the RDS strategy employed in this dissertation. The fact that it may be impossible to construct a systematic sample of populations of deserters does not mean that the subject is not worth investigating.

Beyond Civil Militias in Sierra Leone

Each of the empirical chapters of this dissertation contribute to a general argument about how and why recruitment matters. I have attempted to convince readers that informal armed groups have the potential to engage in selective recruitment through screening; that an important determinant of successful screening is the availability of information through social networks; and that recruitment selectivity has important, measurable consequences in terms of the internal discipline of armed groups and the external relationships that armed actors maintain with local civilians. To the extent that readers believe this basic argument, the next logical question is about the generalizability of my findings. Space does not permit the extensive presentation of an additional set of case studies and extensions of my theory. Rather, I want to highlight the extent to which the recruitment practices of counter-insurgent militias in Sierra Leone were remarkably similar to the practices established by US military forces for creating and managing village stability operations and local police forces in Afghanistan. These similarities provide evidence of the broad applicability of my

[5]Yet you never know unless you ask. My experience with asking awkward questions during fieldwork indicates that at least a few interview subjects will give honest responses to questions even when those responses carry clearly negative implications about the character of the respondent.

argument, and also provide a basis for a discussion of the policy-relevant implications of my research.

Picking Trustworthy Police in Afghanistan: Screening through Village *Shuras*

As a part of US counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan (from circa August 2010), US soldiers encouraged communities to organize informal defensive militias known as the Afghan Local Police (ALP) (Hulslander and Spivey, 2012). My primary source for analyzing ALP recruitment is the "Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police" handbook used by the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan. The handbook reflects lessons learned from the successes and failures of programs for training local counterinsurgent forces in the early stages of US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a whole, the handbook provides guidelines for the re-implementation (or in some cases the continuation) of a common strategy of creating local counterinsurgent militias intended to act as a force-multiplier, augmenting and supporting US soldiers.

The section of the handbook focusing on "Bottom-Up Mobilization" of the Afghan Local Police places remarkable emphasis on the "screening and validation" of ALP members (Meffert and Bolduc, 2011, 39-41). Councils of village elders, called *Shuras*, are at the center of the recruitment process. The first step in ALP recruitment is for local US forces to make certain that the village has a functioning Shura and an elected *malik* (tribal leader) who is recognized by the district-level government.[6] The second step involves the empowering of local Shuras to recruit and screen new members:

> The village elders that form the Shura will nominate ALP candidates and vet that they meet the minimum criteria to become ALP, live in the village, and are of strong moral character. These elders will be required to "sign" as sponsors on the official ALP application (Meffert and Bolduc, 2011, 41).

For US forces, the clear advantage of recruiting through local elders and Shuras was the fact that Shura members were embedded in local patronage networks and had intimate knowledge of their communities. Similar to the chiefs in Sierra Leone, the elders who were members

[6]Readers will note that the role of maliks, as locally elected tribal leaders, is highly analogous to the role of Section or Town Chiefs in Sierra Leone.

of Shuras used their access to local knowledge to ensure that only appropriately motivated recruits with "strong moral character" would become members of the ALP.

The writers of the Village Stability Operations handbook, as well as the practitioners who used it, assert that selective recruitment was of the utmost importance.[7] Poorly screened recruits could easily become a security threat and generally undermine the integrity of the ALP forces in the eyes of local civilians. The handbook explicitly admonishes military practitioners to "not shortcut the ALP screening and validation process in the effort to increase ALP numbers" (Meffert and Bolduc, 2011, 46). Analogous to the early militia recruitment processes in Sierra Leone, the emphasis in ALP recruitment was on quality over quantity. The explicit concerns expressed in the manual, and by practitioners, were remarkably similar to those cited by chiefs and militia administrators in Sierra Leone. Recruiters were trying to avoid the recruitment of members who would potentially be difficult to control, either because of hidden loyalties to enemy forces, personal conflicts within the community, or other (concealed) perverse motivations that might cause them to misbehave or engage in "predatory behavior" once inducted to the police force.[8] The handbook states the criteria for screening ALP members, placing a clear emphasis on recruiting individuals who would be likely to be loyal to local leaders and their communities:

> Land ownership, extensive family ties to the area, and business connections are good indicators that the individual has a vested interest in the security of the area and will not abandon or compromise the program. Connections to known insurgents, insurgent activity and negative popular opinion are good indicators the individual represents a threat to the team security and the program (Meffert and Bolduc, 2011, 49).

While the underlying goals and selection criteria were similar, screening in the ALP was ultimately more sophisticated and technologically advanced than screening in civil militias in Sierra Leone. The US military provided communications technologies and tools for the collection of biometric data that could be used to perform background checks against national criminal records and against records of individuals who were known to have been members of the Taliban (enemy forces). These technologies expanded the amount of information

[7] Author email interview with a Special Operations Forces team leader who served in Helmand Province, Afghanistan between 2011 and 2013.

[8] Author email interview with a Special Operations Forces team leader who served in Helmand Province, Afghanistan between 2011 and 2013.

available during the critical stage of selecting new ALP members, and probably allowed for even more selective recruitment than was possible in Sierra Leone, even when screening took place under ideal conditions. Notwithstanding the increased sophistication that the US military brought to the screening process, US forces still prioritized the initial, low-tech vetting carried out by village elders.[9]

Understanding Militias and Making Policy

Considering how the US military conducted village stability operations in Afghanistan from 2010 onward, this dissertation can be read as providing further evidence to reaffirm lessons that US soldiers and their commanders have already learned through trial and error in Afghanistan. The viability of screening fighters through local social networks is not specific to the context of the Middle East. In fact, the low-tech aspects of these strategies should be viable in any context in which local communities are organized around patron-client relationships. Given the gradually increasing US military presence in Northern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, it is important for military practitioners to understand that many of the mechanisms that led to the creation of successful local counterinsurgent militias in Afghanistan can also be applied successfully in African contexts. The key is for US forces to have a sufficiently deep understanding of their local operational environments, including the contours of local patronage networks and the vested interests of indigenous power-brokers.

This dissertation should also be read as a cautionary tale for policymakers who consider facilitating local militia formation as a mechanism for extending and reinforcing state power. As a whole, this study suggests that successful (i.e. selective) militia recruitment strategies are highly local in nature. Well-screened fighters may be motivated to join, in part, by a sense of patriotism and allegiance to national-level politicians, but recruiters ultimately admit new members into informal armed organizations on the basis of their likely obedience to local leaders. The distinctly local criteria and mechanisms that govern the induction of trustworthy recruits will tend to lead to the creation of civil militias that do a good job of serving local populations, but that will ultimately prove difficult for national-level politicians

[9] Author email interview with a Special Operations Forces team leader who served in Helmand Province, Afghanistan between 2011 and 2013.

to control. Extensive training and indoctrination would seem to be the only ways of better inculcating national-level allegiances in cohorts of recruits who were selected for their local loyalties (Meffert and Bolduc, 2011), but the efficacy of these strategies is still in question. Ultimately, national-level politicians run the risk of creating local militias and empowering local strongmen who may turn against them.

Looking beyond questions of counterinsurgency, this dissertation exposes an often false assumption behind Western approaches to post-war transitional justice. In many post-conflict contexts, the commanders of armed groups are tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity by international or national tribunals. These trials are premised on the idea that high-ranking individuals in armed groups bear "command responsibility" for the conduct of their fighters, which amounts to the assumption that commanders have a high level of control over their fighters and are thus culpable for their actions in the field. Danny Hoffman (2007) has already suggested that command responsibility is an inappropriate basis for establishing the culpability of high-ranking militia commanders in Sierra Leone because the leadership structure of militias was so fragmented and parochial that most significant strategic decisions were made at a surprisingly local level. My findings reinforce Hoffman's basic point about the absurdity of holding national-level commanders responsible for the conduct of local militia units. In many cases, even local commanders were not fully in control of, hence responsible for, the actions of their fighters. My findings suggest that a significant number of the cases of civilians being victimized by militia members were, in fact, a product of indiscipline. In many cases, the victimization of civilians was probably in direct contravention of orders issued by national- and local-level commanders. If this is the case, then no one is culpable for the actions of those fighters except the individual fighters themselves.

Where there is civil war, there will be civil militias. Militias can help to secure and govern civilians when neither state militaries nor insurgent forces are reliable providers of local law and order. Militias can also become just like the predatory armed organizations that they were created to oppose. This dissertation has explored the question of how to manage

militias in such a way as to maximize the obedience of their members to local leaders and to minimize the amount of harm that they inflict on civilians. Evidence from Sierra Leone suggests that militias can be controlled, and that selective recruitment is one of the primary mechanisms of control. However, recruitment strategies that rely on social networks are as fragile as the lives of the individuals who constitute those networks. Once disrupted, systems of screening and control are extremely difficult to restore. Warfare creates and destroys in the same breath. Periods of civil chaos call armed groups into existence and then erode the very mechanisms through which they were originally created and controlled.

Bibliography

Abdullah, Ibrahim. 1998. "Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 36:203–235.

Abdullah, Ibrahim and Patrick K. Muana. 1998. The Revolutionary United Front: A Revolt of the Lumpenproletariat. In *African Guerrillas*, ed. Christopher S. Clapham. Oxford: James Currey pp. 172–194.

Abraham, Arthur. 1976. *Topics in Sierra Leone History: A Counter-Colonial Interpretation*. Freetown, Sierra Leone: Leone Publishers,.

Abraham, Arthur. 1978. *Mende Government and Politics under Colonial Rule: A Historical Study of Political Change in Sierra Leone, 1890-1937*. Freetown, Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone University Press.

Abraham, Arthur. 2003. *An Introduction to the Pre-colonial History of the Mende of Sierra Leone*. Vol. 67 Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press.

Acemoglu, Daron, Tristan Reed and James A Robinson. 2013. "Chiefs: Economic Development and Elite Control of Civil Society in Sierra Leone." *Forthcoming, Journal of Political Economy* .

Alie, Joe. 2005. The Kamajor Militia in Sierra Leone: Liberators or Nihilists? In *Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?*, ed. David J. Francis. Burlington, VT: Ashgate pp. 51–70.

Allen, W. David. 2007. "The Reporting and Underreporting of Rape." *Southern Economic Journal* 73(3):pp. 623–641.

Anonymous. 1991. "Hundreds of Rebels Killed." *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* p. 1.

Arjona, Ana M and Stathis N Kalyvas. 2009. Rebelling Against Rebellion: Comparing Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Recruitment. In *Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity Workshop: Mobilisation for Political Violence What Do We Know*. Vol. 4 pp. 436–455.

Arthy, Simon. 2004. *Third Party Contribution to Conflict Transformation: Reflections from Sierra Leone*. University of Sussex: Unpublished Dissertation for Masters in Anthropology of Conflict, Violence and Conciliation.

Arthy, Simon. 2007. Statement of Simon Arthy on behalf of Moinina Fofana. In *Prosecutor v. Fofana and Kondewa*. Freetown, Sierra Leone: SCSL-04-14-T, Annex A, Request for leave to supplement the Fofana Sentencing Brief.

Arthy, Simon and Helen Moore. 1999. CDF/Community Reconciliation Workshop, 17th - 18th June, 1999, Bo Town Hall: Workshop Report. Technical report DDR Archives, National Archives of Sierra Leone.

Bachman, Ronet. 1993. "Predicting the Reporting of Rape Victimizations Have Rape Reforms Made a Difference?" *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 20(3):254–270.

Barkey, Karen and Ronan Van Rossem. 1997. "Networks of Contention: Villages and Regional Structure in the Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Empire." *American Journal of Sociology* 102(5):1345–1382.

Barr, Abigain, Jean Ensminger and Jeffrey Johnson. 2009. Social Networks and Trust in Cross-Cultural Economic Experiments. In *Whom Can We Trust? How Groups, Networks and Institutions Make Trust Possible*, ed. Karen S. Cook, Margaret Levi and Russell Hardin. New York: Russell Sage Foundation pp. 65–90.

Bates, Robert H. 2008. *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bearman, Peter S. 1991. "Desertion as Localism: Army Unit Solidarity and Group Norms in the US Civil War." *Social Forces* 70(2):321–342.

Blazak, Randy. 2001. "White Boys to Terrorist Men: Target Recruitment of Nazi Skinheads." *American Behavioral Scientist* 44(6):982–1000.

Bøas, Morten and Kevin C. Dunn. 2007. *African Guerrillas: Raging Against the Machine*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Brett, Rachel and Irma Specht. 2004. *Young Soldiers: Why They Choose to Fight*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Campbell, Greg. 2004. *Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stones*. Basic Books.

Campbell, Karen E. and Peter V. Marsden. 1990. Recruitment and Selection Processes: The Organizational Side of Job Searches. In *Social Mobility and Socia Structure*, ed. Ronald L. Breiger. New York: Cambridge University Press pp. 59–79.

Centola, Damon and Michael Macy. 2007. "Complex Contagions and the Weakness of Long Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 113(3):702–734.

Chauveau, Jean-Pierre and Paul Richards. 2008. "West African Insurgencies in Agrarian Perspective: Côte dÕIvoire and Sierra Leone Compared." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 8(4):515–552.

Clapham, Christopher S. 1998. *African Guerrillas*. Oxford Kampala Bloomington: James Currey ; Fountain Publishers ; Indiana University Press.

Clay-Warner, Jody and Callie Harbin Burt. 2005. "Rape Reporting After Reforms Have Times Really Changed?" *Violence Against Women* 11(2):150–176.

Cohen, Dara Kay. 2013. "Explaining Rape During Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980–2009)." *American Political Science Review* 107(03):461–477.

Cohen, Jacqueline and George Tita. 1999. "Diffusion in Homicide: Exploring a General Method for Detecting Spatial Diffusion Processes." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 15(4):451–493.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *The American Journal of Sociology* 94:S95–S120.

Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers, New Series* 56:563–595.

Collier, Ruth Berins and David Collier. 1991. *Shaping the Political Arena*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press Princeton.

Conibere, Richard, Jana Asher, Kristen Cibelli, Jana Dudukovich, Rafe Kaplan and Patrick Ball. 2004. *Statistical Appendix to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone*. Palo Alto, California: Human Rights Data Analysis Group, Beneficent Technology, Inc.

Cook, Karen S., Margaret Levi and Russell Hardin. 2009. *Whom Can We Trust? How Groups, Networks, and Institutions Make Trust Possible*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

David, Paul A. 2001. Path Dependence, Its Critics and the Quest for 'Historical Economics'. In *Evolution and Path Dependence in Economic Ideas: Past and Present*, ed. Pierre Garrouste and Stavros Ioannides. Vol. 15 Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar pp. 15–30.

De Mesquita, Ethan Bueno. 2005. "The Quality of Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3):515–530.

DeBoer, Larry and B. Wade Brorsen. 1989. "The Demand for and Supply of Military Labor." *Southern Economic Journal* 55:853–869.

Densley, James. 2012. "Street Gang Recruitment: Signaling, Screening, and Selection." *Social Problems* 59(3):301–321.

Eckstein, Harry. 1975. Case Studies and Theory in Political Science. In *Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Fred Greenstein and Nelson W Polsby. Vol. 7 Reading, MA: Addison Wesley Publishing Company pp. 79–138.

Eldredge, Niles and Stephen Jay Gould. 1972. "Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism." *Models in paleobiology* 82:115.

Ellis, Stephen. 2001. *The Mask of Anarchy: the Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*. New York: New York University Press.

Erickson, Bonnie H. 1979. "Some problems of inference from chain data." *Sociological methodology* 10(1):276–302.

Fanthorpe, R. 2001. "Neither Citizen Nor Subject? 'Lumpen' Agency and the Legacy of Native Administration in Sierra Leone." *African Affairs* 100:363–386.

Ferme, Mariane C. 2001. *The Underneath of Things: Violence, History, and the Everyday in Sierra Leone*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Finnegan, William. 2010. "Silver of Lead. The Drug Cartel La Familia Gives Local Officials a Choice: Take a Bribe or a Bullet." *The New Yorker,* 31 May.

Fithen, David Caspar. 1999. Diamonds and War in Sierra Leone: Cultural Strategies for Commercial Adaptation to Endemic Low-Intensity Conflict PhD thesis London: .

Fjelde, Hanne and Lisa Hultman. 2013. "Weakening the Enemy A Disaggregated Study of Violence against Civilians in Africa." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* p. 0022002713492648.

Forest, James JF. 2006. *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes*. Praeger Security International.

Francis, David J. 2005. *Civil Militia: Africa's Intractable Security Menace?* Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Gambetta, Diego. 1988. Can We Trust Trust. In *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*, ed. Diego Gambetta. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.

Gambetta, Diego. 2009. *Codes of the Underworld: How Criminals Communicate*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gambetta, Diego and Heather Hamill. 2005. *Streetwise: How Taxi Drivers Establish Customer's Trustworthiness*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Gates, S. 2002. "Recruitment and Allegiance - The Microfoundations of Rebellion." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46:111–130.

Gberie, Lansana. 2005. *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Gerwehr, Scott and Sara Daly. 2006. "Al-Qaida: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment." *The McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook (pp73-89). New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies* .

Gould, Roger V. 1993. "Collective Action and Network Structure." *American Sociological Review* pp. 182–196.

Gould, Roger V. 1995. *Insurgent Identities: Class, Community, and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gould, Roger V. 1996. "Patron-Client Ties, State Centralization, and the Whiskey Rebellion." *American Journal of Sociology* pp. 400–429.

Gould, Stephen Jay and Niles Eldredge. 1977. "Punctuated Equilibria: The Tempo and Mode of Evolution Reconsidered." *Paleobiology* pp. 115–151.

Gould, Stephen Jay and Stephen Jay Gould. 2009. *Punctuated Equilibrium*. New York: Harvard University Press.

Grafen, Alan. 1990*a*. "Biological Signals as Handicaps." *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 144:517–46.

Grafen, Alan. 1990*b*. "Sexual Selection Unhandicapped by the Fisher Process." *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 144:473–516.

Greenwald, Bruce C. 1986. "Adverse Selection in the Labour Market." *The Review of Economic Studies* 53:325–347.

Hagmann, Tobias and Markus V Hoehne. 2009. "Failures of the State Failure Debate: Evidence from the Somali Territories." *Journal of International Development* 21(1):42–57.

Hamill, Heather. 2010. "Recruitment into Insurgency and Extra-Legal Organizations." *ESRC End of Award Report, RES-061-23-0131* (3).

Hardin, Russell. 2006. *Trust*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Heckathorn, Douglas D. 1997. "Respondent-Driven Sampling: A New Approach to the Study of Hidden Populations." *Social Problems* 44:174–199.

Heckathorn, Douglas D. 2002. "Respondent-Driven Sampling II: Deriving Valid Population Estimates from Chain-Referral Samples of Hidden Populations." *Social Problems* 49:11–34.

Heckathorn, Douglas D. 2007. "Extensions of Respondent-Driven Sampling: Analyzing Continuous Variables and Controlling for Differential Recruitment." *Sociological Methodology* 37(1):151–207.

Heckathorn, Douglas D. and Joan Jeffri. 2001. "Finding the Beat: Using Respondent-driven Sampling to Study Jazz Musicians." *Poetics* 28:307–329.

Hegghammer, Thomas. 2013. "The Recruiter's Dilemma: Signalling and Rebel Recruitment Tactics." *Journal of Peace Research* 50(1):3–16.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. *States and power in Africa: comparative lessons in authority and control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hoffman, Danny. 2004. "The Civilian Target in Sierra Leone and Liberia: Political Power, Military Strategy, and Humanitarian Intervention." *African Affairs* 103:211–226.

Hoffman, Danny. 2007. "The Meaning of a Militia: Understanding the Civil Defence Forces of Sierra Leone." *African Affairs* 106:639–662.

Hoffman, Danny. 2011. *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Holzer, Harry J. 1987. "Hiring Procedures in the Firm: Their Economic Determinants and Outcomes." *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 2185* .

Hulslander, Robert and Jake Spivey. 2012. "Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police." *Prism* 3(3):125–138.

Hultman, Lisa. 2005. "Killing Civilians to Signal Resolve: Rebel Strategies in Intrastate Conflicts." *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC* .

Humphreys, Macartan. 2005. "Natural Resources, Conflict, and Conflict Resolution: Uncovering the Mechanisms." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49:508–537.

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2006. "Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War." *The American Political Science Review* 100:429–447.

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy M Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 52:436–455.

Johnston, Patrick. 2008. "The Geography of Insurgent Organization and its Consequences for Civil Wars: Evidence from Liberia and Sierra Leone." *Security Studies* 17:107–137.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1999. "Wanton and Senseless: The Logic of Massacres in Algeria." *Rationality and Society* 11:243–285.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2003. "The Ontology of "Political Violence": Action and Identity in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1:475–494.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge studies in comparative politics Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. and Matthew Adam Kocher. 2009. "The Dynamics of Violence in Vietnam: An Analysis of the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)." *Journal of Peace Research* 46:335–355.

Kaplan, Robert D. 1994. "The Coming Anarchy." *Atlantic Monthly* 273(2):44–76.

Keen, David. 2005. *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. New York: Palgrave.

Keizer, Kees, Siegwart Lindenberg and Linda Steg. 2008. "The Spreading of Disorder." *Science* 322(5908):1681–1685.

Kelsall, Tim. 2009. *Culture Under Cross-Examination: International Justice and the Special Court for Sierra Leone*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Koroma, Abdul K. 1996. *Sierra Leone: The Agony of a Nation.* Freetown, Sierra Leone: Andromeda Publications.

Koroma, Aliesius. 1991. "NPFL Rebels on the Run as Govt Forces Launch Full Offensive." *Sierra Leone Daily Mail* .

Leach, Melissa. 1994. *Rainforest Relations: Gender and Resource Use among the Mende of Gola, Sierra Leone.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute, London.

Leach, Melissa. 2000. "New Shapes to Shift: War, Parks and the Hunting Person in Modern West Africa." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6:577–595.

Lee, Alexander. 2011. "Who Becomes a Terrorist?: Poverty, Education, and the Origins of Political Violence." *World Politics* 63(02):203–245.

Lee, Dwight R. and Richard B. McKenzie. 1992. "Reexamination of the Relative Efficiency of the Draft and the All-Volunteer Army." *Southern Economic Journal* 58:644–654.

Levi, Margaret. 1996. "Social and Unsocial Capital: A Review Essay of Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work." *Politics Society* 24:45–55.

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65(3):682–693.

Loftin, Colin. 1986. "Assaultive Violence as a Contagious Social Process." *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 62(5):550.

Lonn, Ella. 1928. *Desertion During the Civil War.* Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Lubkemann, Stephen C. 2008. *Culture in Chaos: An Anthropology of the Social Condition in War.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lujala, Paivi, Nils Petter Gleditsch and Elisabeth Gilmore. 2005. "A Diamond Curse?: Civil War and a Lootable Resource." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49:538–562.

Lyall, Jason. 2009. "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?: Evidence from Chechnya." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53:331–362.

Mann, Michael. 1986. *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 1, A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*. Vol. 1 New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, Michael. 2013. *The Sources of Social Power: Volume 4, Globalizations, 1945-2011*. Vol. 4 New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mao, Zedong. 2005. *On Guerrilla Warfare*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.

Marten, Kimberly Zisk. 2012. *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States*. Cornell studies in security affairs Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Marwell, Gerald, Pamela E Oliver and Ralph Prahl. 1988. "Social Networks and Collective Action: A Theory of the Critical Mass, Ill." *American Journal of Sociology* 94(3):502–534.

Marx, Karl. 1978. The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. In *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C Tucker. New York: Norton.

Mazzei, Julie. 2009. *Death Squads or Self-Defense Forces? How Paramilitary Groups Emerge and Challenge Democracy in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Meagher, Kate. 2012. "The Strength of Weak States? Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa." *Development and Change* 43(5):1073–1101.

Meffert, Richard P. and Donald C. Bolduc. 2011. "Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police: Bottom-up Counterinsurgency.".

Menkhaus, Ken. 2007. "Governance without government in Somalia: Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping.".

Metelits, Claire. 2010. *Inside Insurgency: Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behavior*. New York: New York University Press.

Miller, Gary J. 1992. *Managerial Dilemmas: The Political Economy of Hierarchy*. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Montgomery, James D. 1991. "Social Networks and Labor-market Outcomes: Toward an Economic Analysis." *The American Economic Review* 81(5):1408–1418.

Moyar, Mark. 2011. "Development in Afghanistan's Counterinsurgency: A New Guide.". **URL:** *http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/development-in-afghanistans-counterinsurgency*

Muana, Patrick K. 1997. "The Kamajoi Militia: Civil War, Internal Displacement and the Politics of Counter-Insurgency." *Africa Development* 22:77–100.

Museveni, Yoweri. 1997. *Sowing the Mustard Seed: The Struggle for Freedom and Democracy in Uganda*. Macmillan.

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Harvard economic studies, Cambridge, Mass.,: Harvard University Press.

Ostrom, Elinor and James Walker. 2003. *Trust and Reciprocity: Interdisciplinary Lessons from Experimental Research*. Russell Sage Foundation series on trust New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Parkinson, Sarah Elizabeth. 2013. "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War." *American Political Science Review* 107(03):418–432.

Paternoster, Raymond, Jean McGloin, Holly Nguyen and Kyle Thomas. 2012. "The Causal Impact of Exposure to Deviant Peers: an Experimental Investigation." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* .

Patten, SB and JA Arboleda-Florez. 2004. "Epidemic Theory and Group Violence." *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 39(11):853–856.

Petersen, Roger D. 2001. *Resistance and rebellion: lessons from Eastern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Pham, John Peter. 2005. *Child Soldiers, Adult Interests: The Global Dimensions of the Sierra Leonean Tragedy*. Nova Publishers.

Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics." *American political science review* pp. 251–267.

Portes, Alejandro. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:1–24.

Putnam, Robert D., Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Raeymaekers, Timothy, Ken Menkhaus and Koen Vlassenroot. 2008. "State and Non-state Regulation in African Protracted Crises: Governance Without Government." *Afrika Focus* 21(2):7–21.

Rees, Albert. 1996. "Information Networks in Labor Markets." *The American Economic Review* 56(1/2):559–566.

Reno, William. 1998. *Warlord Politics and African States*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Reno, William. 2004. The Collapse of Sierra Leone and the Emergence of Multiple 'States Within States'. In *States-within-States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Paul W. T. Kingston and Ian Spears. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan pp. viii, 202 p.

Richani, Nazih. 2007. "Caudillos and the Crisis of the Colombian State: Fragmented Sovereignty, the War System and the Privatisation of Counterinsurgency in Colombia." *Third World Quarterly* 28:403 – 417.

Richards, Paul. 2002. Militia Conscription in Sierra Leone: Recruitment of Young Fighters in an African War. In *The Comparative Study of Conscription in the Armed Forces*, ed. Lars Mjoset and Stephen Van Holde. Amsterdam ; New York: JAI pp. xix, 424 p.

Rosen, David M. 2005. *Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism*.

Rotberg, Robert I. 2004. *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Salganik, M. J. and D. D. Heckathorn. 2004. "Sampling and Estimation in Hidden Populations Using Respondent-Driven Sampling." *Sociological Methodology* 34:193–240.

Schutte, Sebastian and Nils B Weidmann. 2011. "Diffusion Patterns of Violence in Civil Wars." *Political Geography* 30(3):143–152.

Schwartz, Herman. 2004. "Down the Wrong Path: Path Dependence, Increasing Returns, and Historical Institutionalism." *Unpublished Manuscript, University of Virginia* .

Siegel, David A. 2009. "Social Networks and Collective Action." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(1):122–138.

Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission Data. 2003.
URL: *https://hrdag.org/sierraleone/*

Singer, Peter Warren. 2006. *Children at War*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Spence, Michael. 1973. "Job Market Signaling." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 87(3):355–374.

Spence, Michael. 1974. *Market Signaling: Informational Transfer in Hiring and Related Screening Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Staniland, Paul. 2012. "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia." *International Security* 37:pp. 142–177.

Staniland, Paul. 2014. *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Taylor, Michael. 1988. *Rationality and Revolution*. Studies in Marxism and Social Theory Series New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas, Armand, Veronica MacCormack and Peter Bangura. 2006. *Republic of Sierra Leone 2004 Population and Housing Census: Analytical Report on Population Size and Distribution Age and Sex Structure*. Freetown: Statistics Sierra Leone.

Thusi, Thokozani and Sarah Meek. 2003. Disarmament and Demobilisation. In *Sierra Leone: Building the Road to Recovery*, ed. Mark Malan, Sarah Meek, Thokozani Thusi, Jeremy Ginifer and Patrick Coker. Norton pp. 23–38.
URL: *http://www.issafrica.org/pubs/monographs/No80/Chap1.pdf*

Topalli, Volkan, Richard Wright and Robert Fornango. 2002. "Drug Dealers, Robbery and Retaliation. Vulnerability, Deterrence and the Contagion of Violence." *British Journal of Criminology* 42(2):337–351.

Varshney, Ashutosh. 2003. "Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Rationality." *Perspective on Politics* 1(1):85–99.

Vigil, James. 1996. "Street Baptism: Chicano Gang Initiation." *Human Organization* 55(2):149–153.

Volz, E., C. Wejnert, C. Cameron, M. Spiller, V. Barash, I Degani and D.D. Heckathorn. 2012. *Respondent-Driven Sampling Analysis Tool (RDSAT).* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

Warner, John T. and Beth J. Asch. 1995. The Economics of Military Manpower. In *Handbook of Defense Economics*, ed. Keith Hartley and Todd Sandler. 1 ed. New York: Elsevier Science.

Weber, Max, Karl Emil Maximilian, C Wright Mills and Hans Heinrich Gerth. 1946. Politics as a Vocation. In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press pp. 77–128.

Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. "Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49:598–624.

Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2007. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Weiss, Karen G. 2010. "Too Ashamed to Report: Deconstructing the Shame of Sexual Victimization." *Feminist Criminology* 5(3):286–310.

Weitz, Mark A. 2005. *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army.* Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Wilson, K. B. 1992. "Cults of Violence and Counter-Violence in Mozambique." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18:527–582.

Winship, Christopher and Larry Radbill. 1994. "Sampling Weights and Regression Analysis." *Sociological Methods & Research* 23(2):230–257.

Wlodarczyk, Nathalie. 2009. *Magic and Warfare: Appearance and Reality in Contemporary African Conflict and Beyond*. New York City: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2008. "The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11(1):539–561.

World Bank. 2013. "World Development Indicators.".
URL: *http://data.worldbank.org/country /sierra-leone*