UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Queering Gender-Based Violence Scholarship

An Integrated Research Agenda

Loken, M.; Hagen, J.J.

DOI
10.1093/isr/viac050

Publication date
2022

Document Version
Final published version

Published in
International Studies Review

License
CC BY

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Loken, M., & Hagen, J. J. (2022). Queering Gender-Based Violence Scholarship: An Integrated Research Agenda. *International Studies Review*, *24*(4), Article viac050.
https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac050

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, P.O. Box 19185, 1000 GD Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (https://dare.uva.nl)

Download date:11 May 2026

International Studies Review (2022), viac050

ANALYTICAL ESSAY

Queering Gender-Based Violence Scholarship: An Integrated Research Agenda

Meredith Loken
University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

and

Jamie J. Hagen
Queen's University Belfast, UK

Research on armed conflict's gender dynamics has expanded significantly in the past decade. However, research in this field pays little attention to sexual orientation and gender identity. Moreover, where scholarship focused on violence against sexual and gender minority (SGM) individuals during war exists, it is largely divorced from work on gender-based violence (GBV) in conflict-related environments and from sexuality studies. In this article, we integrate these bodies of work and argue for the theoretical expansion of GBV as a conceptual, empirical, and analytic category to study and explain targeted attacks against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and otherwise queer individuals. We suggest two theoretical interventions to better equip existing GBV frameworks to explain violence perpetrated against SGM people. We argue, first, that violence targeting SGM communities is GBV, as sexuality and gender identity are integral components of gender, and second, that analyzing gender dynamics adds to our understanding of when, how, and why targeting SGM individuals composes part of an organization's regulatory "repertoire of violence." We examine violence in Colombia's civil war as an illustrative application of our approach and we identify future, fruitful research avenues with important policy implications for studying and responding to GBV during war.

La investigación sobre la dinámica de género en los conflictos armados ha aumentado considerablemente en la última década. Sin embargo, la investigación en este campo presta poca atención a la orientación sexual y a la identidad de género. Además, los estudios que se centran en la violencia contra las minorías sexuales y de género (MSG) durante las guerras están muy alejados de los trabajos sobre la violencia de género (VG) en entornos de conflicto y de los estudios sobre sexualidad. En este artículo, integramos estos trabajos y defendemos la expansión teórica de la VG como categoría conceptual, empírica y analítica para estudiar y explicar los ataques selectivos contra lesbianas, *gays*, bisexuales y transexuales. Sugerimos dos intervenciones teóricas para dotar a los marcos existentes de la violencia de género de una mejor explicación de la violencia perpetrada contra las personas de las MSG. Argumentamos, en primer lugar, que la violencia dirigida a las comunidades de las MSG es violencia de género, ya que la sexualidad y la identidad de género son componentes integrales del género; y, en segundo lugar, que el análisis de la dinámica de género

Loken, Meredith, and Jamie J. Hagen. (2022) Queering Gender-Based Violence Scholarship: An Integrated Research Agenda. *International Studies Review*, https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac050

© The Author(s) (2022). Published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the International Studies Association. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

contribuye a nuestra comprensión de cuándo, cómo y por qué atacar a las personas de las MSG forma parte del «repertorio de violencia» normativo de una organización. Analizamos la violencia en la guerra civil de Colombia como una aplicación ilustrativa de nuestro enfoque e identificamos futuras y fructíferas vías de investigación con importantes implicaciones políticas para estudiar y responder a la VG durante las guerras.

Ces dix dernières années, les travaux de recherche sur la dynamique des genres des conflits armés se sont multipliés. Cependant, dans ce domaine, la recherche s'intéresse peu à l'orientation sexuelle et l'identité de genre. De plus, tandis que des travaux dédiés aux violences contre des personnes issues des minorités sexuelles et de genre (MSG) en temps de guerre existent, ils ne tiennent généralement pas compte des travaux sur la violence basée sur le genre (VBG) dans des environnements soumis à des conflits ni des études sur la sexualité. Dans le présent article, nous intégrons ces ensembles de travaux et proposons une extension théorique de la VBG en tant que catégorie conceptuelle, empirique et analytique. Elle permettra d'étudier et expliquer les attaques ciblées à l'encontre des personnes lesbiennes, homosexuelles, bisexuelles et transgenres. Nous proposons deux interventions théoriques visant à enrichir les cadres existants de VBG afin d'expliquer les actes de violence perpétrés à l'encontre des personnes MSG. Nous nous proposons d'abord de démontrer que les actes de violence à l'encontre des communautés MSG sont de la VBG, car la sexualité et l'identité de genre font partie intégrante du genre. Puis, nous montrons que l'analyse de la dynamique de genre nous permet de mieux comprendre quand, comment et pourquoi le fait de cibler les personnes MSG appartient au « répertoire de violence » réglementaire d'une organisation. Nous nous intéressons à la guerre civile colombienne telle une application à valeur d'illustration de notre approche. Nous identifions également des pistes de recherche productives pour l'avenir, aux implications politiques importantes pour l'étude de la VBG en temps de guerre et ses réponses.

Keywords: gender-based violence, armed conflict, queer IR
Palabras clave: violencia de género, conflicto armado, RRII *queer*
Mots clés: violence basée sur le genre, conflit armé, RI homosexuelles

Introduction

Research on armed conflict's gender dynamics has expanded significantly in the past decade. Moving away from the singular conception of women as wartime victims, scholars are broadening the theoretical and empirical scope of gender-based violence (GBV) to include male victims, women perpetrators, and nonsexual harms.[1] However, research in this field pays little attention to sexual orientation and gender identity. Moreover, where scholarship focused on violence against sexual and gender minority (SGM) populations during war exists, it is largely divorced from work on GBV in conflict-related environments and from sexuality studies.[2] Treating this violence as a theoretically discrete phenomenon renders explanations and interventions incomplete when they fail to engage underlying gender dynamics. As a result, violence against SGM individuals and communities presently falls between scholarly trenches: it is under-explored, under-theorized, and often de-gendered.

---

[1] We use an expansive definition of GBV, drawing on United Nations (UN) Women's (n.d., n.p.) definition of GBV: "harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted. The term is also sometimes used to describe targeted violence against LGBTQI+ populations, when referencing violence related to norms of masculinity/femininity and/or gender norms."

In this article, we overview and integrate these bodies of work and argue for the theoretical expansion of "gender-based violence" in conflict research as a conceptual, empirical, and analytical category to study and explain targeted attacks against SGM individuals. Scholarly explanations for GBV during war emphasize that such targeting exploits underlying norms, rules, and beliefs about gender, sex, and violence to stigmatize individuals, disrupt gender order in specific communities, and to control sexual behavior as a manifestation of moral and material authority. We suggest two theoretical interventions to better equip existing GBV frameworks to explain violence perpetrated against SGM people, which is both akin to and unique from other gendered abuses.

First, we conclude that while the existing literature theorizes well "women" and "men" as gendered categories and the sociopolitical expectations associated with each that underlie GBV in different contexts, this scholarship should extend to consider sexuality—through compulsory heteronormativity—and gender identity as integral components of gender and as a basis on which lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and otherwise queer individuals may be targeted. Simply, we show that many conflict actors punish SGM people for their perceived failure to uphold gender and related sexual orders. Moreover, we illustrate the need to bring an integrated and intersectional approach to understanding GBV that recognizes the relationships between a multiplicity of identities including gender, sexuality, and race while queering foundational assumptions about both perpetrators and survivors of GBV.[3]

Second, we extend GBV frameworks to help explain when, how, and why SGM people are targeted in armed conflict. We bridge GBV scholarship with feminist and queer IR research about the regulation of sexuality during conflict. We focus on the perpetration of homophobic and transphobic violence as a method for demonstrating practical and ideological authority, and we suggest that regulatory violence against SGM individuals provides further evidence of GBV as a method for legitimizing violent actors during armed conflict. However, we also emphasize that because gender and sexuality are linked in ways that underlie normative gender order, such violence targeting those who are SGM may offer conflict actors a uniquely—and perversely—productive method for defining sovereignty and securitizing morality during war.

We examine violence targeting SGM people in Colombia's civil war as an empirical illustration of our approach. Examining violence perpetrated by regime-loyal paramilitaries and rebel organizations, we demonstrate that violence targeting those who are SGM is gendered and that armed actors use this violence as a method of establishing tangible and moral rule. We then identify future, fruitful research avenues by articulating an integrated research agenda that helps inform a more accurate understanding of violence dimensions and discuss important policy implications for studying and responding to GBV during armed conflict.

Gender and Violence: The State of the Fields

Proscription of conflict-related GBV emerged seriously as an international norm in the mid-to-late 1990s. Prompted by widespread sexual violence in Rwanda and former Yugoslavian states and facilitated by feminist legal activism, the 1998 Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court recognized sexual violence as a potential war crime, crime against humanity, and act of genocide in international law. These norms and international interventions to uphold them were further entrenched by the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000 and the institutionalization of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) programming.

---

[2] We define SGM as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, nonbinary, or otherwise queer, non-heterosexual, and/or non-cisgender individuals. We use this term rather than LGBTQ because it more fully accounts for a broad, contextual range of genders and sexualities.

[3] Crenshaw's (1991) foundational work emphasizes the connections between intersectional identities, specifically focusing on the experiences of black women, and GBV.

A rich academic scholarship developed alongside this agenda: a robust field describes and explains GBV during armed conflict (cf. Carpenter 2005; Wood 2006; Baaz and Stern 2010; Kirby 2013; Leiby 2015; Cohen 2016; Berry 2018; Loken, Lake, and Cronin-Furman 2018; Schulz and Touquet 2020). This research concludes that conflict actors frequently target individuals or groups based on their gender and the social, sexual expectations that ground gender difference. For example, Carpenter (2005) and Kinsella (2006, 161) suggest that the legal and normative "principle of distinction" between combatants and civilians can imperil men during armed conflict. The assumption that all men are combatants results in selective massacres and other abuses during war (Carpenter 2005). On the "civilian" side, Sjoberg and Peet (2011) argue that belligerents may intentionally target women because this protectionist, paternal principle requires that they be consummately vulnerable during armed conflict.

Feminist international relations (IR) scholarship further illustrates how and why conflict actors aim to control reproductive bodies—most often women—as a method of gendered regulation facilitating national, ethnic, or otherwise strategic control (Berry 2018; Laverty and De Vos 2021). Berry (2018, 128) explains how Serb soldiers forcibly impregnated Bosnian women as a method of controlling ethnic bloodlines: "With these war rapes, Serb forces aimed to damage women's future ability to serve as mothers of the Bosnian nation, as any children born of rape would be Serbs." She similarly notes that soldiers forced men to rape their wives or mothers in order to emasculate them and disrupt normal, gendered order in their communities. Donnelly (2018, 461) similarly suggests that non-state actors create "new gender order[s]" within their groups and the communities they seek to control. For example, in Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army relied on forced marriage and prohibitions on extramarital sexual violence to evidence their ideological commitments and desired social outcomes (Donnelly 2018). Indeed, the LRA used rape and coerced sex within forced marriages "to increase birth rates and ensure the [group's] continued existence" (Laverty and De Vos 2021, 625). Elsewhere, Donnelly (2019) argues that armed groups regulate gender roles and opportunities as a mechanism of building cohesion, especially for groups with a desire to remake communities in their own ideological image.

Lake (2018) similarly shows how the M23 armed movement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo crafted itself as a credible challenger and moral alternative to the state by establishing a police unit to protect women and children by prosecuting sexual violence within its ranks. Likewise, research on state actors further highlights the importance of gendered regulation for establishing legitimacy and authority during war; for example, Loken, Lake, and Cronin-Furman (2018) demonstrate how the Sri Lankan government selectively investigated and prosecuted sexual violence cases in order to gain moral high ground during civil war. In the Sri Lankan case, the opposition—the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealem (LTTE)—also explicitly outlawed sexual violence and publicly punished members who violated these policies (Wood 2006). They further controlled sexual relationships within the organization, instituting premarital separation for men and women cadres.

Most GBV scholarship analyzes sexual targeting of women (Wood 2009; Baaz and Stern 2010; Davies and True 2015; Lake 2018; Loken, Lake, and Cronin-Furman 2018). Much of this research identifies unequal, gendered social conditions as an explanation for wartime GBV (Baaz and Stern 2010; Sjoberg and Peet 2011; Davies and True 2015). Such targeting exploits underlying beliefs, rules, and norms about sex and gender. For instance, armed groups may use sexual violence to dislocate women's cultural and literal reproduction and thus disrupt their place in society (Sjoberg and Peet 2011). Structural gendered discrimination that de-values women—and femininity—and subsequent power inequalities in the home, market, and state may consequently underpin GBV (Baaz and Stern 2010; Davies and True 2015).

Indeed, feminist military studies highlight the role of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995; Kirby and Henry 2012) and militarized masculinities as key to understanding the drivers of these abuses (Enloe 2000; Alison 2007; Baaz and Stern 2009; Belkin 2012). Alison (2007, 80), for example, demonstrates how rape is mobilized as a dimension of militarization: "In wartime, perpetrating sexual violence—at least against the 'enemy'—becomes a more socially acceptable feature of (militarised) masculinity." A small but growing literature also shows how militarization can increase domestic violence against women and other nonsexual, but gendered, abuses (cf. Müller and Tranchant 2019). As Enloe (2000, 110) argues, GBV "draws so much of its rationale from an imagining of societal conflict and/or the functions of a formal institution such as the state's national security or defense apparatus or an insurgency's military arm."[4]

Other scholarship explores variation in sexual violence perpetration, highlighting group dynamics and choices (Wood 2006; Cohen 2016; Chu and Braithwaite 2018). Ultimately, these agendas are complementary: the latter identifies conditions under which gendered violence is most likely, while the former explains why this type of violence is so usefully instrumentalized. However, while women victims of sexual violence are the primary focus of this scholarship, researchers are widening this theoretical framework to explain other forms of gendered harm.

Sjoberg (2016), for example, writing on wartime rape committed by women, articulates a gender-subordination theory of abuse that releases conceptions of perpetrators and victims from the singular men-attacking-women dynamic. She argues, "Gender subordination is not something that men exclusively do to women, but rather something any people can do to any people on the basis of gender-based expectations. Who is doing the perpetrating, then, does not change the nature of an act of gender subordination—either for the perpetrator or (most importantly) for the victim" (Sjoberg 2016, 15). In this vein, researchers pay increased attention to sexual violence committed against men (Dolan 2018; Eichert 2019; Schulz 2021). Davies and True (2015, 502) argue that sexual violence may be particularly impactful in cases with male victims "precisely because it undermines their achievement of masculine agency and political identity."[5] Eichert (2019) concludes such violence may be audience-focused, asserting dominance at the community level through individual targeting. In research on sexual violence in Northern Uganda, Schulz (2021, 12) suggests that men can experience "physical, psychological, social, and physiological effects" impacting their identities as men but potentially also affecting other, intersecting social or sexual identities. Schulz and Touquet (2020) further conclude that some such abuses may be motivated—in part—by sexual gratification through domination.

This scholarship lays the foundation for analytical engagement with GBV to extend to sexuality and gender identity. Yet the field is slow to consider these contours. Hagen (2016a) argues that because attention to violence against women—and, more recently, men—ignores sexual orientation and gender identity, it implicitly assumes that "women" and "men" are exclusive categories, and that all women and men are heterosexual. Unlike Schulz (2021), most research on men as victims in armed conflict assumes or knows that its subjects are heterosexual, focusing on how actors therefore intend gendered violence to threaten heterosexual masculinities (Davies and True 2015; Zalewiski et al. 2018). Scholarship on women victims of conflict violence also largely considers them heterosexual or ignores the possibility that they are not (HaleyNelson 2005; Hagen 2016a). HaleyNelson's (2005) research is an exception. She argues that sexual violence against lesbians escalates during armed conflict because of how political, state homophobia intersects with violence targeting women: "women around the world are targeted for human rights violations of bodily integrity because of their gender [. . .] for lesbians, this is compounded by an additional layer of discrimination based on sexual identity or orientation" (HaleyNelson 2005, 166).

---

[4] Here, Enloe (2000) is specifically discussing rape. In Peru's civil war, for example, state agents engaged in sexual violence during the eleven-year period following the establishment of the Political Military Command in the district of Manta in 1984. In her work looking at this sexual violence, Bueno-Hansen (2015, 108–109) argues, "This case [Manta Vilca] and the debates surrounding it- regarding the social context in which soldiers could act with such impunity-imply an underlying heteropatriarchal order. Within this order, conflicts exist among differing expressions of masculinity: those of the benevolent state promising justice, the hyper aggressive soldier/rapist-soldier, and the community leaders."

[5] This broadening view of gendered violence is reflected in international civilian protection architecture. For example, in 2019, the UNSCR 2467 recognized men and boys as victims of gender-based abuse, including sexual violence, for the first time.

There are extant critiques of the relative inattention to sexual orientation and gender identity as a dimension of GBV in policy. For example, Hagen (2016a, 317) calls the "continued silence about homophobic and transphobic violence" in the WPS architecture "alarming," noting that SGM individuals are largely absent in policy, advocacy, and data indicators at the international level. None of the WPS Security Council resolutions mention sexual orientation or violence against SGM communities.[6] Dolan (2014) and Margalit (2019) too argue for attention to SGM people in humanitarian interventions and international humanitarian law, respectively, although Kapur (2017, 2) contends that such attention de-radicalizes queer engagement by forcing it into a "dominant normative order" rather than queering human rights.

In sum, academic literature on GBV has in recent years begun to account for a widening and more complex community of survivors. Still, the lack of engagement with sexual orientation and gender identity as a dimension of this complexity among GBV scholars is surprising. This is, first, because of the clear salience of sexuality scholarship in a broadening GBV-attentive field, and second because, as discussed, a robust body of work *does* interrogate state and non-state actor control of gender and sexuality during armed conflict. However, work addressing violence against SGM communities is largely siloed into tracks where these underlying gender dynamics are not fully realized.

Specifically, there is a small but rich literature examining abuses committed against SGM people during armed conflict. Some of this work focuses on state militaries and supportive armed groups. For example, Serrano-Amaya (2018) interrogates homophobic violence from regime-loyal paramilitaries and suggests that they act as an outgrowth of state discrimination. He suggests that paramilitaries instrumentalize the "productive power" of homophobic violence to generate support during wartime (Serrano-Amaya 2018, 47). Payne (2014, 328) contends that paramilitary abuses in the Colombian conflict are "a form of communicative violence meant to discipline the civilian population," underscoring the role that conflict actors' need for authority plays in this kind of violence. Writing on The Troubles in Northern Ireland, Duggan (2012) suggests that violent groups successfully mobilized homophobia because the government was not invested in protecting SGM individuals. She also links the persecution of lesbians in this context to women's social subordination.

Other research investigates rebel violence committed against SGM people. For example, Thylin (2020, 448) documents sexual abuse and execution as punishment for homosexual combatants in some Colombian insurgencies, attributing this violence to a desire for "heteronormative social control." Thylin's work is distinctive because it focuses on rebels' experiences; she demonstrates that SGM individuals are not only victims, but also agents of political violence. Tshcantret's (2018) work on rebel violence is uniquely cross-national and advances several causal claims. He documents targeted killings of SGM people in thirteen cases and offers three explanations: groups with revolutionary ideologies may view killing SGM individuals as a signal for their vision of society; groups with territorial control may view targeting minorities as a simple way to demonstrate authority and legitimacy; and, consequently, groups in competitive environments may use homophobic killings as a tool of outbidding when discrimination is socially acceptable. Although these studies highlight some underlying gendered factors, such as the role of political discrimination during peacetime, this scholarship often treats homophobic violence as a tool of opportunity, rather than part of a larger, gendered pattern.[7] While this literature suggests that political discrimination against SGM people creates a permissive environment for conflict violence, such work takes actor interests as given and under-evaluates the relationships between gender, sexuality, and state or social homophobia.

---

[6] In 2015, the UNSC held a meeting addressing Daesh-perpetrated violence against SGM people and sent an investigative team to Iraq, but did not move forward with official condemnation. In 2016, the Security Council recognized violence against SGM individuals for the first—and only—time in a resolution condemning the Orlando nightclub shooting.

To summarize, as Schulz (2021, 7) argues, "inclusive recognition of gender non-conforming, intersex and/or trans, or queer identities is [. . .] necessary to fully comprehend studies of war." As Richter-Montpetit (2018, 220) concludes, "Queer research demonstrates that sexuality and gender are important registers in the making and governing of subjects (people; states; organisations) and the international." Yet, theoretical frameworks and empirical models for understanding abuses targeting SGM people are largely divorced from feminist theories of and scholarship about GBV. The small field of research about SGM communities in armed conflict generally considers violence against them as a third category, distinct from abuses targeting women or men. This approach misunderstands sexual orientation as a discrete characteristic rather than an intersectional component of gender (Hagen 2016a): SGM individuals often identify as either women or men.

Queering Gender-Based Violence Frameworks

Responding to the state of affairs in research on violence, we advance two theoretical interventions to integrate scholarship on conflict-related GBV—which overlooks sexual orientation and gender identity—and the literature on wartime abuses committed against SGM people—which largely neglects to link homophobic and transphobic abuses to broader patterns of GBV. We suggest that GBV frameworks can and should extend to conceptualize and explain violence targeting SGM communities by, first, recognizing sexual orientation and gender identity as components of gender and therefore as sites of GBV, and, second, by identifying SGM individuals as victims of regulatory violence aimed at enforcing specific gender orders during armed conflict. Through this approach, we illustrate the limitations of the prevailing heteronormative and cisnormative approach to understanding GBV, which largely treats violence against SGM people as a separate category and imprints presupposed heterosexuality onto its research subjects.

---

[7] Some related bodies of work do make these gendered connections. This is particularly true of research illustrating how wider, structural vulnerabilities SGM people face are aggravated during conflict, related institutional and social breakdown, and exclusion in international law and post-conflict initiatives such as transitional justice (Myrttinen, Khattab, and Maydaa 2017; Margalit 2019; Fobear and Baines 2020). This research complements reporting from human rights organizations such as the Human Dignity Trust (2014) and Human Rights Watch (2009, 2017) as well as that from UN bodies such as the Refugee Agency.

Gendering Violence against SGM Communities

Violence targeting SGM individuals, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and otherwise queer, because of their sexual orientations and/or gender identities is GBV. Homophobic and transphobic violence punish gender deviance: such violence enforces "orderly" gendered categories and the consequent social and sexual expectations therein. The broader literature on "queer IR" lays the foundation to understand such orders as products of heteronationalism—political homophobia excluding gender and sexual minorities from an ideal vision of the nation—at the international level (Lind 2014; Wilcox 2014; Richter Monpetit 2018).[8]

States define and compel gender and sexual normativity through exclusionary policies, frequently employing "deviant" gender identities and sexual orientations as foils to a secure, ideal society defined by traditional, hierarchal, and heterosexual divisions (Weber 2016). As Ward (2015, 52) concludes, "the hetero/homo binary has been premised on the view that to be heterosexual is to possess a normal, natural, and ethical sexual orientation and that to be homosexual is to be deviant, pathological, and depraved." And though heterosexuality is a relatively recent social invention, it is a powerful one. States mandate heterosexual norms—homosexuality is illegal in nearly 40 percent of countries –and often enforce these expectations violently. Even in countries with legal protections, social violence and discrimination often remain widespread. For example, although there are robust legal safeguards in Brazil, SGM people face extreme violence from families, gangs, the public, and police (Amar 2013).

Gender-based abuses exploit underlying expectations about gender to cause both individual harm and unsettle broader social fabric (Baaz and Stern 2009, 2010; Sjoberg and Peet 2011). Because war "disrupts and reconstitutes gender structures in ways that dislocate" gender expectations and identities, violence aimed at entrenching or correcting "normal" gender rules may be particularly pervasive during conflict (Hagen, Daigle, and Myrttinen 2021; Loken 2021, 22). As such, homophobic violence in and outside of armed conflict targets *sexual* minorities because they fail to uphold the compulsory coupling of gender with heterosexuality, wherein cisgender women desire cisgender men, and vice versa. Moreover, states, groups, and individuals target *gender* minorities because they transgress the expected delineation of two "fixed" genders (Serrano-Amaya 2018) or because they fail to express femininity and masculinity in "acceptable" ways. Such structural gender inequalities scaffold gender order in everyday society. This violence "communicate[s] a power relationship between the victimized [. . .] and the perpetrator" (Schulz 2021). It is, to use Sjoberg (2016)'s framework, gender subordination.

For example, the al-Mahdi Army in Iraq condemned gay men and women and gender-non-conforming individuals; the group ultimately killed more than fifty-five gay men who they considered homosexuals by throwing them from building roofs, shooting them, or torturing them to death (Human Rights Watch 2009; Tschantret 2018). The al-Mahdi Army told one gay man that if he grew his hair long or wore earrings, the group would "slaughter" him. They kidnapped another victim and threatened to kill him because of his clothing, groomed eyebrows, and pierced ear (Human Rights Watch 2009). The group reportedly tapped into social panic centered "around gender- particularly the idea that men are becoming less 'manly,' failing tests of 'customary masculinity'" during the civil war (Human Rights Watch 2009, n.p.).

---

[8] In 2014, Weber and Sjoberg co-edited a groundbreaking forum in *International Studies Review—Queer International Relations: From Queer IR to Queer IR*. The forum addressed key themes in bringing queer theory to IR, including insights about being "out" as queer in IR, how queer analytics matter to understanding the family in IR, how/if queer theory can converse with mainstream IR, and potential allies for queer IR.

The gendered contours of such violence are documented within other fields. Researchers explain, for example, how heteronormative assumptions within refugee policy mean that in many instances queer kinships and families are not recognized (Ritholtz and Buxton 2021; Yarwood et al 2022). However, conflict-related GBV frameworks have not sufficiently accounted for sexual orientation and gender identity, to the detriment of both GBV theorizing and efforts to respond to individuals who have experienced this violence. Consequently, we conclude that by considering sexual orientation and gender identity as integral components of gender, GBV frameworks can both better account for the strength, structure, and sociosexual expectations of gender orders and further extend existing theories of violence targeting SGM people. To quote Wilcox (2014, 612), "projects of queering IR are not about making IR queer as if it weren't already, but they are about revealing how sexualities, affiliations, and affects are produced and regulated with existing practices [. . .] and our underlying conceptual frameworks for understanding [them]."

Gender, Sexuality, and Regulatory Violence

Analyzing gender dynamics also adds to our understanding of when, how, and why targeting SGM individuals composes part of an organization's "repertoire of violence." As discussed, some researchers examine GBV as a form of regulatory violence through which actors enforce gender orders and expectations to demonstrate material and ideological authority in periods of insecurity (cf. Lake 2014; Loken, Lake, and Cronin-Furman 2018). During conflict, state militaries, paramilitaries, and rebel groups may similarly enforce heteronormativity as a manifestation of "world-making." Regulating sexual behavior is an essential state function, one that governments perform as a method of defining sovereignty, designating citizens from noncitizens, and securitizing morality (Canaday 2009). There is cross-cultural reliance on a supposed "traditional" gender order to structure states' most basic internal activities. This includes the division of labor, legal hierarchies, and reproduction. Consequently, political homophobia is a well-established tool of statecraft (Puar 2007; Weiss and Bosia 2014; Weber 2016). State militaries—and their armed allies—may intensify regulatory violence as a method of re-entrenching authority during conflict and when sovereignty is contested. Currier (2019, 20), for example, argues that political violence against SGM people "can serve as an expedient strategy for political elites seeking to punish gender and sexual dissidents, to bolster their moral and political authority, to weaken political opponents, to buttress narratives of national sovereignty, and/or to deflect attention from sociopolitical controversies."

Rebel organizations too may target SGM people as "statecraft." States' exclusion or regulation of SGM individuals as a securitizing practice in peacetime means that rebels exercise brutality over a community often already framed as "legitimate" targets (Myrttinen and Daigle 2017; Tschantret 2018). Targeting SGM communities may provide rebels a unique and powerful claim to political and moral authority: by controlling gender and sexual behavior, rebels show that they can monopolize a fundamental state violence and can set and enforce rules. Such targeting may offer material benefit: Tschantret (2020, 1460) concludes, "Since sexual minorities have few outward markers of their difference, accurately targeting them signals to potential defectors that the regime can effectively monitor and punish them."

Moreover, this violence also signals ideological authority and mandates specific gender orders in societies that rebels wish to control. For example, in Peru, the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA) publicly announced their targeted executions of SGM people, harassed civilians by distributing fliers threatening death for all homosexuals, and threatened to bomb the Homosexual Movement of Lima's offices (Lima Homosexual Movement n.d.; Myrttinen and Drumond 2019).

In 1998, MRTA rebels massacred eight transgender and gay civilians and later left in public the body of a young man with a sign reading "this is the way that faggots die" (Myrttinen and Drumond 2019). Defining and enforcing gender and sexual boundaries mimics states' technical and moral delineation between sexualized sovereign subjects and others.

Recognizing violence targeting SGM people as gender-based in type and regulatory in purpose may enable researchers to account for variation in perpetration. Studies of GBV identify a breadth of factors that condition this kind of violence, including the relative normalization of gendered violence in society (Davies and True 2015), unequal power relationships (Schulz and Touquet 2020), the desire to integrate new or enforce existing gender norms within a community (Baines 2017; Donnelly 2019), and leadership strategy and internal hierarchy strength (Wood 2006; Hoover Green 2018). Relatedly, research on conflict-related GBV suggests that armed organizations refrain from these abuses when group leaders "judge that [violence] would be counterproductive or it is against their norms" and when group hierarchy is sufficiently strong to restrain individual combatants (Wood 2009, 136; Hoover Green 2018). This judgment is likely conditional on group ideology (Sarwari 2021), aims (Cohen 2016), and pre-conflict gender norms and power dynamics (Davies and True 2015; Schulz and Touquet 2020).

These frameworks offer avenues forward for theorizing variation in violence targeting those who are SGM. Armed groups that seek to govern and that intend to establish new social orders may target SGM people when such violence illustrates core ideological tenets. For example, in Syria and Iraq, Daesh militants reportedly targeted gay men, lesbians, and transgender individuals with lethal, sexual, and other forms of violence as "part of a larger [Daesh] strategy of cleansing all those who they perceive as not conforming to [their] community standards" (Stern 2016, 1192). In Colombia, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) leaders reportedly viewed homosexuality as a "Yankee affliction" foreign to Colombian society and targeted SGM individuals as part of an anti-imperial project (Moloney 2019).

Importantly, we also observe variation in the *types* of abuses actors perpetrate against SGM communities as well as *who* within SGM communities (e.g., gay men in Peru or transgender women in Syria) are targeted. Research shows that those with overlapping marginalized identities are more vulnerable to GBV in conflict (UN Women 2019). And while comparative, detailed data on violence targeting SGM people are relatively scarce, reports suggest, for example, that queer Afro-Caribbeans and other Afro-descendants (locally known as *palenqueros* and *raizales*), indigenous individuals, and people living in poverty are particularly vulnerable to violence "in the context of armed conflict in Colombia" (CNMH 2015; IACHR 2015, 193; Serrano-Amaya 2018). Applying an intersectional approach in future research will help expand GBV framework beyond sexual violence and into other kinds of abuses with an awareness of how race, class, gender, and sexuality inform who is targeted for this abuse. Notably, intersectionality is one of the two guiding principles (the other being dialogue) for the conceptual framework developed by the UN's Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity (UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner 2020).[9]

---

[9] The report states, "adequate analysis of the causes and consequences of violence and discrimination requires an intersectional lens, as they are experienced in ways that are compounded by factors such as ethnicity/race, indigenous or minority status, colour, socioeconomic status and/or caste, language, religion or belief, political opinion, national origin, marital and/or maternal status, age, urban/rural location, health status, disability and property ownership. No particular identity will ever encapsulate the entire complexity of the lived human experience, but each one of them can nonetheless serve as a point of entry, a prism through which the mandate holder may attempt to describe the infinite richness of human aspirations and experiences, and the depths of misery to which some persons are sunk by violence and discrimination. In turn, this will hopefully allow for the texture of these lived experiences to be made visible and, as a consequence, addressable."

Finally, recognizing violence targeting SGM people as regulatory akin to other types of GBV broadens our frameworks for understanding GBV as selective in scope. Research on this kind of targeting emphasizes that perpetrators are often discerning yet indiscriminate in their victimization patterns; for example, actors may target women from specific political communities because they are women (Alison 2007), or men from specific ethnic groups because they are men (Schulz 2021). But while women and men may be targeted through (sometimes) more easily observable, gendered markers, in many cases violence targeting SGM individuals such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people requires a more discriminating approach. Conflict actors may go to great lengths to identify and brutalize SGM people, including going through queer individuals' social media and phone contacts or forcing queer people to compose lists of their sexual contacts or queer friends (Bobseine 2013). In this way, violence targeting SGM communities is unique.

However, armed groups also often target people who they *perceive to be* SGM individuals based on the relation of their outward appearances to expectations about their gender. For example, according to one male victim in Syria, "[. . .] the Free (Syrian) Army came to my village, and because I look very soft and do make-up, they arrested me. I was raped in the detention centre" (UNCHR 2017, 29). Similarly, groups including the al-Mahdi Army and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) reportedly executed individuals they suspected to be gay because of their appearance or lifestyles (Tschantret 2018). As the IACHR (2013, 414) notes, "in the context of the armed conflict [. . .] trans persons are 'the most vulnerable group at a national level' because gender expression gives them more visibility and increases their vulnerability and the violation of their human rights." Therefore, factors such as social and sexual relationship monitoring may uniquely condition violence targeting SGM people in some but not all cases; the broad, known pattern of this violence suggests that armed groups may use GBV more selectively than the existing literature describes. This provides further evidence that regulating sexual and gender boundaries may be a particularly important aspect of gendered regulation, as selective violence is resource-intensive.

In this article, we advocate for approaching violence targeting SGM communities through a framework that recognizes these abuses as gendered and as a method of regulating gender order during armed conflict. We summarize the analytical contributions of our framework, compared with the mainstream approaches to studying GBV, in Table 1.

An Integrated Research Approach

To demonstrate the empirical utility of our approach, we briefly examine paramilitary and rebel violence targeting SGM people in Colombia's civil war. Colombia is a useful illustrative case for two reasons. First, the broader literature suggests that ideology can shape repertoires of violence: left-wing groups may be least likely to target individuals using GBV (Sarwari 2021). Colombia's civil war was fought between the government, right-wing regime-loyal paramilitaries, and ideologically left rebel organizations. It therefore offers within-case variation on actor ideologies and includes a "hard case" for our approach on the rebel actors' side.

Second, detailed data on violence targeting those who are SGM are limited in most cases. Human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that monitor conflict-related violence largely ignore SGM individuals (Hagen 2016a, 2017), speaking about violence can be socially and legally dangerous, some communities have better reporting access than others, and incentives to come forward about abuse do not fall evenly across SGM communities. In the Colombian case, local NGOs such as Colombia Diversa, government initiatives including the Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH), and IGOs such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

Table 1. Analytical contributions of a queered approach to GBV

Analytical concept	Mainstream GBV framework	Queered GBV framework
Targets of GBV	Focus on women and, to a lesser but burgeoning extent, men	Focus not only on women and men, but also on those outside the gender binary
Sexual orientation and gender identity of targets of GBV	Survivors of GBV are assumed heterosexual and cisgender	Survivors of GBV may be lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, or otherwise queer, which is important for explaining both the rationale of targeting and consequences
People who are SGM as targets of violence	Survivors who are SGM are viewed as a third category (i.e., men, women, and LGBTI survivors)	Individuals who are SGM are not a distinct group of survivors other than men and women; rather, they are overlapping with and expanded beyond men and women
Gendered rationale of targeting	Reproducing gender subordination for women; introducing gender subordination for men	Punishing failure to meet heteronormative and cisgender expectations of gender order
Regulatory functions of GBV	Regulating gender and sexuality as a situational dimension of GBV	Regulating gender and sexuality as a central dimension of GBV

document perpetration patterns and collect testimony and from a wide range of SGM individuals. The breadth of this data, presently unique to this case and perhaps the civil war in Syria,[10] enables us to explore the gendered dynamics of reported violence patterns most responsibly.

Queering the Gendered Approach in Colombia

In 2016, Colombia's government signed a peace agreement with the FARC-EP, the primary rebel opposition in the country. The armed conflict lasted for more than fifty years: over six million people were displaced and over 200,000 people were killed (Maier 2020). Yet, when the historic peace referendum was first put to the people of Colombia, it failed. A slim majority of Colombians rejected the deal in part (but not entirely) over its inclusion of LGBTI[11] people as a vulnerable group specifically targeted during the war (Hagen 2016b; The Monitoring Group for the Implementation of CEDAW in Colombia 2019).[12] Colombia's peace accords marked the first time that LGBTI people were included in official peace dialogue proceedings responding to abuses committed during armed conflict and invited to official peace dialogues in their capacities to advocate on SGM rights

---

[10] For discussions of violence targeting SGM communities in Syria, see, for example, the Syria Human Rights Observatory reporting, Human Rights Watch's 2014 report *The Double Threat for Gay Men in Syria*, the UN Human Rights Council's 2016 *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' 2017 report *"We Keep It in Our Heart": Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in the Syria Crisis*.

[11] LGBT/LGBTI is the language used in the Colombian accords' context. We describe the term here as LGBTI for salience with Colombian organizations referenced here.

[12] According to the Monitoring Group for the Implementation of CEDAW in Colombia (2019, 4), "The significant number of people who voted against the plebiscite convened by President Santos for the endorsement of the peace agreement (2016), in whose decision the so-called 'gender ideology,' as propaganda generating aversion and fear of progress in the rights of women, had an important weight and accounts for an adverse context for the achievement of equality and non-discrimination against women and the LGBT population."

(Casey 2016; Hagen 2016b; Bueno-Hansen 2020). Although a renegotiated accord including these provisions eventually passed (Koopman 2020, 8), the failed plebiscite on the Colombian Peace Accords illustrates the strength, structure, and socio-sexual expectations of gendered orders in the country.

Maier (2020, 378), summarizing data from the Victim's Unit of the Colombian government, suggests that individuals who identified as "LGBTI" were "15 times more likely than women to experience 'crimes against sexual freedom and integrity' and 162 times more likely than men." Moreover, this population "were five times more likely to experience threats than those who identify as women or men." While these statistics likely undercount violence targeting those who are SGM—the Victim's Unit data consider women, men, and "LGBTI" individuals to be separate categories—these data make clear that queer people were particularly vulnerable to violence during the long war. Indeed, queer people in Colombia experienced violences including, not limited to, killings, sexual violence, torture, abduction, forced displacement, threats, and harassment (Ritholtz 2022).

Local organizations collected testimonies and data about violence that LGBTI individuals experienced and presented it to the Gender Sub-Commission facilitating the peace process. The Sub-Commission's eighteen members were meant to "ensure a gender perspective and women's rights are included in all agreements."[13] In their presentations, local organizations such as Caribe Afirmativo and Colombia Diversa "painted a picture of LGBTI people living as second-class citizens, describing a country of exclusion, discrimination, and sheer denial of diverse gender identities, sexes, and sexual orientations" (Maier 2020, 387). Although the abuses that these groups monitor are not always framed as "conflict-related" violence, these experiences fed into the peace process and transitional justice mechanisms.[14] For example, Colombia Diversa (2020, 14), a Bogotá-based NGO that promotes and defends SGM community rights, concludes that the violence is "prejudice based" arguing, "all violence committed against LGBT people in the Colombian armed conflict was always organized and never arbitrary, even if the system that produces it is not readily apparent [. . .] armed groups capitalize on preexisting scripts of gendered oppression, which are in turn rooted in the sex/gender/desire system, in order to target LGBT people and that it is these systems that imprint a clear organizational logic on the violence."

Taking an integrated approach to conflict-related abuses illuminates the gendered underpinnings as a form of regulatory violence. In the case of Colombia's civil war, paramilitary and rebel organizations targeted SGM individuals selectively and collectively to demonstrate their authority and install an exclusionary social, gendered order. As Serrano-Amaya (2018, 37) concludes, violence targeting SGM communities "can be seen as ways of creating and demarcating the boundaries of social groups by sharply defining the subordinate position in gender and sexual roles [. . .] The despised other is defined as being in itself a threat to the imagined homogeneous community." And indeed, armed actors in Colombia also aimed to establish this imagined community by controlling gender and sexual roles in other ways, including by targeting sex workers as deviant and regulating in-group sexual relationships (IACHR 2015; Serrano-Amaya 2018). By recognizing targeted violence against SGM individuals as GBV, we can better understand these abuses as part of a broader, regulatory project.[15]

---

[13] Attention to gender in this case included not only intersections with SGM community rights, but also indigeneity. See Koopman (2020) for insights into how Colombian feminists view the concept of intersectionality. See González Villamizar and Bueno-Hansen (2021) for insights into the mainstreaming of intersectionality in the Colombian Peace Process.

[14] Gray (2018) notes how this is in part the result of the ongoing challenge of the war/not-war divide between what type of sexual and gender-based violence counts as being "part of" war.

[15] It can be difficult to ascertain why individuals or communities are targeted using GBV. For example, a lesbian woman may be targeted because she is a woman, a lesbian, or both. The IACHR (2013, 408–409) introduces non-mutually exclusive or fully conditional criteria for determining that an abuse is targeted "due to prejudice, that is,

In Colombia's civil war, the government fought against Marxist–Leninist rebel organizations primarily motivated by anti-imperialism and revolutionary change for peasants and the working class. Paramilitaries and other right-wing militant groups expanded to fight against the rebels in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) operating as one of the most violent and powerful paramilitary organizations. When the AUC demobilized in the early- and mid- 2000s, smaller right-wing groups splintered off and maintained a violent presence in conflict-affected areas. Armed groups on all sides are implicated in violence targeting SGM people because of their sexuality or gender identity. Still, available data suggest that paramilitary organizations are responsible for over 70 percent of reported threats against LGBTI people in Colombia's conflict (Serrano-Amaya 2018), while rebel groups are responsible for almost 20 percent of reported violence perpetrated against these individuals (CNMH 2015). Due to work from Caribe Afirmativo, other organizations, and survivors of violence, as of 2021 the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP)—the tribunal established by the peace accord—has jurisdiction in cases of discrimination and persecution against LGBTI people in the armed conflict context (see Caribe Afirmativo 2022).

According to Serrano-Amaya (2018), paramilitary violence in Colombia disproportionately targeted *travestis*[16] and homosexual men, often through collusion with or complicity of state agents. Still, paramilitary groups also attacked transgender men and lesbian women (CNMH 2015). Much of this violence targeted SGM individuals selectively: "A common pattern is that *travestis* and *homosexuales* are killed by armed groups while they are on the streets or in public venues [. . .] They usually work in pairs: one driving the vehicle, the other firing the weapon" (Serrano-Amaya 2018, 32). In many cases, perpetrators of these killings left notes on their victims' bodies explaining why they had committed the assassinations, suggesting that these were not isolated incidents but part of a "logic of control and regulation of bodies and sexuality" (CNMH 2015). Paramilitaries also threatened individuals directly, arriving at their homes and telling them to leave town or be killed (CNMH 2015).

Paramilitary groups further targeted SGM communities collectively, usually through threats and forced displacement: these organizations distributed leaflets throughout cities and towns threatening homosexuals and demanding that they leave or face expulsion or eradication (CNMH 2015; Serrano-Amaya 2018). For example, transgender women forced to leave their homes in Bogotá often settled in "the Tolerance Zone of the Barrio Santa Fe, characterized as a 'ghetto' or space for confining the population so as to keep trans persons distant from society, and at the same time [. . .] in which they feel safer" (IACHR 2013, 415). Transgender women also reported fleeing their homes because paramilitaries murdered their friends and threatened the broader community:

> *Llegan varios [paramilitares] y ya es donde las otras niñas [otras mujeres transgénero] empiezan a hacer cosas, entonces empiezan a decir que iban a acabar con los maricas del pueblo [...] entonces con el tiempo cogen a Carolina y la matan, en la casa, durmiendo, van por Karen y la cogen y la aporrean y ella se alcanza a volar. Entonces ya, yo no me iba a quedar esperando qué era lo que iba a pasar conmigo [...].* (CNMH 2015, 132)

---

motivated by the sexual orientation or gender identity, real or perceived, of the victim." These criteria include: if abuses occur in spaces where SGM communities socialize; if they were attacked with their partner or other SGM individuals; if the perpetrators said discriminatory things to them, left discriminatory messages, or claimed the attacks on the basis of discrimination motivated by the sexual orientation or gender identity; and if the perpetrating group is known to be homophobic or transphobic. While these criteria will not apply in all cases, individually they are useful assessment tools and available evidence suggests that these factors are often discernible.

[16] In his research studying violence against *travestis,* Serrano-Amaya (2018, 19–20) relies on original, cultural, and contextual terms "to avoid an immediate translation that would blur meanings that are relevant for this research. The Spanish term *travesti* (transvestite) will be kept in order to stress relations of social exclusion, exploitation and marginality faced by some transgender women, mostly those in sex work."

> Several paramilitaries arrived and that's when the other girls [other transgender women] they start to do things, so they start to say that they were going to finish off the queers [[this is often meant as something closer to faggots]] of the town [...] so at some point they take Carolina and kill her, at home, sleeping, they go for Karen and take her and beat her and she manages to flee. So it was enough, I was not going to wait for what was going to happen to me (translated from original Spanish text).

These groups also perpetrated acts of violence in public as a method of signaling control over queer bodies and behaviors. For example, paramilitary commanders organized boxing matches where they forced gay, undressed men to fight each other to demonstrate their masculinity (CNMH 2015). Victims' testimonies paint paramilitaries—and rebels'—violence against SGM people as a form of "social cleansing" working to "correct" social orders perceived as deviant (CNMH 2015; Serrano-Amaya 2018).

Rebel organizations, including the FARC-EP and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) also targeted SGM individuals with extrajudicial executions, sexual violence, other types of physical attacks, harassment, and forced displacement. For example, in testimony to the CNMH, transgender individuals contend that rebels sexually assaulted them with the intention of "correcting" their gender identity. FARC-EP guerilla reportedly raped and impregnated a transgender man; he recalls:

> *Por mi condición de chico trans, he recibido insultos de parte de paramilitares, de guerrilleros, de hecho fui víctima de violencia sexual, producto de esta violación tengo un niño. En el momento que duró, durante el momento de la violación siempre me estaban diciendo que yo no era un hombre, que a mí me podían hacer lo que le hacían a cualquier mujer, que el hombre tenía pene y que dónde estaba mi pene (…).* (CNMH 2015, 258)

> Because of my status as a trans boy, I was insulted by the paramilitaries, the guerrillas, in fact I was a victim of sexual violence, as a result of this rape I have a child. As it was happening, during the rape they were always saying that I was not a man, that they could do to me what they did to any woman, that a man has a penis and where was my penis (…) (translated from original Spanish text).

Rebels also physically assaulted and harassed lesbian women, several of whom report that their attackers told them they would "teach them" to be women (CNMH 2015). Other victims suggested that rebels raped lesbian women to "cure" them and force them into heterosexuality (CNMH 2015). According to testimony from one lesbian woman, after she escaped sexual abuse in her home "she was then raped several times at the hands of illegal armed groups, often in front of her partners, as a punishment for her sexual orientation [. . .]" (IACHR 2015, 110). FARC-EP and ELN rebels similarly forced SGM people to flee their homes on threat of death (Amancio 2011; Nagle 2013), and FARC-EP rebels forced people to write down the names of their sexual partners before driving them out (Colombia Diversa 2020). FARC-EP rebels are also implicated in brutal beatings and attacks against transgender and homosexual individuals (CNMH 2015).

Further, the FARC-EP reportedly prohibited homosexual or transgender combatants in their ranks and operated internal "war trials" to prosecute those accused of violating this rule (Thylin 2020). For instance, when two women combatants were caught kissing, FARC-EP leaders shot one dead and transferred the other. In Thylin (2020, 452)'s interviews with ex-FARC-EP combatants, former cadre "described how they believed LGBT combatants were executed not only because the organization considered them not fit for combat but because the organization didn't want them to be discharged and returned to their communities to 'spread homosexuality.'"[17] Like violence targeting civilians, this was part of a larger rebel strategy introducing a hierarchical gender order and regulating sex. Colombia Diversa (2020) suggests that despite the group's gender-emancipatory rhetoric, the FARC-EP enforced civilian gender roles in some areas under its control. The group also reportedly implemented other, strict gendered rules within its ranks: male guerillas were able to seek civilian sexual partners in communities the organization controlled, while women were not; women had to seek and receive approval from commanders to have sex or relationships with men in the group; and rape was a capital offense in FARC-EP statutes (Herrera and Porch 2008).

---

[17] Testimony from some former guerrillas, including queer guerillas, refute this claim and suggests that the FARC-EP's homophobia was "mild" (see, e.g., CNMH 2015, 141).

The Colombia case suggests that armed actors may also refrain from targeting SGM communities and even create permissive structures for them when articulating a transformative claim to political and moral authority. In rejection of state, paramilitary, and popular rebel conceptions of appropriate gender and sexual order in society, Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19)—a left-wing, urban rebel organization—was "characterized by insistence on equality" that extended not only to women, but also to SGM individuals (Thylin 2020, 452). The organization permitted queer participants in its ranks, included a unit of homosexual men, and, according to Thylin (2020, 453), "There were also accounts of the top leadership not only being aware of the sexual orientation and gender identities of LGBT combatants but also protecting the rights of LGBT combatants." One gay, former combatant notes that this visibility illustrated M-19's revolutionary view of a new society wherein SGM communities were not regularly embattled: "As we were discriminated against [. . .] it was a way of demonstrating that we could earn this political space, to promote respect and set a precedent that we could be part of all the political spaces of Colombia" (quoted in Thylin 2020, 453). The diverse regulatory patterns in Colombia's civil war suggest that conflict actors may target, or embrace, SGM individuals as a method for enforcing and publicizing "appropriate" gendered boundaries.

Looking Forward

Our approach to theorizing violence underscores that sexuality and gender identity are integral components of gender and that abuses targeting SGM individuals can therefore serve regulatory functions akin to yet unique in some ways from broader patterns of GBV during armed conflict. This framework contributes to burgeoning research invested in an intersectional understanding of the complex motivations for conflict harms that are grounded in gender inequities in daily life. This work bridges a well-established GBV literature with emerging attention to SGM victims and combatants in civil conflict and insights foundational to queer theory. Our intervention to queer GBV research responds to a theoretical and empirical frame that views violence against SGM people as distinct in foundation from that which motivates other forms of GBV. GBV frameworks can and should be expanded to include SGM individuals. Here, we outline a research agenda by identifying five fruitful areas for integrated scholarship.

First, our approach offers expansive opportunities for data collection on violence targeting SGM communities, engaging with questions of sexual orientation and gender identity to better understand how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and otherwise queer individuals experience GBV. Political violence researchers are already attuned to the difficulties of and inconsistencies in collecting data on experiences of violence (cf. Hoover Green 2016). Scholars of GBV further suggest that gender dynamics in daily life compound and explain some of these difficulties. For example, men appear especially hesitant to come forward about sexual violence due to gender norms and consequent expectations about masculinity and inviolability (Schulz 2021). Men sometimes prefer to record sexual violence as torture and report abuses accordingly (Gray and Stern 2019). Studying violence targeting SGM communities through a gendered lens illuminates not only patterns of perpetration, but also patterns of visibility and invisibility related to underlying gender orders.

Without attention to both cases and silences, data on these abuses will not capture true patterns of violence nor reckon with variation between and within them.

Second, in conjunction with more comprehensive data collection efforts, future scholarship can draw from the broad literature on GBV to address variation in conflict actors' behavior. Explaining why some organizations and militaries commit gendered abuses while others exercise restraint is a central project for GBV research. Why do some armed actors engage in homophobic and transphobic violence, but others do not? What explains which forms of violence an organization commits? Does violence against SGM individuals co-vary with other gendered abuses, including, for example, sexual violence committed against women? How do race, class, geography, social acceptance, and other intersectional factors shape perpetration and response, at local and cross-national levels? Such research may also take up Bueno-Hansen (2018, 141) call: "[. . .] the study of 'gendered patterns of abuse' must read for state processes and protocols, as well as political arrangements whose dominant logics sustain these patterns and their impunity."

Third, integrated research on this topic can disaggregate violence targeting SGM people to better assess *who* within minority communities (e.g., lesbians or transgender women) is targeted, when, and why. Sexual orientation and gender identity are diverse and contextual categories, and they warrant thoughtful analyses. Following Schulz's (2021) model, researchers can situate gender categories and sexual practices within their social and cultural contexts to explore how SGM individuals are interpreted, treated, and protected (or not) in specific cases. This approach will yield more robust and nuanced understandings of GBV that consider the non-transportability of many gender and sexual orientation concepts across contexts. This is an opportune time to do this research given the growing commitment to supporting SGM communities in conflict by actors such as the Office of the UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Mr. Victor Madrigal-Borloz, whose forthcoming 2022 report will look specifically at the dynamics between sexual orientation, gender identity, and armed conflict (UN OHCHR 2022).

Fourth, research into violence targeting SGM individuals during war will serve to theorize and demonstrate the consequences of this violence, both individual and collective. For example, Ritholtz (2022) suggests that the most common type of violence against SGM people in Colombia was forced displacement, making up between 43 and 81 percent of reported cases in the ten most violent departments. While researchers emphasize the negative health, social, and economic barriers that queer refugees and internally displaced persons face, we know less about the effects that such displacement has on families, and on queer and trans communities who remain. Relatedly, research and practice focused on social consequences—for example, stigma or outing, disruption of and trauma within queer social networks—for targeted individuals is important for individual human security and for collective reintegration and durable peace building after war. Our approach suggests that scholars can leverage existing frameworks on the consequences of GBV during war (cf. Berry 2018; Schulz 2020) with new attention to the regulatory gender regimes armed actors instill and leave behind to help understand consequences of violence targeting SGM people.

Finally, future research may explore the applicability of our framework to cases outside the conditions we discuss here: active, armed conflicts. Anecdotal evidence suggests that violence targeting SGM individuals serves similar functions to enforce specific gender orders in post-conflict societies and those experiencing other forms of violent instability, including communal, gang, or cartel violence. This appears true of both organizational and individual perpetrators. For example, many gangs and organized criminal groups use violence against transgender women as a method of social control; gangs in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador target transgender women, including as part of initiation processes (REDLACTRANS 2012). In Guatemala, patrol groups "whose legality is questionable but who take on community policing and neighbourhood security duties" reportedly killed transgender women "in a social cleansing operation" (REDLACTRANS 2012, 26).

Scholars and activists in South Africa further call attention to homophobic violence targeting black lesbians, and survivors argue that "attackers were interested in humiliating and punishing them for their choice of sexual identity and lifestyle and in 'transforming' them—by coercion—into heterosexual women" (Mkhize et al. 2010, 26). Mwambene and Wheal (2015, 58) conclude that victims of this violence are "seen as a threat to patriarchy and hetero-normativity which demarcate women's bodies as male property." And while violent instability and periods of conflict exacerbate actors' enforcement of gendered norms, the gendered underpinnings of attacks like these targeting lesbians remain important to understanding how members of SGM communities are violently targeted even in times of relative "peace." Scholars may engage our approach in studying and explaining homophobic and transphobic violence as a form of GBV quite broadly.

Still, there are practical limitations to successfully integrating sexual orientation and gender identity in research about GBV. At the policy and practitioner levels, disaggregating focus on SGM communities from work on violence against women—or a gender perspective in conflict in general—remains the status quo, although this is changing.[18] As discussed, the WPS agenda and other international policy infrastructure are also exclusionary of SGM people (Hagen 2016a). There are related challenges in researching marginalized women's experiences (including lesbian and bisexual, and transgender women), as much of the existing research on violence targeting SGM individuals—and research funding—focuses predominately on cisgender men (Mama Cash and Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice 2020). There is, further, significant debate among practitioners working to improve humanitarian interventions into GBV over the binary scope and scale of language, concept, and programming, particularly over the trade-offs between a broader scope of "gender" and the need "to attend specifically to the rights and needs of women and girls" (Ward 2016, 282). Working with all members of the SGM community requires revisiting methodological practice alongside the development of a community of practice to promote this integrated, intersectional approach to understanding and responding to GBV. It is our hope that where scholarship leads, policy initiatives will follow. This violence is not uncommon, new, nor confined to individual contexts. An integrated scholarly approach can produce much needed complex, gendered attention to violence targeting those minoritized because of their sexual orientation or gender identity during war.

Acknowledgments

We are very grateful to Helen Kinsella, Charli Carpenter, Tanisha Fazal, Ron Krebs, Mark Bell, Jamie Rowen, Rebecca Hamlin, and Abbey Steele and to the participants of the Minnesota International Relations Colloquium and the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Conflict, Violence, and Security Workshop for their comments on earlier drafts of this manuscript. We are also grateful to Abbey Steele for translation assistance and Jenna Norosky and Gretchen Baldwin for research assistance.

References

ALISON, MIRANDA. 2007. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Women's Human Rights and Questions of Masculinity." *Review of International Studies* 33 (1): 75–90.

---

[18] This is particularly true at the UN and otherwise international level. A myriad of important, excellent regional and state-based organizations, such as Colombia Diversa, for example, integrate these frameworks and advocate a gendered approach to violence targeting SGM during war.

Amancio, Nelly Luna. 2011. “Crímenes de odio prevalecen contra grupos homosexuales.” El Comercio, July 17. Accessed September 24, 2022. https://elcomercio.pe/sociedad/lima/crimenes-odio-prevalecen-contra-grupos-homosexuales_1-noticia-887388/.

Amar, Paul. 2013. *The Security Archipelago: Human–Security States, Sexuality Politics, and the End of Neoliberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press

Baaz, Maria Eriksson, and Maria Stern. 2009. “Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence, and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo (DRC).” *International Studies Quarterly* 53 (2): 495–518.

———. 2010. *The Complexity of Violence: A Critical Analysis of Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*. Sweden: Sida/Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Baines, Erin. 2017. *Buried in the Heart: Women, Complex Victimhood and the War in Northern Uganda*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.

Belkin, Aaron. 2012. *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Facade of American Empire, 1898–2001*. New York: Colombia University Press.

Berry, Marie E. 2018. *War, Women, and Power in Rwanda and Bosnia–Herzegovina*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bobseine, Haley. 2013. “Out and Down in Syria’s Civil War.” *Foreign Policy*, 4 December. Accessed September 23, 2022. https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/12/04/out-and-down-in-syrias-civil-war/.

Bueno-Hansen, Pascha. 2015. *Feminist and Human Rights Struggles in Peru: Decolonizing Transitional Justice*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

———. 2018. “The Emerging LGBTI Rights Challenge to Transitional Justice in Latin America.” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 12 (1): 126–45.

———. 2020. *Derechos Feministas y Humanos en el Perú: Decolonizando la Justicia Transicional*. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.

Canaday, Margot. 2009. *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Caribe Afirmativo. 2022. Jurisdicción Especial Para la Paz abre macro caso para investigar graves crímenes e infracciones al DIH cometidos por las FARC y anuncia la próxima apertura de un macrocaso de violencia sexual y otros crímenes motivados por el género, sexo, orientación o identidad de género, 15 July. Accessed September 24, 2022. https://caribeafirmativo.lgbt/jurisdiccion-especial-para-la-paz-abre-macro-caso-para-investigar-graves-crimenes-e-infracciones-al-dih-cometidos-por-las-farc-y-anuncia-la-proxima-apertura-de-un-macrocaso-de-violencia-sexual-y-otros/.

Carpenter, R. Charli. 2005. “‘Women, Children and Other Vulnerable Groups’: Gender, Strategic Frames and the Protection of Civilians as a Transnational Issue.” *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (2): 295–334.

Casey, Nicholas. 2016. “Colombian Opposition to Peace Deal Feeds Off Gay Rights Backlash.” New York Times, October 8. Accessed September 24, 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/americas/colombian-opposition-to-peace-deal-feeds-off-gay-rights-backlash.html.

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH). 2015. “Aniquilar la diferencia: Lesbianas, gays,bisexuales y transgeneristas en el marco del conflicto armado colombiano.”

Chu, Tiffany S., and Jessica Maves Braithwaite. 2018. “The Effect of Sexual Violence on Negotiated Outcomes in Civil Conflicts.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35 (3): 233–47.

Cohen, Dara Kay. 2016. *Rape during Civil War*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Colombia Diversa. 2020. “Orders of Prejudice: Systematic Crimes Committed against LGBT People in the Colombian Armed Conflict.”

Connell, R. W. 1995. *Masculinities*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1991. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241–99.

Currier, Ashley. 2019. *Politicizing Sex in Contemporary Africa: Homophobia in Malawi*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davies, Sara E., and Jacqui True. 2015. “Reframing Conflict-Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Bringing Gender Analysis Back In.” *Security Dialogue* 46 (6): 495–512.

Dolan, Chris. 2014. “Letting Go of the Gender Binary: Charting New Pathways for Humanitarian Interventions on Gender-Based Violence.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 96 (894): 485–501.

———. 2018. “Victims Who Are Men.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict*,” edited by Ní Aoláin Fionnuala, Naomi Cahn, Dina Francesca Haynes and Nahla Valji. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Donnelly, Phoebe. 2018. “The Interactive Relationship between Gender and Strategy.” *Global Society* 32 (4): 457–76.

———. 2019. “Wedded to Warfare: Forced Marriage in Rebel Groups.” *PhD dissertation*, Tufts University.

Duggan, Marian. 2012. *Queering Conflict: Examining Lesbian and Gay Experiences of Homophobia in Northern Ireland*. London: Ashgate Publishing.

Eichert, David. 2019. "'Homosexualization' Revisited: An Audience-Focused Theorization of Wartime Male Sexual Violence." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 21 (3): 409–33.

Enloe, Cynthia. 2000. *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Fobear, Katherine, and Erin Baines. 2020. "Pushing the Conversation Forward: The Intersections of Sexuality and Gender Identity in Transitional Justice." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 24 (4): 307–12.

González Villamizar, Juliana, and Pascha Bueno-Hansen. 2021. "The Promise and Perils of Mainstreaming Intersectionality in the Colombian Peace Process." *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 15 (3): 553–75.

Gray, Harriet. 2018. "The 'war'/'not-war'divide: Domestic Violence in the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 21 (1): 189–206.

Gray, Harriet, and Maria Stern. 2019. "Risky Dis/Entanglements: Torture and Sexual Violence in Conflict." *European Journal of International Relations* 25 (4): 1035–58.

Hagen, Jamie J. 2016a. "Queering Women, Peace and Security." *International Affairs* 92 (2): 313–32.

———. 2016b. "Did Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Play a Role in the Rejection of the Colombian Peace Deal?" LSE Blog, December 19. Accessed September 24, 2022. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/wps/2016/12/19/did-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-play-a-role-in-the-rejection-of-the-colombian-peace-deal/.

———. 2017. "Queering Women, Peace and Security in Colombia." *Critical Studies on Security* 5 (1): 125–29.

Hagen, Jamie J., Megan Daigle, and Henri Myrttinen. 2021. "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression (SOGIE) in Violent Conflict and Peacebuilding." In *The Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research,* edited by Tarja Väyrynen, Swati Parashar, Élise Féron and Catia Cecilia Confortini, 304–12. New York: Routledge.

HaleyNelson, Chelsea. 2005. "Sexualized Violence against Lesbians." *Peace Review* 17 (2–3): 163–80.

Herrera, Natalia, and Douglas Porch. 2008. "'Like Going to a Fiesta': The Role of Female Fighters in Colombia's FARC-EP." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19 (4): 609–34.

Hoover Green, Amelia. 2016. "Violence Data: What Practitioners Need to Know." Open Global Society. Accessed September 24, 2022. https://www.openglobalrights.org/violence-data-what-practitioners-need-to-know.

———. 2018. *The Commanders' Dilemma: Violence and Restraint in Wartime.* New York: Cornell University Press.

Human Dignity Trust. 2014. "Criminalising Homosexuality and LGBT Rights in Times of Conflict, Violence and Natural Disasters."

Human Rights Watch. 2009. "'They Want Us Exterminated:' Murder, Torture, Sexual Orientation and Gender in Iraq."

———. 2014. The Double Threat for Gay Men in Syria. Accessed September 23, 2022. https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/04/28/double-threat-gay-men-syria#:∼:text=In%20Syria's%20savage%20war%2C%20it,not%20bring%20homophobia%20to%20Syria.

———. 2017. "Human Rights Watch Country Profiles: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity."

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). 2013. "Truth, Justice and Reparation: Fourth Report on Human Rights Situation in Colombia."

———. 2015. "Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons in the Americas."

Kapur, Ratna. 2017. "The (Im)possibility of Queering International Human Rights Law." In *Queering International Law: Possibilities, Alliances, Complicities, Risks*, edited by Dianne Otto, 145–47. New York: Routledge.

Kinsella, Helen. 2006. "Gendering Grotius: Sex and Sex Difference in the Laws of War." *Political Theory* 34 (2): 161–91.

Kirby, Paul. 2013. "How Is Rape a Weapon of War? Feminist International Relations, Modes of Critical Explanation and the Study of Wartime Sexual Violence." *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (4): 797–821.

Kirby, Paul, and Marsha Henry. 2012. "Rethinking Masculinity and Practices of Violence in Conflict Settings." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 14 (4): 445–9.

Koopman, Sara. 2020. "Building an Inclusive Peace is an Uneven Socio-Spatial Process: Colombia's Differential Approach." *Political Geography* 83 (4): 1–11.

Lake, Milli. 2014. "Organizing Hypocrisy: Providing Legal Accountability for Human Rights Violations in Areas of Limited Statehood." *International Studies Quarterly* 58 (3): 515–26.

———. 2018. *Strong NGOs and Weak States: Pursuing Gender Justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Africa.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laverty, Ciara, and Dieneke de Vos, 2021. “Reproductive Violence as a Category of Analysis: Disentangling the Relationship between ‘the Sexual’ and ‘the Reproductive’ in Transitional Justice.” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 15 (3): 616–35.

Leiby, Michelle. 2015. “Sexual Violence against Political Prisoners: An Examination of Empirical Evidence in El Salvador and Peru.” In *Sexual Crimes: Transnational Problems and Global Perspectives*, edited by Alissa Ackerman and Richard Furman, 129–42. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lima Homosexual Movement. n.d. “Crimenes por homofobia durante el conflicto armado interno reportados en el Informe Final de la CVR.”

Lind, Amy. 2014 “‘Out’ in International Relations: Why Queer Visibility Matters.” *International Studies Review* 16 (4): 601–604.

Loken, Meredith. 2021. “‘Both Needed and Threatened:’ Armed Mothers in Militant Visuals.” *Security Dialogue* 52 (1): 21–44.

Loken, Meredith, Milli Lake, and Kate Cronin-Furman. 2018. “Deploying Justice: Strategic Accountability for Wartime Sexual Violence.” *International Studies Quarterly* 62 (4): 751–64.

Maier, Nicole. 2020. “Queering Colombia’s Peace Process: A Case Study of LGBTI Inclusion.” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 24 (4): 377–92.

Mama Cash and Astraea Lesbian Justice Foundation. 2020. “Vibrant Yet Under-Resourced: The State of Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer Movements.”

Margalit, Alon. 2019. “Still a Blind Spot: The Protection of LGBT Persons during Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 100 (907–909): 237–65.

Mkhize, Nonhlanhla, Jane Bennett, Vasu Reddy, and Relebohile Moletsane. 2010. *The Country We Want to Live In: Hate Crimes and Homophobia in the Lives of Black Lesbian South Africans*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Moloney, Anastasia. 2019. “Ex-child Soldier Fights for Trans Rights in Colombia.” *Thomas Reuters Foundation*, 21 February. Accessed September 23, 2022. https://news.trust.org/item/20190221085028-qrseo/.

Müller, Catherine, and Jean-Pierre Tranchant. 2019. “Domestic Violence and Humanitarian Crises: Evidence from the 2014 Israeli Military Operation in Gaza.” *Violence against Women* 25 (12): 1391–1416.

Mwambene, Lea, and Maudri Wheal. 2015. “Realisation or Oversight of a Constitutional Mandate? Corrective Rape of Black African Lesbians in South Africa.” *African Human Rights Law Journal* 15 (1): 58–88.

Myrttinen, Henri, and Paula Drumond. 2019. “Policing Heteronormativity - Examining the Dynamics and Gendered Underpinnings of Sexual Violence Against LGBTI in Conflict.” *presented at the 2019 meeting of the International Studies Association Convention.*

Myrttinen, Henri, Kana Khattab, and Charbel Maydaa. 2017. “‘Trust No One, Beware of Everyone:’ Vulnerabilities of LGBTI Refugees in Lebanon.” In *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, edited by Jane Freedman, Zeynep Kivilcim and Nurcan Özgür Baklacıoğlu, 61–76. New York: Routledge.

Nagle, Luz E. 2013. “Giving Shelter from the Storm: Colombians Fleeing Persecution Based on Sexual Orientation.” *Tulsa Law Review* 48 (1): 1–26.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Payne, William J. 2014. “Death-Squads Contemplating Queers as Citizens: What Colombian Paramilitaries Are Saying.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 23 (3): 328–44.

REDLACTRANS. 2012. “The Night is Another Country: Impunity and Violence against Transgender Women Human Rights Defenders in Latin America.”

Richter-Montpetit, Melanie. 2018. “Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex (in IR) but Were Afraid to Ask: The ‘Queer Turn’ in International Relations.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 46 (2): 220–40.

Ritholtz, Samuel, and Rebecca Buxton. 2021. “Queer Kinship and the Rights of Refugee Families.” *Migration Studies* 9 (3): 1075–95.

Ritholtz, Samuel. 2022. *Civil War and the Politics of Difference: Paramilitary Violence Against LGBT People in Colombia*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oxford.

Sarwari, Mehwish. 2021. “Impact of Rebel Group Ideology on Wartime Sexual Violence.” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6 (2): 1–23.

Schulz, Philipp. 2021. *Male Survivors of Wartime Sexual Violence Perspectives from Northern Uganda*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schulz, Philipp, and Heleen Touquet. 2020. “Queering Explanatory Frameworks for Wartime Sexual Violence against Men.” *International Affairs* 96 (5): 1169–87.

Serrano-Amaya, José Fernando. 2018. *Homophobic Violence in Armed Conflict and Political Transition*. London: Palgrave MacMillan

Sjoberg, Laura. 2016. *Women as Wartime Rapists: Beyond Sensation and Stereotyping*. New York: New York University Press.

Sjoberg, Laura, and Jessica Peet. 2011. "A(Nother) Dark Side of the Protection Racket." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13 (2): 163–82.

Stern, Jessica. 2016. "The U.N. Security Council's Arria-Formula Meeting on Vulnerable Groups in Conflict: ISIL's Targeting of LGBTI Individuals." *NYU Journal of International Law and Politics* 48 (4): 1191–8

The Monitoring Group for the Implementation of CEDAW in Colombia. 2019. *Executive Summary: Women and Peace in Colombia: In Search of Full Rights*. Presented at the 72nd sessions period, February 18 to March 8, 2019. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Thylin, Theresia. 2020. "Violence, Toleration, or Inclusion? Exploring Variation in the Experiences of LGBT Combatants in Colombia." *Sexualities* 23 (3): 445–64.

Tschantret, Joshua. 2018. "Cleansing the Caliphate: Insurgent Violence against Sexual Minorities." *International Studies Quarterly* 62 (2): 260–73.

———. 2020. "Revolutionary Homophobia: Explaining State Repression Against Sexual Minorities." *British Journal of Political Science* 50 (4): 1459–80.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 2017. "'We Keep It in Our Heart': Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in the Syria Crisis."

United Nations Human Rights Council. 2016. *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*. A/HRC/31/68.

UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. 2022. "Report of the Independent Expert on Protection against Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity to the 77th General Assembly on Peace, Security, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity."

United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (UN OHCHR). 2022. 2022 50th session of the Human Rights Council, Report to the Human Rights Council, Upcoming. Accessed September 27, 2022. https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/ie-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity/annual-thematic-reports.

UN Women. 2019. "The Value of Intersectionality in Understanding Violence against Women And Girls (VAWG)."

Ward, Jane. 2015. *Not Gay: Sex between Straight White Men*. New York: New York University Press.

Ward, Jeanne. 2016. "It's Not about the Gender Binary, It's about the Gender Hierarchy: A Reply to 'Letting Go of the Gender Binary'." *International Review of the Red Cross* 98 (1): 275–98.

Weber, Cynthia. 2016. *Queer International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weiss, Meredith L., and Michael J. Bosia. 2014. *Global Homophobia: States, Movements, and the Politics of Oppression*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Wilcox, Lauren. 2014. "Queer Theory and the 'Proper Objects' of International Relations." *International Studies Review* 16 (4): 612–15.

Wood, Elisabeth. 2006. "Variation in Sexual Violence during War." *Politics & Society* 34 (3): 307–42.

Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2009. "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When Is Wartime Rape Rare?" *Politics & Society* 37 (1): 131–62.

Yarwood, Vanessa, Francesco Checchi, Karen Lau, and Cathy Zimmerman. 2022. "LGBTQI + Migrants: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework of Health, Safety and Wellbeing during Migration." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19 (2): 869.

Zalewski, Marysia, Paul Drummond, Elisabeth Prugl, and Maria Stern, eds. 2018. *Sexual Violence against Men in Global Politics (Interventions)*. New York: Routledge.