

Title: Draining the Sea: Mass Killing and Guerilla Warfare  
Authors: Valentino, Huth and Balch-Lindsay

NOTE:

The authors will refer to a “logit analysis”. A logit, or logistic regression, is closely related to Ordinary Least Squares Regression. The primary difference is that the dependent variable is dichotomous (i.e., binary, takes on a value of 1 or 0). Review footnote 7 of the Powner readings for more information on how to interpret this type of analysis.

When you get to the tables, concentrate on the coefficients as opposed to the relative risk ratios.

Terms to Know:

- Directed dyad
- Endogeneity
- Polity IV Project
- Correlates of War (COW) Project
- Modal value
- Median value

Questions From the Readings:

1. What is the main puzzle the authors are trying to address?
2. What do the authors propose as the conventional wisdom about why mass killing sometimes takes place?
3. What is the authors’ alternative theory?
4. Why does mass killing only happen in some counter-guerrilla wars?
5. What is the primary dependent variable of the study? How is it operationalized, precisely?
6. What problems do the authors identify with the ways current scholarship handles this topic?
7. How do the authors operationalize guerrilla conflict?
8. Why might guerrilla armies fare well against conventional forces?
9. Why are states more likely to use mass killing strategies than guerrilla forces?
10. Why might states *not* use mass killing strategies, even when facing guerilla forces?
11. What are the authors’ key independent variables? (Hint: Look in the hypotheses.)
12. What are the control variables and why are they included?
13. How do the authors select which conflicts will be included in the study?
14. What do you think the authors mean when they say each war is represented by “two directed-dyads” on page 389?
15. Can you think of another way the authors might have measured and/or coded their “civilian support” variable?
16. What do you think the authors mean when they talk about “endogeneity”? Why are they fairly confident the potential presence of endogeneity does not threaten their findings?
17. The authors use the Polity IV Project data to code whether a state is a democracy or not. How might you code this variable differently?
18. What are the three stages of analysis the authors employ? Why do you suppose they break things up this way? (Hint: Try to identify the dependent variables/set of observations used for Tables 1-3 and differences between the tables.)

19. On page 395 the authors claim to find “strong confirmation” for Hypotheses 4 and 5. How do they know this?
20. What do you suppose the point is of Table 4?
21. What does the empirical evidence suggest about the conventional wisdom?