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**WHY MEN PARTICIPATE: A REVIEW OF PERPETRATOR RESEARCH ON THE
RWANDAN GENOCIDE**

Cyanne E. LOYLE

***Abstract:** In "Why Men Participate: A Review of Perpetrator Research on the Rwandan Genocide," Cyanne E. Loyle provides a thought-provoking analysis of the existing state of the genocide perpetrator literature. Relying on fieldwork conducted in Rwanda over the past several years, her research contributes to the development of a unified theory of participation in genocide (that is, who participates and why) that can be examined and applied across case.*

Arguably the greatest crime a person can commit, genocide, never seems to be hindered by "a lack of willing executioners" (Waller 2001). Yet, participation in genocide has been difficult to explain. Why do certain people volunteer to kill their neighbors? How are others mobilized to attack their own families? When do some unwillingly participate in acts of violence? Put simply, why do certain people commit genocide? To date the existing literature on genocide participation has been inconclusive, with the field of study split between psychology (Staub, 1989, Waller 2002), 1981; 1985 anthropology (Hinton, 2005), political economy (Verwimp, 2005), public health (Adler et al. 2008b), sociology (Fein, 1990; Horowitz, 1981; and Kuper, 1981; Kuper, 1985), and political science (McDoom, 2005; Straus, 2006; Fuji, 2009). This focus on explanations for participation across discipline has failed to produce a unified theory of participation that can be examined and applied across cases.

Understanding why people participate in genocide could not be more important. Determining the motivations and conditions for participation in mass violence is essential for establishing patterns of prevention. Only by understanding the factors that facilitate participation will the academic and policy communities be able to identify potential perpetrators and work to restrict the mass participation that makes genocide possible.

Herein, I provide a review of the genocide perpetrator and participation literature across field and synthesize the main hypotheses. I then go on to apply and test those predictions on participation in the context of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Through a more detailed description and evaluation of the Rwanda context I challenge some of the existing assumptions of genocide participation and the applicability of this research across case. I conclude by proposing some avenues for future research in participation for both political science and genocide studies.

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Why Participate in Genocide?

The field of genocide studies has been consumed by a desire to understand why people participate in the crime of genocide. Conceived of as “how ordinary men become killers,” what makes people “evil” and how some become “willing executioners,” the concept of mass participation in extremely violent crimes is seen as the lynchpin for the future prevention of these atrocities. The sixty years since the Holocaust has not brought us any closer to these answers. In fact, the subsequent violence in Cambodia (1975-1979), the Former Yugoslavia (the 1990s), Rwanda (1994) and now Darfur (2003-present) has only further complicated our understanding. So why do people participate in genocide?

For the purpose of this paper I define “perpetrating” genocide as the participation and intention to participate in a direct attack on a civilian with the intention to kill or harm (Straus 2004). While the legal definition of genocide requires that the intention of the act be the elimination in whole or in part of a particular group based on that individual's national, ethnic, racial or religious identity, individual acts of participation within a genocide need not be so intentional. To assume that violent participation is motivated by genocidal ideology assumes that all participants in genocide act for the same reason -- to perpetrate genocide. This need not be the case.

Turning to the current literature, I review the theoretical reasons for participating in genocide. In addition to a survey of why people participate, I extrapolate predictions for who should participate and how people participate.

Structural and Individual Theories of Participation

Existing theories on genocide participation can be divided into two categories: theories relating to (1) structural factors, and those relating to (2) the individual. Structural theories involve institutional, cultural and situational explanations unique to a given society at a give time. Theories of the individual include explanations for participation that are unique to a given participant, for example, psychological deviance, group membership or personal life conditions. Both the structure and individual theories are further elaborated below.

Structural theories for mass participation are well developed in the genocide studies literature. These explanations include characteristics of the state, characteristics of a given culture or a particular historical situation that can lead people to perpetrate genocide. Structural theories assume that context is essential for determining when

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people will mobilize to commit genocide. Without the right structural context genocide would not be possible.

Institutional explanations for participation are a subset of the structural theory which suggests that the structure of a state plays a role in shaping an individual's motivation. Here it is argued that state capacity and the institutional hierarchy of a particular country can influence levels of participation. Some countries, such as Germany and Rwanda, are argued to have a historical legacy of societal adherence to an authoritarian state (Harff, 2003). In other words, some states condition unquestioning "followers." Other states or communities reflect the presence of strong leaders (Valentino, 2004). Variations in the styles of community leaders and prior patterns of communal responses to ethnic tensions can affect an individual's desire or ability to participate in violence (Straus, 2006). If a powerful authority figure orders its followers to support a genocide, individuals are more likely to participate. Acceptance of violence by the state and leaders can also be a useful tool for legitimating genocide. State support makes genocidal violence a "legal" and non-deviant social behavior. Institutional explanations therefore argue that state authority and a societal adherence to that authority facilitates participation in genocide by "legalizing" the act and commanding participation.

Another structural explanation for participation is the characteristics of a given culture. Here certain cultures are more predisposed to genocidal violence than others. This explanation includes discussions of institutionalized racism (Charny, 1982), cultural anti-Semitism (Goldhagen, 1997) and the presence of deep social divisions (Kuper, 1983). Cultural explanations argue that there are particular characteristics of a given cultural context that facilitates the participation in mass violence. These characteristics can lead an individual to place a different moral and social calculus on participation. The discussion of cultural context is particularly relevant in regards to the ability of elites to use dehumanization or differentiating tactics to facilitate violence. If a particular culture is already predisposed to the idea of an "other" differentiation is easier and more likely.

The situational context provides another structural explanation for participation in genocide. This explanation includes all contemporary events in the country at a given time. Historically, genocide has taken place in the environment of extreme domestic violence, civil or interstate war. The current situation in a country can alter group dynamics and an individual's calculus of safety, security and survival. Here an individual might be more likely to commit mass atrocities in a time of war because violence has already led to social and cultural breakdown. Conditions of violence

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motivate individuals based on fear, self-defense, a desire to protect their family or loved ones and a desire to defend one's nation or homeland.

Different from structural theories, individual explanations of genocide participation attempt to explain why a particular person would choose to participate in mass murder independent of the context. One possible explanation for individual participation is a psychological deviance within that person. Psychological deviance theories suggest that only "deviant" individuals participate in mass killing. According to psychological explanations, certain individuals may be more predisposed to participate in acts of violence; some individuals are more violent. This explanation tends to focus on the latent aggressive tendencies of single, young men. In addition to a pre-disposition, deviance can be caused by a triggering event such as the attack on the Reichstag in the case of Nazi Germany or the crash of President Habyarimana's plane in Rwanda (Adler, et al. 2008b). Deviant participant theories are countered by the "ordinary men" hypothesis that suggests that it is regular people and not psychological exceptions who make up the bulk of participants in genocide (Browning, 1993).

Another individual explanation for genocide participation is group psychology. This theory suggests that there are unique characteristics of groups (both inclusion in and exclusion from) that facilitate particular behavior patterns (Staub, 1989). For example, being a member of a particular group can cause one to act in a way that is against his or her personal value structure. Also, the strengthening of out-groups and across group distinctions can lead to behavioral exceptionalism (Kuper, 1983). In this case, individuals treat members of different groups differently with genocidal violence as the extreme manifestation of this difference. In addition to treating the out-group differently, group members are also more likely to engage in violence if other members of their group are participating. Here a member of a particular group fears social sanctions and is more likely to participate if his or her community is already involved (Fujii, 2009). Stronger social structures within a given community will increase an individual's incentive to participate.

Finally, an individual's life conditions are a possible explanation for participation in mass violence and genocide. If an individual is discontent with his or her personal situation, violence provides an opportunity to settle scores both emotionally and materially (Andre and Platteau, 1998). In addition, an individual's greed or perception of injustice could increase the likelihood of scapegoating manifested with violence (Staub, 1989). In the political science conflict literature this motivation is referred to as the expression of *individual grievances*. Here social class, economic and political grievances and personal dislocation and frustration are the primary motivations for

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participation in violence. In this situation, participation is also more likely when private goods are offered to an individual (Lichbach, 1995). While theories of individual gain are not well articulated in the genocide perpetrator literature, existing conflict literature stresses the effectiveness of "selective incentives" in compelling individuals to violent action (Gurr, 1970).

Both structural and individual theories generate predictions regarding the type of person who would participate in genocide. Below I draw out some of these predictions to evaluate who participates in genocide and how.

Who Participates?

Structural explanations argue that mass genocide participation is more likely in some states and cultures than in others. Authoritarian states with a history of violence are more likely to compel individuals to participate in mass violence through fear and coercion. Societies with a history of ethnic tension and social divisionism are more likely to compel genocidal acts through dehumanization and a legacy of the "other" (Charny, 1982)). Preexisting ethnic tension in a society can also make violent mobilization easier. Deep divisions within a given society make violence towards an out-group less morally challenging (Kuper, 1983). And finally, conditions of war facilitate a culture of violence that increases the likelihood of mass participation in all types of brutality. Countries already at war will be more likely to experience genocide than those at peace (Harff, 2003).

Structural explanations provide a theory for the type of situation in which genocide participation would be more likely for all members of a given state or culture, but it does not explain why some individuals in that group participate while others do not. Individual explanations for participation suggest that participants in genocide have individual motivations to do so. Certain individuals could be more *deviant* than others. Here the literature focuses on single, young adult men, but the deviant psychology literature would also point to particular individuals who may have latent psychopathic tendencies. Grievance arguments would suggest that poor, under-educated and political disenfranchised people would be more likely to participate in violence. And finally, members of a political, cultural or social community that is already participating in the violence would also be more likely to join.

Individual arguments concerning individual motivations suggest that even given the same institutional, cultural and situational structure, certain people are more likely to participate in mass violence than others. Structural and individual theories address why a person participates and subsequently who that person is most likely to be;

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however, they fail to address *how* a person is likely to engage in genocidal acts. Theoretical predictions regarding how people participate in genocide are not well developed in the current literature. Structural and individual theories of participation are used to predict who will commit an act of genocide i.e. who will participate. However, different people participate in mass violence in different capacities and at different levels. During the Holocaust, for example, most perpetrators participated in the genocide in uniform. In this example, people participated from the ranks of the German army, the Special Police or as concentration camp guards. This is a similar pattern to the violence in Cambodia and the Former Yugoslavia. Within these units people participated at varying levels and in various activities. Some members of the Special Police in Germany, for example, were active and aggressive killers who were frequently put on the front line of killing squads. Others were less willing participants and engaged in genocidal activities with diminished zeal. There were even some who voluntarily withdrew from participating in violent acts against civilians (Gross, 2001). Structural and individual theories of participation can be used to predict who would show up in the first place, but not the level or activity in which the individual would be involved.

Conclusions from the Theoretical Literature

But which comes first, the structure or an individual's motivation? Competing theoretical claims simultaneously argue that individuals would not participate in genocide without a given structural context and likewise a similar structural context will not elicit genocidal participation across all individuals. Below I examine existing theories of structural and individual explanations for participation in the case of the Rwandan genocide in an attempt to draw out these distinctions. Relying on existing surveys and interviews with genocide perpetrators in Rwanda, I look at the different ways that experiences in Rwanda adhere to and deviate from the predictions of existing theory. I then use the evidence from Rwanda to generate some additional hypotheses regarding participation in genocide.

Participation in the Rwandan Genocide

The indicators of the Rwandan genocide are both familiar and unique. Like other genocides of the twentieth century, the Rwanda genocide took place in a time of existing armed conflict (Harff, 2003). A civil war between the Rwanda government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) had been raging from 1990 to 1992 and ended with the signing of the Arusha Accords. The RPF represented a group of Tutsi expatriates and refugees exiled in Uganda who were invading after a series of unsuccessful

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negotiations regarding the right to return to Rwanda. The ceasefire and resulting power-sharing agreement between the RPF and Rwandan government contributed to the rise of extremist factions within the political elite and army (Prunier, 1995). As with other genocides, these extremist factions used dehumanization propaganda and fear of the security threat from the RPF to incite violence and to consolidate political support. Because of the RPF invasion which began the civil war in 1990, Rwandan Tutsis were portrayed as an enemy of the Rwandan state. It therefore became a Rwandan's duty and "job" to eliminate this threat.

The Rwandan genocide emerged from an autocratic government, in a country with a history of ethnic tension. Genocidal violence began in April 1994 with the death of the President Juvenal Habyarimana. His plane crash on April 6th signaled the start of the killings which lasted for approximately 100 days. The sheer scope and pace of the killing was startling and the patterns of violence varied across the country (Davenport, and Stam 2008). Over 800,000 people (upper bound estimates are closer to 1.2 million), both Tutsi and Hutu political moderates, were killed in this three-month period (Commission pour le Memorial du Genocide, 1996). Early political killings were the responsibility of the National Police and Rwandan Army. Days later, local killings squads, both roving and community-based, were responsible for the majority of deaths. These squads, made up of trained local militia (*Interahamwe*) and community recruits, manned roadblocks, performed door-to-door searches, and traveled through the country-side both seeking out victims and inciting violence in neighboring communities. Studies of recruitment and participation in the genocide highlight the hands-on nature of the killing in this conflict as well as the pattern of mass participation across the population.

Existing research on participation in the genocide in Rwanda has consisted mostly of perpetrator interviews and prison surveys (Adler, et al. 2008a; Adler, et al. 2008b; Fuji 2009; McDoom, 2005; Straus, 2004; Straus, 2006). Unlike the previously referenced theoretical work on genocide participation, data on perpetrators in the Rwandan genocide rely almost entirely on these surveys and interviews with the Rwandan perpetrator population. Because of the unprecedented access granted to researchers by the Rwandan government, people have been able to gain entrance to prisons, perpetrator support organizations and reintegration facilities in order to conduct this research. Of note are the research project by Scott Straus (2006), Lee Ann Fuji (2009) and Reva Adler et al. (2008). The findings of this research are incorporated in the discussion below.

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In addition to perpetrator specific work in Rwanda, there has been a recent attempt to map variations in the violence of the civil war and genocide across the country. The work of Christian Davenport and Alan Stam (2008) suggests that there was extreme variation in the violence over the period of the 100 days. This variation in deaths and types of attacks suggests that there was also variation in the number of perpetrators in a given area, variation in who joined and variation in how they participated. These findings challenge some of the uniformity within the genocide perpetrator theory and are also included in the analysis that follows.

Below I use the Rwandan genocide to analyze the existing structural and individual theories of genocide participation. While I find support for much of the current work, the Rwandan genocide raises additional questions and potential hypotheses regarding participation that should be addressed in subsequent work.

Structural and Individual Explanations for Participation in Rwanda

So how does the Rwandan case further our understanding of existing theories of genocide perpetration? In Rwanda there were both structural and individual explanations for participation in the genocide. Rwanda was and is a highly authority-focused society. In addition to the autocratic government at the time of the genocide, Rwanda has a history of adherence to authority and a tradition of participating in elite-sponsored projects and community activities (Straus, 2006). In other words, Rwandans were accustomed to following the directions of elites. However, most contemporary research on Rwanda does not find a blind adherence to authority, but rather perpetrators who are motivated by fear of those authorities (Adler et al., 2008; Straus, 2006). Perpetrators of the genocide did not admit to following leaders for leadership sake, but rather confessed fear for their own safety and security for deviating from the party position.

The fear of punishment was a strong motivator for participants in the violence. In addition to being afraid of an impending RPF attack, perpetrators expressed fear of being associated with the invading forces. There was the fear that the failure to participate would be punished or sanctioned either by the authorities or by Hutu political extremists in the area. Because of the strong "enemy from within" vocabulary in Rwanda at the time, participants used their actions to distinguish themselves as active supporters of the current government and willingness to work in support and protection of the Nation (Adler et al., 2008b). This motivation for participation demonstrates a more complicated relationship between Rwandans and state authority.

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The fear of personal punishment and the desire to protect the state demonstrates both a reverence for authority and a legacy of a "punishing" autocratic state.

Participants in the Rwandan genocide were also motivated by national leaders and community officials. Both Davenport and Stam (2008) and Straus (2006) find evidence of extreme variation in violence and participation across Rwanda. Variation in the authority and motivation of local leaders is one explanation for this difference. Some local government officials, for example, actively supported the genocide while others tried to pacify their communities and resist local violence as long as possible (Human Rights Watch, 1999). As structural theories suggest, leadership can be essential to determining an individual's or community's participation in violence. Variation in the genocide in Rwanda demonstrates that leaders and leadership structure in that country were able to influence participation in the genocide.

In addition to the structure of authority and individual leaders in Rwanda, the situational context of the concurrent civil war created a need to defend self, family and nation that was brought on by a fear of the RPF invasion and its potential military victory. This fear was rooted in the apprehension that the Tutsi "invaders" meant to enslave and punish Hutu in Rwanda (Mamdani, 2002). Propaganda from the extremist government insisted that the advancing RPF army intended to kill the Hutu population (Melvern, 2006). This fear was strengthened by both previous ethnic tensions in Rwanda (pogroms in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s) as well as ongoing ethnic violence between Tutsi and Hutu in neighboring Burundi.¹ This fear led to a need to defend and a motivation for participation that would not have been possible without the concurrent situational factors.

Structural factors do not sufficiently explain participation in the Rwandan context. Individual theories are needed to explain why some chose to act in extremely violent ways. Individual motivations for participation in the Rwandan genocide include personal edification and greed, group associations, and confusion and uncertainty. The explanation of personal edification and greed is similar to the broader theory of participation regarding an individual's life conditions. Group psychology and communal associations are also predicted in the literature. But the motivation of confusion and uncertainty does not map well onto existing explanations for genocide participation. There is also little evidence to suggest that culture or deviant behavior featured

¹ The context in Burundi was particularly relevant for southern prefectures in Rwanda which were influenced by an influx of Burundian refugees who both spread stories of the conflict and participated in the killing of Rwandan Tutsi (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

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prominently in individual decisions to participate in the genocide. These motivations are discussed further below.

Personal edification and greed was a common individual motivation during the genocide in Rwanda. Once the genocidal violence and conflict began, the general state of lawlessness was easy to exploit. Economic depravity and individual frustrations were voiced through large-scale looting of homes and community spaces. This looting was not limited to private homes. In Butare, health centers and public offices were also looted (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Some Rwandans participated in the genocide in order to materially benefit from the violence. Beyond the personal benefits of looting, some individuals were also directly rewarded for their participation in killings. For example, in the Gikongoro area, Lt. Colonel Simba is purported to have made personal payments to individuals who assaulted Tutsi (Human Rights Watch, 1999, p. 309). In addition to monetary gains, some perpetrators used the situational context of social breakdown to exercise other desires. Revenge killings unrelated to the genocide were commonplace in some communities. Sexual assault and forced cohabitation was often the result of prior rejections (particularly of Hutu men by Tutsi women). A lack of governmental sanctions allowed for a social breakdown that encouraged participation for personal gain.

Group associations also played a key role in determining which individuals participated in the genocide. Lee Ann Fujii (2009) finds that participation in the genocide in Rwanda was often the result of social network structures that were able to mobilize individual participants. Consistent with both the genocide studies and conflict literature, this finding suggests that social sanctions as well as group pressure and legitimation was a useful tool in mass mobilization. This finding would also explain some of the extreme communal variation found in Davenport and Stam (2008). Group associations provide a pseudo-social tipping point for participation. Once a large group is activated for participation, ranks quickly swell.

Finally, some perpetrators admit feeling *overpowered and confused* by the situation. Adler et al. (2008) refers to this as the "tsunami effect," but this emotion is similar to the exclusion of individuals from the "universe of obligation" as described by Helen Fein (1984). In this context, individuals were no longer certain of right and wrong. Morality was reversed and participating in the killing became "good" (Staub, 1989). Rwandans were unsure who to trust or believe and often acted along with the momentum of the collective. This motivation suggests that different from being willing to participate, some perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide did not stop to critically or morally evaluate their action, but rather were caught up in the momentum of the time.

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Unlike a “deviant behavior” hypothesis, the tsunami explanation suggests that in an emotionally traumatizing time, some people were unable to distinguish the relevant moral universe (Fein, 1984). The individual admissions of convicted perpetrators are essential for understanding motivating factors, however, this research should be triangulated with additional material concerning who actually participated in the violence.

Who Participated in Rwanda?

Like most other forms of violent conflict, participants in the Rwandan genocide were primarily male. The rank and file were generally farmers -- like the majority of the Rwandan populations (Bhavnani, 2006; Verwimp, 2005), primarily poor and with medium levels of education (Straus, 2004). Like the majority of the population at the time, the majority of perpetrators were literate (approximately 60%). In his survey of 210 perpetrators from 15 different prisons in Rwanda, Straus (2006) finds that the demographics of participants in the genocide did not differ significantly from the demographics of the Rwandan population at the time. In an economic survey of land quality before the genocide, Verwimp (2005) finds that perpetrators did not own comparatively smaller farms, experience lower land productivity or have poorer soil quality than non-participants. These demographics lend support to an “ordinary Rwandan” hypothesis suggesting that there were few distinguishing characteristics of genocide perpetrators aside for the predominance of men.

Perpetrators in Rwanda were disproportionately made up of non-combatants. While in the case of the Holocaust and the massacre at Srebrenica (the so-called safe haven in the former Yugoslavia, 1995) participants were primarily uniformed combatants, in Rwanda local community members with no previous history of military involvement were incited to violence. That is not to say that all participants in the Rwandan genocide were without institutional or group affiliation. While not an official military branch, the *Interahamwe* was trained and funded by political elites in Rwanda. Training of the *Interahamwe* took place as early as 1992 in some areas outside the capital city, Kigali. Early participation in the *Interahamwe* was almost entirely voluntary. These groups were originally recruited to be homeland defense squads in the case of a RPF attack, however from the very beginning they espoused extreme forms of anti-Tutsi discrimination, dehumanization and hatred.

Later participation in killing squads was not always voluntary. As the genocide progressed, killing groups went door-to-door in an attempt to swell their ranks. Some communities instituted mandatory shifts at roadblocks or in “hunting parties” patrolling

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neighborhoods. These individuals did not choose to participate in violent acts, but rather joined to avoid social sanctions for non-participation. Others willingly joined because of previous group affiliations, social pressure or the hope of political or economic gains. As mentioned above, there was also a strong desire for self-preservation.

Mass participation outside of the military services necessitated the more “hands-on” nature of the killings in Rwanda. While the National Police and Rwandan Army had access to automatic weapons, hand grenades and vehicles, the bulk of participants in the Rwandan genocide did not have access to or know how to operate such weapons. Unlike the technologically advanced containment and killing of the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide was perpetrated using farming tools and traditional weapons such as machetes and spears.²

The number of perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide is still a matter of debate. In an extrapolated survey effort, Straus (2004) estimated that there were between 175,000 and 210,000 active participants in the Rwandan genocide. These numbers represent a participation rate of between 14% and 17% of the adult male population in Rwanda at the time. More recent figures emerging from the ongoing justice process in Rwanda, *gacaca*, suggest that this number could be as high as 600,000 to 800,000, but these numbers include those accused of looting and being present at roadblocks without specific charges of killing or assault.

Perpetrator research in Rwanda has suggested that there is also variation in how and at what level people participated in the genocide. Participation ranges from those who joined reluctantly or under duress to those who eagerly participated. Bhavnani (2006) argues that the majority of participants were closer to reluctant participants than active enjoiners of the violence.

Similarly, Straus' survey (2004) finds that the average number of victims per respondent was .7. If Straus' sample is representative then this finding suggests that a large proportion of the killings were committed by a small group of individuals while the majority of perpetrators committed only a single killing act.

² While there has been a heavy focus on the role that machete deaths played in the killings in Rwanda, the majority of the larger massacres involved armed national police or army troops and the weapons that accompanied those troop movements (Davenport and Stam 2008). For example, pockets of Tutsi resistance in Gikongoro and Butare were met with large groups of troops and arms (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

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Conclusions from Rwanda

It is clear that a certain confluence of structural factors both induces and facilitates the participation in genocide. In the Rwandan context the ability to exercise personal grievances and to manifest individual fears were directly related to the structure of the government and the ongoing civil war. As demonstrated in the research outlined above, individual leaders mattered. The variation in violence across Rwanda can be explained in part by the variation in leadership style and local leader support or refusal to participate in genocidal actions. The importance of the civil war should not be overlooked. The structural context of violence and perceived perpetual danger shaped the vocabulary of mobilization and generated fears, both justified and not, throughout the Hutu population.

The Rwanda case also demonstrates the latent ability for all individuals to be motivated to participate in genocide given the right context. Extreme legacies of violence and cultural desensitization were not needed to mobilize perpetrators. The majority of the research demonstrates that before the genocide both Hutu and Tutsi Rwandans were successfully co-habiting throughout the country. This research shows that once the structural context was conducive to participation, people participated. These findings challenge existing individual theories regarding deviant personalities or personal grievances. Rwandans also participated in the genocide out of greed or for personal edification, but there is no evidence to suggest a latent *need*. While participants may have perceived themselves to have economic or political grievances they were demographically similar to the rest of the population at the time. This finding suggests that the relationship between participation and individual life conditions may be more nuanced than originally predicted.

A review of the current genocide perpetrator literature in the Rwandan context suggests that greater attention must be placed on identifying and preventing the structural contexts that can lead to genocide. The Rwandan case demonstrates what we already know, that groups bind and fear motivates, but it also makes clear that mass brutality requires a context of chaos, violence and fear to thrive.

Suggestions for Future Research

In applying the theoretical literature of genocide participation to the Rwandan genocide, there are a number of additional hypotheses that are generated. The role of leadership and desire for personal edification warrant additional attention. Communal leadership, much more than state authority, seemed to play a decisive role for

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individual participation in Rwanda. What are the characteristics of a given community leader that makes "following" more likely? The Rwandan case points to the strong role of fear in motivating participation, but how were individual reputations developed in the first place?

In addition to a stronger focus on communal leadership in the context of genocide, a theory of selective incentives for participation should also be further developed. The demographics of Rwandan participants suggest that it is not always the poor and deprived who rush to genocide. This is no longer a sufficient explanation. The conflict literature includes a well-developed discourse on the utility of public and private goods in motivating individuals to participate in acts of rebellion against the state. In a perverse way, genocide can be seen as a public good. This would suggest that mobilization would be difficult, but yet it rarely is once the violence has begun. A better understanding of selective incentives could help further establish when some countries do and are able to resort to genocide while in other countries ethnic tensions are never manifested in that way.

Further research on leadership and incentives is needed to complement our understanding of existing theories of participation, however, the Rwandan case also highlights some underdeveloped areas of the perpetrator literature. Coercion, for example, is rarely discussed in the genocide literature. Current theories assume that individuals choose to participate in genocide, but recent research in conflict studies highlights the possibility of involuntary participation in violence (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007). Forced recruitment and threats feature prominently in a number of recent African conflicts. Additional attention should be paid to forced participation in genocide and in Rwanda in particular.

And finally, the Rwanda case suggests a need to focus on the temporal dimensions of participation. Participation is not a single decision, but rather a series of decisions made on an almost daily basis. While some perpetrators in the Rwandan genocide joined killings squads for the duration of the genocide, others participated in single events or for limited amounts of time. Why do people come and go? When are group ties binding and when do other factors supercede their pull?

Understanding participation in genocide is essential for future efforts of prevention. Perpetrating genocide requires perpetrators. Isolating the root causes of mobilization and participation will aid in the development of policy and programs aimed at halting this process. It is clear that this work needs to address both the structure of a genocidal state and the individual characteristics of those who join.

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