

Terror, Targeting, and Pay: A Literature Review of Rape as a Weapon of War During the 1980-2003 Liberian Civil Conflict

Jessi Hanson-DeFusco*

*School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS), University of Texas at Dallas, United States.

RESEARCH

Please cite this paper as: [Hanson-DeFusco J. Terror, targeting, and pay: a literature review of rape as a weapon of war during the 1980-2003 liberian civil conflict. Women's Health Research \[2023\] 4\(2\): 5-26.](#)

*Corresponding Author:

Dr. Jessi Hanson-DeFusco, PhD

School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS),
University of Texas at Dallas, United States, USA, Tel: +1
(972) 883-4969; E-mail: jessi.hanson@ymail.com

ABSTRACT

According to Kaldor's 'new war' theory, post-Cold War conflicts often involve higher levels of violence targeting civilians than in previous wars. The Liberian conflict (1980-2003) involved the systematic raping of female civilians. Yet an extensive qualitative literature review of media, formal reports, and top-cited digital scholarship indicates that armed forces used rape as a weapon of war for different purposes. Under the Doe regime, rape was often used for political suppression, territorial gain, and ethnic targeting of Americo-Liberians, Gio and Mano peoples. Comparatively, while the use of rape continued to be used for ethnic targeting of Krahn and Mandingo populations by Taylor's forces, increasingly sexual violence was used for financial and resource exploitation, sexual slavery, supplemental payment for rebels, and hypermasculine bonding. By the Second Civil War, rape as a weapon became an endemic problem for nearly all Liberians. As state legitimacy over violence deteriorated,

the division in insurgent factions escalated the level of depravity of human rights violations. This study highlights the importance of exploring in-depth the different shared experiences of war rape among different generations to understand its complexity and to adapt service provisions to individualized needs of survivors.

Key words: Civil war; women's rights; global health; rape; weapon of war; Liberia; new war theory; conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Emerging In the late 20th century, many nations in the Majority World struggled for democratic independence, while others were continually used as pawns in proxy wars between Cold War hegemonic powers. Following the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, there was a surge in civil conflicts like Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, and Cambodia, catalyzed by the global power vacuum. In Liberia, the dictator-president Samuel Doe was assassinated in 1989 by Prince Yormie Johnson supported by Charles Ghankay Taylor, igniting a 14-year civil war that would leave nearly a fourth of the population dead, and hundreds of thousands of rape survivors, mainly women and children [1, 2]. Before the conflict, sexual abuse primarily centered around unequal and misogynistic gender dynamics, including ethnic and religious practices like forced and early marriages. Kaldor (1999)'s 'new war' theory indicates that in this post-Cold War era, the deterioration of a state's political legitimacy can result in the proliferation of armed rebel groups, in which violence is targeted on civilians more than in previous wars. In Liberia, most victims of the war were citizens trapped between warring ethnic groups. The nearly 25-year-long civil conflict mutated the face of sexual violence, in



which rape became a systematized weapon of war. Doe's Krahn-led military coup d'état propelled the employment of rape by armed forces targeting unwanted ethnic groups like the Americo-Liberians and Gio people. Yet during the civil war, all Liberian girls and women would face increasingly rates of sexual assault by both armed soldiers and drug-fuelled rebel factions [3–6]. A literature review of agency reports, judicial testimonies and reports, and news media indicates that with each new phase of the conflict, the purpose of rape as a weapon of war altered.

This qualitative research traces the history of rape as a weapon of war in Liberia, including its origins before the First Civil War, the different reasons that military leaders and warlords sanctioned its use on the general population into the Second Civil War, and human rights movement that rose to stop it. Civil war affected many low-/middle-income nations (LMICs) in the late 20th century. In the 1980s-90s, the international human rights community fought to make rape a war crime and a crime against human rights under international statute. Research on the wars in LMICs like Bosnia, Rwanda, Cambodia, Vietnam, Argentina, and Columbia Liberia revealed how rape is used for many different ends, such as to instill terror, enforce compliance, for ethnic cleansing, and for extortion [7–11]. Yet, many studies on war rape tend to generalize the reasons for why combatants commit sexual atrocities during war, contributing to a narrative which implies that rape as a tool of war is often fixed throughout a conflict. This research examines the research question: are there potential differences in the use of rape of female civilian populations as a weapon of war during progressive phases of a conflict?

Study of the Liberian conflict (1980-2003) uniquely offers a case of a LMIC nation that experienced a protracted conflict for nearly three generations, in which each decade grew progressively more violent and chaotic. This study presents the findings of the literature review by identifying and offering an in-depth analysis of key trends among the three major periods of the Liberian conflict: the indigenous military coup d'état (1980-89), the First Civil War (1989-1997), and the Second Civil War (1999-2003). The purpose is to understand how time and context might change rape as a

weapon to serve different purposes as a conflict progresses. Most sexual assault studies concur that the effects of sexual violence are profound on the survivor's physical health and mental wellbeing [12–16].

Background

Rape in any form or for any purpose is an atrocity. There are numerous consequences for rape survivors and their families, including poor mental health, sexually-transmitted disease (STD), physical impairments, and stigmatization [5, 17–21]. Child rape (under the age of 18) has added consequences including psychological harm like depression, physical implications including early pregnancy and fistula, and emotional effects like risky behavior-seeking, forming future unhealthy relationships, and self-harm [5, 22]. With proper support, survivors of rape can develop resiliency and heal. They also can find more peace if their perpetrator is brought to justice. Yet some negative effects remain, including the memories of the event that cannot be erased [15, 20, 23–25]. Moreover, rape can have long-term effects, including unwanted pregnancy, permanent physical impairments, stigmatization, and intergenerational psychosocial health issues passed down from mother to child [25–30].

Rape as a war crime

Before the late 20th century, rape was often considered a byproduct of war. Yet, research in the last thirty years recognizes that war rape is often used as an instrument of war with systemic end-goals, which led military leaders to sanction its use particularly on female populations, or at least to turn a blind-eye to rape of specific populations by their forces. In WWII, Allied forces and Axis military groups employed rape as a means of terrorizing civilians in enemy territories, and demoralizing enemy forces. Starting in the mid-1930s to 1945, Japanese forces regularly used sexual enslavement of women, often referred to as 'comfort women,' in conquered enemy territory [31–33]. In less than six weeks in 1937, Japanese forces also sexually assaulted and murdered tens of



thousands of Chinese women and girls in the Rape of Nanjing [30, 34]. In retribution of the invasion of the USSR, Soviet troops mass raped German women while advancing on Nazi-Berlin [35, 36]. From the French invasion of Vietnam to the US wars in Iraq, "sexual violence was and is common in nearly all crisis zones" [35].

The civil wars in Yugoslavia and Rwanda in the 1990s additionally helped recognize rape in war a human rights violation. Rape became a crime against humanity in the Foca Rape Case, prosecuted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (the ICTY) [11, 37–40]. Rape was defined as not only a war crime but a crime against humanity. The ICC defined rape as:

The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or the perpetrator with a sexual organ or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body...The invasion was committed by force, or by the threat of force or coercion, such as that was caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression, or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent [40].

Changes in warfare and war rape

While international conventions help make war rape illegal, it is still important to understand how it is used in our fight to mitigate the phenomenon. The different reasons for why armed groups employ rape in war are likely similar throughout history. Yet, the way that wars are fought has changed, and with it, the rates of systematized sexual violence incurred on innocent civilians. Kaldor (1999/2013)'s 'new wars' theory implies that new wars differ from old conventional warfare. In the post-Cold War era, warfare increasingly occurs between state and non-state actors, mainly guerrilla fighters, militia groups, and counterinsurgency groups, often fighting over identity politics rather than ideology [41–46].

"New wars" are distinguishable from earlier wars by their characteristic "blurring" of distinctions between war, organized crime, and large-scale human rights violations...the changed mode of warfare, involving primarily guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency; the highly disorganized groups that operate "through a mixture of confrontation and cooperation" with opponents; and the "globalized war economy"... The aim of either forcing the population out or forcing the population to supply the armed group to the point that in the long term, shadow economies are established in which the use of violence and the exchange of goods are inextricably linked which Kaldor describes as decentralized and heavily dependent on foreign or external resources (Meger, 2011, p. 107).

This paper uses the terms 'new wars' and 'wars of the third kind' interchangeably, as well as 'rape' and 'war rape.' In 'total wars,' violence mainly targets combatants who account for the majority of casualties (approximately 90%). Yet 'new wars' are different in that civilian populations experience higher rates of targeted violence including higher causality rates. 'Wars of the third kind' increase in the 1980s and 1990s, especially within the African continent [41, 42, 45]. As in the case of Liberia, "new wars occur alongside and in the context of a gradual erosion of the state's monopoly of the legitimate force" [45]. It is not the premise of this paper to theoretically explore the feminist scholarship on 'new war' and warfare rape. The research by Meger provides an eloquent foundation of the link between 'new wars' and changes in rape as a weapon of war, in which sexual violence is an efficient weapon of terror and dispersion that serves an armed group's financial goals [41].

While more men are killed in war, women often experience violence, forced pregnancy, abduction and sexual abuse and slavery... The harm, silence and shame women experience in war is pervasive; their redress, almost non-existent [47].

The reasons and purposes for why military forces and insurgents use sexual assault as a systematic means of war can differ- from ethnic cleansing, terrorization and submission, financial extortion, forced migration, to

genocide. Yet, beyond terrorization, studies on specific conflicts often primarily focus in on one or a few top reason(s) or purpose(s) that sexual violence serves in the conflict. For instance, most top-cited scholarship on the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Bangladesh often concur that rape was a means of ethnic cleansing and genocide [27, 48–52]. As different faction fight each other based on divisions of ethnicity, cleansing occurs by 'breeding out' unwanted ethnic blood from the population [18, 19, 37, 39]. Since 1993, the ICTY has convicted dozens of defendants including high-ranking officials for sexual crimes [48, 49].

Comparatively, rape is more frequently attributed to use of sexual slavery of Yazidi women in Northern Iraq than for ethnic genocide [12, 50, 53, 54]. In the civil war in Columbia and the gang wars of El Salvador, rape (either as exploitation or to payment to avoid sexual violence) often associated with financial extortion. In parts of Columbia, paramilitary occupation frequently resulted in women and girls becoming extorted sex slaves, including forced prostitution, or coerced into trading sex to save their families [55–57]. Additionally, most El Salvadorian household have single-mother providers whom a warring gang may impose *renta*, a system of extortion for residing in its territory, which can be paid financially or with sex. Gangs also use sexual violence to seize territorial control, often targeting female rival gang members and rival gang companions [58–61]. In studies on 'new wars' around the world, including research on Rwanda Yugoslavia, the various means for why sexual violence is employed by armed groups are listed. I note however that one facet of rape as a tool becomes more dominant in the narrative of the conflict than the others. Yet, by associating 'new war' rape with a few means to an end, we may neglect to recognize how rape develops and changes as a tool of terror throughout the progression of the strife.

Materials and Method

Over a decade of work on gender rights in post-war Liberia, dozens of colleagues and friends repeatedly shared their intimate experiences of living through the civil war. In

quiet moments together, they recounted of moments when they had to suddenly fleeing into the bush to escape armed militia, watched their homes be looted and burnt, struggling to find food and medicine, the constant fear of bullets that often fell like rain, and most of all, witnessing civilian raped, or surviving rape. As a female American researcher who did not experience the war, there are limits to my understanding of the war's dynamics, as well as to the culture and context of Liberia. Reflexively, I base my hypotheses and guidance for what sources to explore based on inputs from Liberian colleagues (named in the Acknowledgements), and have spent fifteen years studying about the war, and learning from the voices of those who experienced it. Their stories formed the premise of this research, which uses a constructivist approach [62–64]. While the research query is based on their private accounts, none of their testimonies appear in this study to ethnically safeguard their privacy. Only secondary-source testimonies pulled from the literature review are used. No ethical approval is required. There are no conflicts of interest or funding sources to declare. The study design follows Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research (SRQR) [65].

The results of this qualitative analysis are based on a 2023 literature review of digital top-cited studies, policy documents, legal statues, court cases, and media reports/sources. The literature review firstly examines nearly 230 studies from PubMed and Google Scholar, using the search terms of rape, soldiers, Liberia, West Africa, Samuel Doe, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Charles Taylor, war, civil conflict, sexual violence, gender rights, and human rights, prioritizing pieces focused on the timeline of 1980-2015. Additionally, a grey literature review of approximately 195 legal and policy documents mainly on Liberian government sites and international agency sites like the United Nations, US Government, and the World Bank, and media available digitally related to policies on child sexual abuse and Liberia are incorporated.

The qualitative analysis first maps key trends of the use of sexual violence in Liberia against the different means it serves often recognized in literature, presented in the Background section. The results are presented for each of



the three phases of the 25-year-long Liberian conflict: the Doe regime, the First Civil War, and the Second Civil War, doing a comparative analysis of the major motives for raping by armed groups, both government military and rebel factions. I reference Kaldor's 'new war' approach to analyze how the destabilizing of governmental control of legitimate force, the growing number of armed actors, and the globalized war economy relate to sexual violence. Liberian men were also faced sexual violence, yet, this study primarily focuses on the targeting of women and girls.

There are limitations that effect qualitative literature reviews, including issues of reliability of the data sources used and selection biases of testimony selected for analysis; thus, the research should incorporate various methodological strategies to indicate trustworthiness of key findings, including triangulation of various types of data sources, acknowledgement of biases in sampling, and inclusion of rich and thick verbal descriptions in participant accounts to support findings [63, 64, 66, 67]. The TRC report and other qualitative data sources from which testimonies were pulled may hold some biases. The TRC took thousands of testimonies of Liberians who survived the war, yet only a few dozen appear in the report on 'Women and Children'. The selection of testimonies may be randomly selected or partially graphic to elicit emotional appeal. The testimonies from ethnographies and smaller participant studies may be less biased. To account for the potential in selection biases, I evaluated a large variety of reports, including using top-cited literature listed in Google Scholar and PubMed using specific search criteria. Additionally, I attempted to triangulate findings from various studies, news reports, testimonial videos/documentaries, books, and human rights reports to validate key points made in the results and discussion section. Another limitation that is hard to account for is that various testimonies and reports at times fail to mention the exact year or event when the sexual violence incident occurred. I would use provided details such as if they mentioned a specific rebel faction to estimate the time period, yet some of the quotes presented may not fully fit the timeline narration of this piece.

RESULTS

Like many LMICs, early marriage and arranged unions are normative cultural traditions for many of Liberian ethnic and religious populations [68–70]. Yet a literature review of legal statutes, new reports, policy documents, and studies indicates that sexual abuse outside of traditional practices became a growing threat for girls and female adolescents during the nation's 25-year-long civil unrest. The issue of rape and sexual exploitation devastatingly mutated in ways that supersede traditional practices, transforming wartime rape into a shared experience for many Liberians.

Frequently cited studies conducted during and after the Liberian crisis state that up to 75% of women and girls were victims of war rape, including those who were murdered and their sisters who survived [3, 4]. These studies offer valuable insight into Liberian rape experiences. They also were used to help inform the Peace and Reconciliation process. However, most statistical surveys in the years after the war appear to be inaccurate or non-generalizable. They are based on selective qualitative interviewing and non-randomized surveys performed by advocacy and human rights groups, using small sampling, selective group sampling, and even poorly documented techniques [71–73]. We cannot know for certain the scale of sexual abuse rates among Liberians during the conflict period.

Warfare and violence in 'new wars' are often associated with identity politics, in which people sharing a particular race, social class, ethnicity, or religion fight for political dominance rather than fighting for ideological purposes [42, 44, 46, 74]. The Liberian civil unrest erupted when Samuel Doe launched a military coup in 1980. This coup may be attributed to the social class hostilities between of the Liberian indigenous population (often discriminately referred to as the 'uncivilized' or 'traditional' people) and the elite Americo-Liberians. Yet, the distinction between elite class status and ethnicity can be blurred. In Liberia, it is often common practice to identify African-Americans as not fully indigenous African, and can be distinguished as a race of its own. Yet for the most part,



Americo-Liberians are officially classified as a specific ethnicity in national population studies. In the late 1970s and 1980s, Americo-Liberians (about 5% of the general population) owned the vast majority of the nation's wealth and land; historically occupied most political power position; and in general, held higher levels of socio-political privilege than indigenous peoples who made up 16 distinct native ethnic groups [1, 7, 75].

Before the 1980 coup d'état

Throughout its formative years, Liberia mainly existed as a de facto apartheid state, in which the government dominated by Americo-Liberians (descendants of freedmen who settled Liberia in 1822). While the American settlers were of African descent, most Americo-Liberians were often non-indigenous to the territory, and held power over indigenous people through US military support. During their 133 years in power, Americo-Liberian politicians fostered socio-political and economic divisions that greatly excluded indigenous peoples from entering elite society [1, 2, 7, 75–77]. The dominant political party, the True Whig Party (TWP), ruled the Liberian interior through district commissioners, who administratively managed local chiefs. Indigenous and religious leaders held territorial authority for generations before the arrival of the freedmen. This public administrative system helped to draw more formal distinctions between many of Liberia's 16 indigenous ethnic groups, which for the most part was previously more impartial. At times small clans were incorporated into administrative TWP states often based on ethno-linguistical territories, like the Krahn [7, 77, 78] (see Figure 2).

Before the 1980 coup, there were various forms of sexual induction that placed children at risk, but at the time were not illegal. Traditional practices including early and forced marriage, polygamy, and induction into religious practices linked to ethnic secret societies for female members (the Sande society) were frequent [7]. Yet these cultural practices were not held by all ethnic groups [8, 79–81]. During the presidential administrations of Tubman (1941-1971) and Tolbert (1971-1980), there were limited

formal protective rights for women and children from sexual exploitation and rape.

The Doe regime

During Doe's administration, rape was often used for ethnic targeting, political suppression, and forced migration of undesired/enemy populations [7, 75]. On 12 April 1980, then-Master Sergeant Samuel Doe led a military coup, in which bans of government soldiers immediately began targeted looting, torturing, raping, and killing of elite Americo-Liberians, both in the capital and Hinterland [1, 3, 75, 82].

Incidents of rape of particularly women previously considered fashionable and socialites, multiplied in and around Monrovia—with undisciplined, often intoxicated armed soldiers forcing their way into homes of those associated with the overthrown government... during those tumultuous post-coup times, there were many publicly untold stories/reports that were even worse [83].

The initial day that rape became a weapon against enemy civilians is graphically detailed by Cooper in her 2008 novel, *House on Sugar Beach*, in which her mother is gang raped by 'rouge' indigenous soldiers, one of whom states, "'You think the Americans are going to come and help you [Americo-Liberians]? Well, they back us [Doe's forces].'" Like hundreds of Americo-Liberian families, the Cooper family fled to the United States as the country fell under indigenous control.

A Krahn soldier forcibly violated a [Americo] woman while her teenage son was hiding under the very bed where the act was taking place [83].

Violations took place in bushes; others took place in homes and houses, by the roadside and in barracks of warring groups. AFL detained people. Some atrocities took place in churches... Rape and torture were used as a weapon of war to weaken the opponents – woman, Pleebo [84].

After assassinating Americo-Liberian President Tolbert, Doe became Chairman of the People's Redemption Council (PRC) until 1984, and later was elected as the first indigenous-Liberian president. Historical depictions often

cast Doe as a puppet dictator of the United States during the Cold War [1, 81, 85, 86]. Being of Krahn descent, Doe used his position to bring up minority ethnic-lingual groups from the southern interior regions (see Figure 1). Yet, after a failed 1983 plot to overthrow Doe by Thomas Qwiwonkpa, of the Gio people, Doe's Krahn-dominated Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) began targeting military opponents and their home territories, mainly the Gio and Mano in the northern interior [81, 86]. Doe's government progressively mistreated other ethnic groups (see Figure 2). Thousands of non-Krahn women and children were sexually assaulted, tortured, and killed along with men [1, 8, 85, 87–90]. The number of rapes that occurred under Doe's regime is not documented.

Violations by Doe's forces were often overlooked by leading world governments like the US. However, by the late 1980s, civil unrest was escalating against the Doe administration. The US government was losing control of Doe, and eventually pulled its support of his government. The ALF ramped up attacks in the northern region against the Gio and Mano people, and, a full-scale civil war quickly erupted [91], (see Figure 2).

In 1989, international condemnation of Doe and his armed forces increased when Krahn-soldiers tortured, raped, and executed an estimated 600 civilians seeking shelter in St. Peter's Lutheran Church [77, 91, 92].

After Qwiwonkpa, the government escalated terrorizing civilians, especially in Nimba County, homeland of the Mano and Gio. Testimony of Krahn-on-Gio sexual violence appears limited on digital documents. Most documents instead mainly detail civilians who had to flee due to ethnic targeting, likely for the purpose of forced migration, at to some extent, indications of potential genocide although often contested [77, 93, 94].

The soldiers used to come to the customs and abuse me and talk about the Gio people, saying that we are all against the government. They used to say that they were sorry that they hadn't killed all the Gio people in 1985, and they were just waiting for the order. From 1985, the Krahn people began to hate the Gio people and it has been that way since- Esther T., Yekepa, 1985, [95].

As with the history of countries like Rwanda, Americo-dominant political strategy was similar to European colonizers of "divide and rule" of different ethnic groups within their colonial boundaries" [96], setting a foundation for violent ethnic infighting after the oppressor was expelled [96, 97].

In 1984, Doe ordered the army to quell student protests about political repression, at the University of Liberia. The soldiers looted, flogged, and raped throughout the campus [93, 98, 99]. Additionally, girls and women detained for political reasons were also raped by military guards, as in a recount by Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf while arrested who witnessed a 19-year-old girl who was gang raped by soldiers [100].

Little appears to be published documenting the scale of rape in the formative years of Doe's rule. By 1989, US agencies helped provide resources to the growing rebel fraction made up of Gio and Mano, many of whom were victims of Doe repression and had lost family [1, 2, 99]. Collaborating ethnic populations were also targeted by the rebels. For instance, the Mandingos were courted by Doe's administration due to their wealth and trade connections. Mandingo people were targeted more as Doe's hold on power lessened. Doe enemy groups like the NPLF promoted propaganda of the "ethnic marriage" or partnership between the Krahn and Mandingo people. "Thus when government troops lost ground, a Mandingo "ethnic cleansing" followed in their wake" [93]. Charles Taylor and Prince Johnson were often portrayed before the First Civil War as liberators and saviors of the Nimbian Hinterland [1, 101].

The army used brutal counterinsurgency tactics in its efforts to crush the rebellion, indiscriminately killing unarmed civilians, raping women, burning villages and looting. Most of the victims of the army abuses were of the Gio and Mano ethnic groups" [95].

First Civil War

For every one human rights crime committed by Doe's forces, Charles Taylor's forces were responsible for 8 during this reign of terror [1]. Initially Taylor fought



alongside Johnson with the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), which in 1989 launched an attack from Côte d'Ivoire [1, 75, 77, 102]. By 1991, Charles Taylor and his rebel forces made up of mostly of north-central interior including the Mano, Gio, and Pele. During the NPFL invasion of Monrovia in 1990-1992, rape of children and women significantly increase. "All armed forces, government forces, affiliated militias, and insurgent groups sexually assaulted and raped girls on a large scale. Sexual assault was used as a weapon of war, namely as a form of humiliation, intimidation and symbol of subordination of local communities" [7]. While the NPFL mainly targeted Krahn civilians and officials in retaliation of the Gio and Mano repression under Doe, other ethnicities were also victimized, often mistaken as Krahn or Mandingo [7, 77, 91, 98, 103, 104].

In August 1990, peacekeeping forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), called Economic Community Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), entered Monrovia to help bring stability. ECOMOG's participation in the war would be contentious, including charges of statutory rape and the fathering of thousands of abandoned Liberian children by the time they pulled out [2, 47]. ECOMOG received the infamous nickname of 'every car or moving object goes,' referring to the notorious looting of civilian homes [1, 105, 106].

Johnson split from Taylor after supposed disagreements of leadership. Johnson later claimed he disagreed with Taylor increasing violent use of child soldiers, random pillaging, rapes, and kills of the population. Johnson's NPFL splinter group eventually captured Doe, tortured, and killed him, including his supposed cannibalization by troops while Taylor watched drinking Budweiser [1, 101, 107, 108]. After a ceasefire, Johnson supported Taylor's claim of the presidency, but ECOWAS rejected this proposal. In response, the NPFL launched a bloody assault on the capital. The NPFL descended towards the capital, first capturing Robertsfield airport and then Firestone. By December 1990, Taylor's NPFL was solely responsible for committing approximately 40,000 human rights violations, including at least 400 murders, 800

abductions, and 600 rapes, including of a 13-year-old girl who was later killed in the Firestone attack (Rota, 2015).

Liberians forced to flee often faced multiple abuses, as represented in various filmed testimonies. An archetypical case is the story of Mary Pollee whose family lived on Firestone when war broke out:

The American government, they came and picked up all their citizens [Americans working on Firestone plantation], and carried them away. We thought they were going to protect us [from the fighting]...When you not blessed by God, they [the AFL] kill you. My husband...they kill him...Then the other one came and got on me, rape me. I was in tears, crying. He put a gun in my mouth, and said, "If you don't do it, I will kill you."

Afterwards, Mary fled with her family into Taylor rebel held-territory:

They [NPFL] catch one of my children. She was a girl, about 13 years-old. There were about three men that rape her. So, they damaged her womb. No hospital, where could I find a hospital to carry her. So, she died. She died [110].

In the early 1990s, the face of rape changed mainly to one of conquest, spoils of war, and territorial submission of the population. In villages, towns, and cities, an armed group would stay for long periods often brutalizing the community, including daily executions, torturing, and rapes. The details resemble stories from the Rape of Nanking and the Rwandan genocide. Additionally, similar to its use in El Salvador by gangs, rape was used as a means of extortion, forcing both men and women to trade sex or submit to twisted forms of sexual abuse as payment of living in their territory, or to bargain for their life, the lives of family or friends, financial repository, less torture, and for some a quicker execution [7, 47, 86, 106, 107, 111]. Testimonies of rape often linked to the sordid murdering of family:

Those that raped me I don't know them; they raped me until I am not to myself today. I am suffering and my hips are hurting me as I am sitting here. They beat me all over my body and I am having a lot of complaints today [7].

Sixteen armed men jumped over the fence, burst the gate and came into our apartment. They took cell



phones, money – everything... He pulled down my jeans in order to rape me. My little daughter started screaming. And the man grabbed my screaming child from my side and knocked her down and started raping her. He just grabbed her from me, raped her to death, and laid her to the side [7].

After the attack on Monrovia failed, and ECOMOG and what remained of the AFL pushed the NPLF back, Taylor declared himself president of Liberia and set up a second government in his home territory of Bong. His rebel government established a constitution that offered his people some protections from harm but with no laws against rape or forced marriage. 'New wars' can often lead to chaotic fractioning of non-state players [42, 46, 77]. By 1993, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO) forced mostly of former AFL soldiers. Another rebel faction also emerged, the Liberian Peace Movement (LPM), almost made up of ex-Doe soldiers. Thirdly, the Lofa Defense Force (LDF) sprung up to combat ULIMO in Loma territory. The divisions continued when ULIMO split among ethnic lines, with the ULIMO-J representing the Krahn and ULIMO-K representing the Muslim Mandingo people. In 1994, the ULIMO-K received support from Guinean security forces including some being issued Guinean army uniforms. They targeted Liberian refugees in Guinea thought to be LDF [1, 77, 107]. Thus, systemic sexual violence expanded wider into the Hinterlands, and often employed escalated depravity as a means of shaming, exploiting, and male bonding.

[ULIMO-J] fighters ordered my brother to have sex with me. I was very scared and I began to tremble. They told him that if he refused they will kill him, but he still refused. I was too scared for his life but he told the fighters he could not have sex with me. – Mary, 1993, Robertsport (Isaac, 2014, p. 18).

I beg them [rebel soldiers] to please leave me but they still put me at gunpoint...they used sticks and other things on me [inserting them in her vaginal]. I cried hard but they refused to listen. After they left me, I was bleeding for three months and I can still feel pain in my body. – TRC testimonial participant [112].

The warlord exploited thousands of child soldiers, most of whom resided in NPLF in interior, called Taylor Land, and sustained on hundreds of millions in illegal trade including blood diamonds. Taylor's 'boys' demonstrated how "child warriors can enable gangs to become low-cost, combat effective forces—forces that are able to regenerate despite a lack of popular support and devaluation of ideology. Personal profit and plunder can become the fuel for on-going conflict" [113].

The first years of the civil war led to nearly one in five citizens dead. In some towns and urban communities, mothers and female adolescents were raped, sometimes by gangs, and sometimes multiple times of the span of months [105, 106]. Hundreds of thousands were displaced or refugees, and the country was economically in ruins, with no electricity [1].

Holding regime in his new capital city of Gbanga, in Bong County, Taylor ran into increasing difficulties paying his rebel forces including gangs of orphaned or stolen child soldiers. By the end of the First Civil War, the NPLF informally allowed rapes to become a form of bonuses for soldiers. A perverse economic system, the 'pay yourself' tactic slowly became a common practice, in which NPLF commanders permitted rebel soldiers to loot homes and businesses of anyone they thought to be Doe or Congo supporters. The 'pay-yourself' method extended informally to raping women in pillaged homes, and taking 'country wives,' who were young women and girls forced to become sex slaves and laborers for rebel bands. 'Pay yourself' eventually spread to other armed groups, as warlord resources became scarcer [1, 105, 106].

A 1994 randomized survey in Monrovia found that 49% of female participants experienced at least one incident of physical and sexual violence by a soldier or fighter, including being tied up, beaten, stripped searched. 15% of female participants reported being raped or sexually coerced. Women accused of belonging to a non-favored ethnic group or enemy faction, or were forced to cook for a soldier/fighter had significantly higher rates of sexual violence [114].

The ULIMO people also raped my young sister's daughter and she got sick. She died because there was no medicine. My Aunt also got crazy – woman, Foya [84].

[An INPLF] commando who fell in love with me. So the easiest I could do was to love to him [have a relationship with him-in Liberian English]. I didn't like him though- Bintu, [93].

Taylor and other rebel leaders like General Butt Naked were responsible for SGBV and human rights atrocities. General Butt Naked often sexually violated, sacrificed and ate body parts of young girls. Warlords also allowed troops to rape virgins, as dark magic practices became increasingly ingrained into rebel culture. Taylor took on polygamist practices, and abducted 'country wives,' and was reported to often rape young girls [1, 7, 85, 105].

Temporary peace and elections

In 1997, a peace accord allowed for national presidential and parliamentary elections to be held. Charles Taylor represented the National Patriotic Party (NPP), made up primarily of his original invasion force. Running on the campaign slogan, "He kill my ma. He kill my pa. I vote for Taylor," the brutal warlord won by an ironic 75% landslide [1, 108, 115]. Liberians were tired of war and knew that if Taylor did not receive the presidency, war would restart. The state under President Taylor remained a highly authoritative dictatorship in which oppression of opposition was blatantly enforced by the rebels, now called the National Armed Forces [1, 115–117]. The use of rape as a 'pay yourself' policy did not lessen [113, 115, 118, 119]. In urban and rural areas, violations of women and children continued by both the government military as well as in traditional ethnic groups.

When he first came into power, Taylor briefly attempted to assuage the international opposition against him and win over more support including of the American government. Taylor continued to deny charges by human rights actors. Yet nearly a year into his presidency, many human rights advocates disappeared, were arrested, or executed. Bribery became rampant, and many international NGOs were forced to leave. Taylor increasingly rules with

terror. His child soldiers continued to thrive on the 'pay yourself' approach, and raping in the capital and surrounding areas became a normal part of survival for most women [1, 113, 118]. The weakened economy also forced many female citizens to turn to prostitution or serving in Taylor's forces, which could include cooking, washing, fighting, and for many- becoming soldier concubines [47, 111, 113, 118–120]. Previous research indicated that women younger than 25 years experienced higher risks of rape and sexual coercion by fighters. If she served a fighter in a domestic capacity, her chances of being sexual abused increased [114].

We do not know how many girls and women were combatants during the two civil wars [84, 112, 121]. "Some scholars assert that girls have comprised 30–40% of all child combatants in recent conflicts in Africa" [122]. For female fighters, implications of SGBV that they likely experienced can compound their rehabilitation and reunification process after the war. Girl soldiers who gave birth to children by rebel commanders, or were forced to become their wives remained haunted by the experience years later [112].

It was not Liberian armed men only committing sexual atrocities. 6,600 Liberian children were registered as being fathered by peacekeepers like ECOMOG between 1990 and 1998, many of whom by adolescent mothers [47]. Peacekeepers often abused their positions of authority to exploit vulnerable female populations suffering a lack of basic needs for survival.

When ma asked me to go to the stream to wash plates, a peacekeeper asked me to take my clothes off so that he can take a picture. When I asked him to give me money he told me, no money for children only biscuit – young girl, 2001, [111].

Statutory rape of refugees and coercive sex trading for provisions by humanitarian workers was also noted by the United Nations in the years around Taylor's presidency [111]. An unknown number of humanitarian aid workers from various nonprofits and international organizations sexually exploited girls and women, primarily affecting female refugees, orphans, and single-mothers with no stable income [123]. As conditions deteriorated after

Taylor's election, communities were so reliant on NGOs that they often were forced to stay silent about the sexual abuse:

It's difficult to escape the trap of those (NGO) people; they use the food as bait to get you to [have] sex with them. - adolescent, Liberia [111]

Yesterday I was walking with a friend of mine and this kind NGO worker stopped his car and gave me 100 Liberian dollars (US\$ 20 for sex). I was able to help my child and myself. If I tell you his name and he loses his job, what will I do?" - girl mother in Liberia [111]

Sexual violence by any peacekeeper or humanitarian worker is morally appalling and a violation of professional oaths to serve and protect.

Second Civil War

In 1999, elements of the ULIMO, both Krahn and Mandingo, joined together to form the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), with support from the diaspora and the Guinean government. LURD's political motto was 'Taylor must go' [1, 77, 118]. By 2001, the Second War erupted, costing more lives than the previous conflicts together. Different phases of this civil war were nicknamed as World War I, II, and III, ironically representing the level of hostile violence used by warlords fighting each other and those civilians stuck in the crosshairs.

Testimonies by civilians in 2003 indicate that NPFL rebels were responsible for more than three times the number of reported violations with the next closest being LURD [7]. While warring factions continued to hold ethnic-dominant ties, GBV targeted indiscriminately with most Liberians and refugees in neighbouring nations at risk [1, 77, 124]. Female abductions were common, including induction as rebel fighters and sex slaves:

An armed faction LURD, "abducted girls, trained them to use guns and other weaponry, and sexually assaulted many to the point of death" [7].

The rebel captured me from my village when they attacked and I was his woman, I had my child, first it was hard, I used to want to kill myself and the baby but, later, I got used to the baby. I love my baby now – child mother

whose baby was taken away by rebel father at end of war, 2003 [7].

There are indications that random acts of gang rape by armed soldiers increased, not only for women of so-called enemy ethnic affiliations, but of nearly anyone unfortunate to find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time [89, 105, 106]. Gang rape is especially harmful as it can increase risks of physical injuries, STIs, and mental distress. While incidences of sexual coercion or financial exploitation may not involve physical violence, often gang rape is exceedingly violent, in which the victim is held against her will, and repeatedly abused over extended amounts of time [114, 122, 125–127]. Female survivors who have experienced to three types of gender-based violence incidences often suffer extreme rates of mental disorder (77.3%), anxiety (52.5%), and substance abuse disorder (56.2%) [126, 127]. In gang rape, in which the act involves 'proving or asserting masculinity,' she is likely to experience higher numbers and types of SGBV.

"In conflicts such as those in Liberia and the DRC, men have been reported to engage in individual or gang rape as a means of displaying their masculinity, bonding with peers, and establishing their place in the armed group" [127]. As sanctions began to lead to starvation of the Liberian population living under Taylor, forced child soldiering was used by both the state and rebels. The recruitment of children into armed groups became increasingly dehumanizing. Death of parents and displacement often made children more vulnerable to recruitment. However, various rebel groups and Taylor's army forces targeted an untold number of boys and young men to rape mothers, sisters, and neighbours, and often kill their parents, as a tactic to ensure they would not escape soldiering and return home [89, 113, 118, 120]. Gang rape of neighbours or family members also became a tactic to ensure forced servitude and building of comradeship.

Gang raping can be more prevalent than individual rapes during the civil wars, due to the nature of it used as a means of socialization among armed groups [112, 114, 118, 120]. While adult fighters participated in gang rape, pushing male children and adolescents into committing the act is a

form of sexual coercion and exploitation. "Child soldiers were also exposed to sexual violence against citizens, especially women and girls. According to Amnesty International, boy fighters as young as 12 have been engaged in raping women and girls in shelters and camps. Armed rapists used the power of their weapons to carry out sexual attacks" [112]. The psychological implications harmed both child soldiers pressured into raping, many of whom would have post-traumatic stress, have unhealthy future relationships, and often become adult abusers after the war as for their victims. Drugging including the sniffing of 'brown-brown' (cocaine and gunpowder) or pushing it into the blood stream directly through lacerations on the face was common. Many child soldiers have difficulty remembering their participation in attacks as a result of being high [1, 7, 125, 128]. Yet when in drug-induced states, the level of depravity among child soldiers tends to increase [121, 129, 130].

In her ninth month of pregnancy she... She was forced to hold down her husband with her sons while he was butchered alive and then forced to eat his flesh. They then raped her until she delivered the baby she was carrying -woman, Bong [7]

There bellboy carried the bucket side my baby and chopped, chopped all my baby body and put the blood in the bucket and brought it and told me to was my face [7].

By 2001, the UN and ECOWAS supported by the US State Department condemned Taylor and imposed international sanctions on the government. The economic bottleneck laid the final blow that allowed rebel forces to eventually liberate Monrovia.

MODEL were killing machines, a torture group who used rape as a weapon of war. NPFL used civilians as labourers and used rape as a weapon of war – woman, Pleebo [84].

As Taylor's control over state power deteriorated, more enemies entered the battle to topple his administration. The Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), a dominantly Krahn-led rebel groups with a strong hold in Côte d'Ivoire launched attacks in March 2003. Strategically coordinating with LURD, MODEL gained

territory quickly. Sadly, rape as a 'pay yourself' and 'country wives' models increased among both Krahn and Mandingo fighters as they approached Monrovia, Taylor's seat of power [93, 112, 118, 124].

[O]ne of the MODEL people impregnated me and so while we were there anytime he wants to go with me and I refused he will show me the gun and I will have to go against my will for survival" – adolescent mother, Ganta, 2003 [7]

Another told of how she walked with an old woman, heavily pregnant. The old woman who was to help her deliver was captured and raped and at that time, she went into the bush and delivered a set of twins. Unable to get the placenta to emerge, she wrapped the new born twins in a cloth and went to look for the old woman. She found her and pleaded with the rebels to release her to help her. Finally, they did and when she got back to the babies they found that they had been eaten by ants – Liberian women, Monrovia, 2003 [7].

Women including rebel fighters taken prisoner often experienced repeated sexual violence in captivity.

They [NPFL soldiers] beat me and raped me, more than more, and I lost everything I had. Any commando who was ready to see a woman for free would come and rape me-with my sabou (shaved head- typically done to prisoners of war). I did not have clothes on. They did not even want to know that I was a human being they did not want to know - Bintu, a Mandingo fighter, Gbarnga [93].

The psychological impacts of being raped often remain long after the war [6, 15, 72, 84, 112, 119].

One of the women I have been counselling was raped by 7-10 soldiers every night for two weeks...She now feels useless and wanted to commit suicide. She could not tell her husband and the children- male therapist, [84].

DISCUSSION

Utas (2005) indicates that although rape was a common phenomenon throughout the Liberian civil war, there is debate about whether it was a deliberate strategy of "ethnic cleansing" as in the cases of Rwanda or Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some Liberian war researchers like Lucas

(1997) and Olonisakin (1995) urge that rape in the 1990s and early 2000s was more a carnival of hyper-masculine warrior identity, wartime disparagement, and the projection of women as sexual objects to be taken. Rape as a war weapon was “carried out against any unprotected woman, regardless of whether they had ethnic or political affinity with those who perpetrated this violence” [93]. The problem with this argument is two-fold: 1) cited sources validating this statement are not accessible, only summaries; and 2) are conducted early on in the First Civil War.

There is growing literature evaluating the cases of Liberia's civil strife, which conclude that the start of the civil war was a result of the socio-economic status and political power sharing differentials between the long-time ruling elite, Americo-Liberians, and the indigenous population. After Doe took over the country, and his power legitimacy was tested by the failed coup and sham elections that voted him as president, Doe's army strategically began attacking perceived enemies and their ethnic peoples- the Gio and Mano. The coup and the First Civil War were based on ethnic-political tensions [7, 94–97, 104, 112, 124, 131, 132].

After an escalation of mass attacks and murders by governmental soldiers (mostly Krahn) in the late 1980s, a resistance force under Taylor and Johnson emerged, often seen as ‘liberators’ of the Nimbian peoples in the Hinderlands [1, 93, 101, 112, 124]. The rebels that emerged to fight Doe's forces ultimately were driven by the desire of retaliation for the mass murders of their people, as well as the propaganda of being the emancipators of their ethnic communities. “Even before the outbreak of the civil war, the other Liberian ethnic groups viewed a fight between the Krahns on the one hand and the Gios and Manos of Nimba on the other” [97].

At first Taylor and Johnson's forces mainly attacked, including the use of rape as a weapon, the Krahn and Mandingo population throughout the country. The use of rape during the war was again not necessarily for cleansing so much as a weapon of ethnic targeting, retaliation, and forced migration of undesirable ethnic populations. Yet, the more Doe's violence escalated, the

more documents arose noting the initial conditions for genocide [96], although Liberia's Second Civil War likely evolved into the employment of insurgency violence [131] in the aftermath of the coup and First Civil War.

This study thus posits that the 1980 coup d'état was likely a byproduct of both ethnic political tensions between indigenous populations often left with little power in a social class system in which one had to be of Americo-Liberian descent to inherently benefit from elitest privileges, including wealth, prosperity, and various democratic rights. Access to political power sharing, suffrage, and economic opportunities historically were denied to Liberian indigenous and non-landowning peoples. Ethnicity and social class were intertwined by a propagated system the Americas had used overtime to solidify administrative control over clans and tribes, dividing them often into ethnic groups based on ethno-linguistic divides, and thus solidifying distinctions among ethnic groups [7, 75, 77, 107].

Rape as a weapon during Doe's reign is not well-documented, but there are sufficient indications that during the coup, his indigenous soldiers violently targeted Americo-Liberians, including the use of rape, which in turn led to most fleeing the nation and conceding territorial control over to Doe and his Krahn-led armed forces. By the mid-1980s, the use of rape was used to political suppress opponents including student protestors. Yet ethnic targeting became rampant by Doe's assassination as a direct result of the failed Gio-led coup. ethnic groups were also victimized as the result of the civil strife, but being able to speak Krahn often could save a person from being assaulted [1, 7, 95, 101, 104]. Gang rape was used by Doe forces, as documented in Cooper's House on Sugar Beach, likely a combination of hypermasculine bonding and ethnic targeting. Whether Doe employed mass rape and murder directly for this purpose, the violence inflicted on the Gio and Mano led to thousands fleeing, which lends to the potential of ethnic raping as a means of forcing mass migration. Also, genocide may have been a potential factor, as Krahn troops would torture, rape, and kill entire villages or large populations repeatedly before the First Civil War.

Addedly, Bøås (2005) states that the “Liberian war is not a ‘new’ war, but the present manifestation of a social conflict that started when the first settlers arrived in the early 18th century” (p.87). Yet I urge that while this may be somewhat the case during Doe’s regime, it may not be the case for the civil war itself. The Americo power dynamic for the most part was neutralized by the time Doe was assassinated. The inevitable fractioning of the resistance against the Americo-elite, and later the Krahn-elite, grew as a result of the destabilization of the nexus of state legitimacy and the increased violence exhibited upon the Liberian population.

Comparatively, after nearly ten years of repression and murder, the rebel factions (INPLF and NPLF) under Taylor and Johnson also initially used rape as a weapon of ethnic targeting. Yet, the literature review finds sufficient evidence to posit that Gio/Mano ethnic targeting of Krahn and Mandingo peoples served more for retaliatory premises rather than Doe’s suppression tactics, which may be a reason for why sexual violence grew more depraved as the First Civil War expanded. Using the ‘new war’ model, the disintegration of the state’s legitimacy, including legitimacy of violence, ultimately led to a civil conflict in which rebel factions battled the state, but increasingly violence hurt the general population rather than armed entities [44–46, 77].

In the First Civil War, rape as a tactic of war was frequently a means of financial exploitation, gang rape as a hypermasculine experience of supposed warriors, and more formally, a means of supplementing troop payments that could not always be paid monetarily, via the ‘pay yourself’ method, mainly started by Taylor with his child soldiers and young insurgents. Human depravity reigned. Singer (2006) indicates that there are different types of motivations that drive child soldiers in particularly- coercion (threats of harm, punishments, demotion, torture), and remunerative motivators with rewards (food, drugs, promotions, and sex) [121]. Encouraging or forcing rape among child soldiers is a double-edge sword, as it may have remunerative applications, may bind boys together in comradeship, but at the same time, sexual exploit them through a different form of grooming, and testimonies of former child soldiers indicate, also increase their self-loathing, addictive

behaviours, and scar their ability to form healthy adult relationships later in life [121, 128–130]. The death toll increased the longer the war continued.

Stories of pregnant women raped and then cut open alive so that rebels could gamble on the sex of the fetus [108]. Stories of forced recruited children made to rape their family members or elderly neighbours so that they could not return home, making them wholly depend on their commanders for survival, a tactic that is uniquely symbolically associated with various wars in West Africa in the 1990s[113, 118, 125]. Stories of young women and girls forced into sexual exploitation either as army sex slave, prostitutes, or country wives [77, 93, 97], the equivalent of Japanese ‘comfort women’ in WWII. Female Liberians who were not necessarily physically threatened into sexual exploitation often selective chose to become sex workers or combatant girlfriends as a means of survival, as the alternatives were often few, yet they too often repeatedly had to survive multiple instances of sexual violence [7, 97, 132].

As the longevity of the war raged, the levels of violent narratives of rape appear to grow in scholarship and documented reports. As I analyze the documented quotes of survivors sharing their experiences, the details become more haunting. By the Second Civil War, including its various World Wars, rape became endemic to the point that being of the right ethnicity or political affiliation was of less value for protection for many female Liberians residing in country and whom were refugees [1, 94, 96, 97, 112, 124, 132]. As a colleague would explain, if a person was singled out by armed men or boys, she could only hoped that after the rape, if death was inevitable, she were fortunate for it to come quickly, instead of a slow torturous process, or one where the memories would scar her for a lifetime. The role of young children and youth already raised in a sexually violent war situation may be an additional factor for the random systematization of raping and being raped as an experience of the war

Post-war research by Utas (2005), indicates that while many Liberian women were sexually victimized, they were not victims. Those who lived through the war are



survivors. Women who experience abuse often use terms like “copying,” “fighting back” and “surviving” as an indication that women are more than the abuse that they suffer, and many instead build coping mechanisms and resiliency out of hardship (pp.405-420).

CONCLUSION

This study theoretically incorporates Kaldor's ‘new war’ framework in examining rape as a weapon of war during the Liberian civil crisis. Bøås (2005) critiques whether the Liberian conflict was a ‘new war’ or ‘old war’ according to Kaldor's thesis. He concludes that “there is little ‘new’ about the Liberian war. Rather, it can best be understood as a violent expression of the tendencies, organisation and attitudes towards identity, society and class that have underpinned Liberia since its formation in the 19th century” (p.88). There appears to be no neat delineation of the conflict as either new or old. It simply was too complex in dimension, in which the state contended for power against both domestic military factions, as well as diversified domestic opposition in the form of warlord-led insurgents. Armed fighters killed each other in vast quantities throughout the conflict during territorial attacks and sieges. Yet, most of the violence targeted the population as a means of financing and resourcing their factions, par to ‘new war’ literature emphasis that economic motivations and global connections between local conflicts and predominantly illegal internal market-based stakeholders. Yet, the conflict was in many ways a ‘new war’ in which sexual violence of Liberian women served as a major economic incentive especially for rebel groups in the civil wars. Rape was used as supplemental payment in lieu of standard wages, remunerative bonuses for drugged child soldiers, coercive recruitment for many female fighters and sex slaves, a means of territorial forced migration, terror for submission to rule, and an exploitative tax for residents within that territory.

This qualitative study examines to what extent there were potential differences in the use of rape of female civilian populations as a weapon of war during progressive phases of a conflict. In examining hundreds of

sources, I find no clear cut distinctions of rape as a weapon of war throughout the nearly 25 year-long civil strife. Incidences of gang rape, ethnic targeting, rape for mass migration, rape for territorial and political gain/submission of opposition, financial exploitation, and sex servitude through country wives, sex slaves, and prostitution can be found among the three periods of the Liberian civil strife- the 1980-1989 Doe regime, the First Civil War, and the Second Civil War. However, this analysis takes the position that each phase of the war exemplified key trends of rape as a means of war, with varying input factors and objectives. While not as well-documented as sexual violence in the two civil wars, Doe's regime appears to use rape as a means of systemic ethnic targeting in which Americo-Liberians, Gio and Mano were mainly victimized. Ethnic tensions were clearly linked with social class divisions and political elitism.

Comparatively, as the NLPF mainly led by Gio and Mano leadership responded as a so-called liberation front, rape quickly became a twisted weapon serving multiple purposes, including territorial gain, power brokering, extortion for survival, sexual slavery and servitude, and hypermasculinity bonding. The most provocative form of rape, highly associated with the Liberian civil wars' narrative within scholarship, seemingly is the ‘pay yourself’ tactic first employed by Taylor which would spread among various factions, including ULIMO, LURD, and MODEL. ‘Pay yourself’ remunerative motivation can be effective among fighters.

Additionally, this study asks if the exponential factor of the violence of rape as a weapon may in fact be time itself. The longer younger generations of Liberians boys and girls were born in the ethnic political instability in which peoples were labelled as ‘us versus them’, and rape and murder become more diversified, the more the next generation of fighters appear to have violated the standards of war, basic human rights, and moreover, moral and ethical boundaries of society. Taylor's forces were often made up of youth and child soldiers who were orphaned by Doe's forces, or who watched their mothers, sisters, and grandmothers raped, burnt alive or shot. This trauma likely ignited a generation thirsty for security and justice in which violent retaliation was a means. By the Second Civil War,



the disassociation from common human decency fell to levels where the Liberian nation remembers 1999-2003 as three distinct World Wars, in which everyone was fighting and no one was safe.

Yet, in the quest to better understand why rape in war was weaponized, I realize that one of the greatest lessons from the Liberian conflict is survival as the ultimate victory over defeat. Hundreds of thousands of female individuals survived unspeakable atrocities. Yet in surviving, they did not give into the darkness, in fact many found light. The Liberian civil war was not brought to an end by ECOMOG or UN peacekeepers so much as by the “spread your lappa movement.” The Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement surrounded the headquarters for months, spreading their lappas on the ground where they sat refusing to leave, openly protest for peace signings. The Women in Peace-building Network (WIPNET), led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gblowee additionally protested. In 2003, their female members, many of whom had been raped, lined the hallways and barred rebel warlords and government leaders including Charles Taylor from exiting peace talks until an agreement was reached. Moreover, the women demanded that warlords publicly admit the systematic use and acceptance of rape in war including of children.

In 2006, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf won the presidential elections in great support by Liberian female populations sick of war. The 2006 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia's (TRC) was conducted to help the country heal. Yet, many Liberians are still traumatized by their experiences. One purpose of this study is to help inform global health policy of the important distinctions in war rape experiences, especially in ‘wars of the third kind.’ Health services including trauma healing services must be tailored to flexibly adapt to different facets in generational experiences throughout a prolonged conflict. While rape is a shared experience for many women, each generation has a different story to tell in their struggle against sexual violence. Trauma-informed care is increasingly used in the provision of health services of female patients. Patient symptoms and needs can vary depending on the type of

trauma experience, its duration and frequency, and whether intergenerational [12, 133, 134]. Thus, this study emphasizes the need for research to map changes in war rape over time, so we may be able to adapted policies, services, and treatment individualized to help different generations of survivors and their families to recover and to thrive. As the number of civil conflicts grows in the global South in countries like Syria and Iraq, it is important to contribute to research that informs the use of rape as a weapon of war.

Acknowledgements

This research is dedicated to my Liberian friends and colleagues who shared their intimate experiences of the war. Thank you to Ernest Smith, Jr., Prisie Badu, Desmond Diggs, for reviewing initial drafts of this work. This is dedicated to the Forum for African Women Educationalists-Liberia, especially Mrs. W. Deline, Satta Gbelee, Rufus Mandein, Christian Plakar, Cora Wallace, and Jarvis Fletcher, and to the women and girls who heroically survived the war and those who lost their lives.

REFERENCES

1. Waugh. Charles Taylor and Liberia: Ambition and Atrocity in Africa's Lone Star State. Zed Books, 2011.
2. Gerdes F. The Interplay of Domestic Legitimation and Foreign Relations: Contrasting Charles Taylor and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. *Civil Wars* 2015; 17: 446–464.
3. Kristof. Rape in Liberia. *New York Times*, 21 May 2009, p. 1.
4. Bargués-Pedreny P, Martin de Almagro M. Prevention From Afar: Gendering Resilience and Sustaining Hope in Post-UNMIL Liberia. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 2020; 14: 327–348.
5. Mahlangu. Legal Understanding of ‘Quid Pro Quo’ Sexual Harassment in Schools. *Bulgarian Comparative Education Society*, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED574224> (2017, accessed 17 May 2023).
6. Medie PA. Fighting gender-based violence: The women's movement and the enforcement of rape law in Liberia. *Afr Aff (Lond)* 2013; 112: 377–397.



7. TRC. Title 1: Women in Conflict. Monrovia, January 2007.
8. Abramowitz S, Moran MH. International Human Rights, Gender-Based Violence, and Local Discourses of Abuse in Postconflict Liberia: A Problem of "Culture"? *Afr Stud Rev* 2012; 55: 119–146.
9. Bott, Morrison, Ellsberg. Preventing and Responding to Gender-based Violence in Middle and Low-income Countries A Global Review and Analysis. World Bank, 2005.
10. Hughes MM. Armed Conflict, International Linkages, and Women's Parliamentary Representation in Developing Nations. *Soc Probl* 2009; 56: 174–204.
11. Dörmann. Elements of War Crimes Under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
12. Goodman A, Bergbower H, Perrotte V, et al. Survival after Sexual Violence and Genocide: Trauma and Healing for Yazidi Women in Northern Iraq. *Health N Hav* 2020; 12: 612–628.
13. Tarzia L. "It Went to the Very Heart of Who I Was as a Woman": The Invisible Impacts of Intimate Partner Sexual Violence. *Qual Health Res* 2021; 31: 287–297.
14. Sigurdardottir S, Halldorsdottir S. Persistent Suffering: The Serious Consequences of Sexual Violence against Women and Girls, Their Search for Inner Healing and the Significance of the #MeToo Movement. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 2021; 18: 1849.
15. Gavey N, Schmidt J. "Trauma of Rape" Discourse: A Double-Edged Template for Everyday Understandings of the Impact of Rape? *Violence Against Women* 2011; 17: 433–456.
16. Krug EG, Mercy JA, Dahlberg LL, et al. The world report on violence and health. *Lancet* 2002; 360: 1083–8.
17. Lawn RB, Koenen KC. Violence against women and girls has long term health consequences. *BMJ* 2021; e069311.
18. Cohen, Hoover Green, Wood. Wartime Sexual Violence: Misconceptions, Implications, and Ways Forward. 2013.
19. Ogbuehi. M (2020) Rape as a Moral Attack against Women in the Nigeria-Biafra War, in *Women and the Nigeria-Biafra War*: , 125. . In: *Reframing Gender and Conflict in Africa*. Lexington Books, 2020, pp. 125–127.
20. Kivlahan C, Ewigman N. Rape as a weapon of war in modern conflicts. *BMJ* 2010; 340: c3270–c3270.
21. Traunmüller R, Kijewski S, Freitag M. The Silent Victims of Sexual Violence during War: Evidence from a List Experiment in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2019; 63: 2015–2042.
22. Wright. *The Oxford Handbook of Sex Offences and Sex Offenders*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
23. MacDonald R. Time to talk about rape. *BMJ* 2000; 321: 1034–1035.
24. Sweeney BN. Gender-Based Violence and Rape Culture. In: *Companion to Women's and Gender Studies*. Wiley, 2020, pp. 285–302.
25. Center on Law & Globalization. How rape became a crime against humanity. 2015.
26. Toral. History of Violence: Struggling with the Legacy of Rape in Liberia, <https://world.time.com/2012/04/30/history-of-violence-struggling-with-the-legacy-of-rape-in-liberia/> (2012, accessed 17 May 2023).
27. Denov M, Piolanti A. Mothers of children born of genocidal rape in Rwanda: Implications for mental health, well-being and psycho-social support interventions. *Health Care Women Int* 2019; 40: 813–828.
28. Buiten D, Naidoo K. Framing the problem of rape in South Africa: Gender, race, class and state histories. *Current Sociology* 2016; 64: 535–550.
29. Njoroge. Evolution of Rape As a War Crime and a Crime Against Humanity. *SSRN* 2016; 1–18.
30. Brook T. The Tokyo Judgment and the Rape of Nanking. *J Asian Stud* 2001; 60: 673–700.
31. Kazuko W. Militarism, colonialism, and the trafficking of women: "Comfort women" forced into sexual labor for Japanese soldiers. *Bull Concern Asian Sch* 1994; 26: 3–17.
32. Soh CS. The Korean 'Comfort Women': Movement for Redress. *Asian Surv* 1996; 36: 1226–1240.
33. Chinkin CM. Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery. *American Journal of International Law* 2001; 95: 335–341.



34. Yoshida. *The Making of the 'Rape of Nanking' History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States*. Oxford Press, 2006.
35. Kuwert, Freyberger. The unspoken secret: sexual violence in World War II. *Int Psychogeriatr* 2007; 19: 782–784.
36. Messerschmidt JW. Review Symposium: The Forgotten Victims of World War II. *Violence Against Women* 2006; 12: 706–712.
37. Buss DE. Rethinking 'Rape as a Weapon of War'. *Fem Leg Stud* 2009; 17: 145–163.
38. WIGB Violence. Ending violence against women. *Issues in World Health* 1999; 11: 1–44.
39. Kostovicova D, Bojicic-Dzelilovic V, Henry M. Drawing on the continuum: a war and post-war political economy of gender-based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Int Fem J Polit* 2020; 22: 250–272.
40. Gaggioli G. Sexual violence in armed conflicts: A violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law. *International Review of the Red Cross* 2014; 96: 503–538.
41. Meger. Rape in Contemporary Warfare & The Role of Globalization in Wartime Sexual Violence. *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review* 2011; 1: 100.
42. Kaldor M. In Defence of New Wars. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2013; 2: 4.
43. Kaldor M. Commentary on Kögler: Analysing the Ukraine war through a 'new wars' perspective. *European Journal of Social Theory* 2023; 136843102311688.
44. Banta BR. The New War Thesis and Clausewitz: A Reconciliation. *Glob Policy* 2019; 10: 477–485.
45. Maccarrone. *Contemporary Warfare: an analysis of the conflict in Syria under Kaldor's 'New Wars' Paradigm*. Università Degli Studi di Pavia, 2018.
46. Münkler. *The New Wars*. Wiley, 2005.
47. Rehn, Johnson-Sirleaf. *Women, War, and Peace*. 2002.
48. Murphy. Progress and Jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. *Am J Int Law* 1999; 91: 57–60.
49. Adams A. The Legacy of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and Their Contribution to the Crime of Rape. *European Journal of International Law* 2018; 29: 749–769.
50. Sharlach L. Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda. *New Political Science* 2000; 22: 89–102.
51. United Nations. Justice and Reconciliation Process: Rwanda, <https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/assets/pdf/Backgrounder%20Justice%202014.pdf> (2014, accessed 17 May 2023).
52. Jaleel. *The Work of Rape*. Duke University Press, 2021.
53. Goessmann K, Ibrahim H, Neuner F. Association of War-Related and Gender-Based Violence With Mental Health States of Yazidi Women. *JAMA Netw Open* 2020; 3: e2013418.
54. Ibrahim H, Ertl V, Catani C, et al. Trauma and perceived social rejection among Yazidi women and girls who survived enslavement and genocide. *BMC Med* 2018; 16: 154.
55. Stallone K. Strategic Submission to Rape is not Consent: Sexual Violence in the Colombian Armed Conflict. *Violence Against Women* 2022; 28: 3482–3504.
56. Chaskel R, Gaviria SL, Espinel Z, et al. Mental health in Colombia. *BJPsych Int* 2015; 12: 95–97.
57. Sleele. Insecurity and opportunity in Colombia: Linking civil war and human trafficking . In: *Trafficking and the global sex industry*. Lexington , 2006, pp. 77–88.
58. Claval. Extortion and Sexual Violence: Women's Unspoken Suffering, <https://insightcrime.org/investigations/extortion-sexual-violence-womens-unspoken-suffering/> (April 2019, accessed 25 May 2023).
59. McNamara PJ. Political Refugees from El Salvador: Gang Politics, the State, and Asylum Claims. *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 2017; 36: 1–24.
60. Boerman T, Golob A. Gangs and Modern-Day Slavery in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala: A Non-Traditional Model of Human Trafficking. *J Hum Traffick* 2021; 7: 241–257.

61. Hume M. Mano Dura: El Salvador responds to gangs. *Dev Pract* 2007; 17: 739–751.
62. Lee. Reconsidering Constructivism in Qualitative Research. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 2012; 44: 403–412.
63. Dunn WN. *Public Policy Analysis. Sixth Edition.* | New York : Routledge, 2017. | Revised edition of the author's *Public policy analysis*, c2012.: Routledge, 2017. Epub ahead of print 4 August 2017.
64. Shadish WR, Cook TD, Campbell DT. *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference.* Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 2002.
65. O'Brien BC, Harris IB, Beckman TJ, et al. Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research. *Academic Medicine* 2014; 89: 1245–1251.
66. Noble H, Smith J. Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Evidence Based Nursing* 2015; 18: 34–35.
67. Slevin E, Sines D. Enhancing the truthfulness, consistency and transferability of a qualitative study: utilising a manifold of approaches. *Nurse Res* 2000; 7: 79–98.
68. Girls Not Brides. *Child Marriage around the World- Liberia,* <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/liberia/> (2023, accessed 17 May 2023).
69. OHCHR. *Current Situation of Early and Forced Marriage in Liberia.* Monrovia, 2021.
70. African Child Policy Forum (ACPF). *Minimum age of marriage in Africa.* Para. 2-8. <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/documents/1197/Minimum-age-of-marriage-in-Africa-June-2013.pdf> (June 2013, accessed 7 May 2023).
71. Cohen DK, Green AH. Dueling incentives. *J Peace Res* 2012; 49: 445–458.
72. Thornhill K. Power, predation, and postwar state formation: the public discourse of ritual child rape in Liberia. *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* 2017; 2: 229–247.
73. Shepherd. *Handbook on gender and violence.* Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019.
74. Meger S. The Fetishization of Sexual Violence in International Security. *International Studies Quarterly* 2016; 60: 149–159.
75. Scully, Karim, Bernstein. *Conflict Profile: Liberia,* <https://womensmediacenter.com/women-under-siege/conflicts/liberia#reasons> (13 September 2013, accessed 23 May 2023).
76. Médard. The Liberian state was and is in essence a neopatrimonial state. In: *États d'Afrique Noire: Formation, Mécanismes et Crise.* Karthala, 1991, pp. 3–88.
77. Bøås. The liberian civil war: new war/old war? *Global Society* 2005; 19: 73–88.
78. Brown. 'On the Category 'Civilised' in Liberia and Elsewhere. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 1982; 20: 287–303.
79. Curry. Extending the Imagination of African Gender Thought. *Hood Communist* 2021; 1–5.
80. Leopold. The shaping of men and the making of metaphors: The meaning of white clay in Poro and Sande initiation society rituals. *Anthropology* 1983; 8: 21–40.
81. Olukoju. *Culture and Customs of Liberia.* Greenwood Press, 2006.
82. Cooper. *House on Sugar Beach.* S&S/ Marysue Rucci Books, 2008.
83. Independent Probe Newspaper. *Memories of Bloody April 12 Coup -What Happen on this Day 1980-38 Years Ago?* 11 April 2018, pp. 1–4.
84. Liebling-Kalifani, Mwaka, Ojiambo-Ochieng, et al. *Women War Survivors of the 1989-2003 Conflict in Liberia: The Impact of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.* *J Int Womens Stud* 2011; 1–20.
85. Mallah. Interview with United Nations (UNMIL). Monrovia, 2 March 2018.
86. Mandain, Wallace, Hanson. *County Education Officer meeting notes.* River Cess, 2011.
87. Mastey. *National Narratives Reconciled in Contemporary Liberian Fiction.* *Research in African Literatures* 2012; 43: 151.
88. Hegre H, Østby G, Raleigh C. Poverty and Civil War Events. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2009; 53: 598–623.
89. Powers. *Blue Clay People.* Powel's Books, 2008.



90. Badmus. Explaining Women's Roles in the West African Tragic Triplet: Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Cote d'Ivoire in Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 2009; 1: 808–839.
91. Wagner P. Multiple trajectories of modernity: Why social theory needs historical sociology. Thesis Eleven 2010; 100: 53–59.
92. BBC. Liberian church massacre survivors seek US justice. 12 February 2018, pp. 1–3.
93. Utas. West-African Warscapes: Victimcy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone. *Anthropol Q* 2005; 78: 403–425.
94. Cain. The Rape of Dinah: Human Rights, Civil War in Liberia, and Evil Triumphant. *Hum Rights Q* 1999; 21: 265–277.
95. Africa Watch. Liberia: Flight from terror- testimony of abuses in Nimba Country, <https://archive.hrw.org/legacy/reports/pdfs/l/liberia/liberia.905/liberia905full.pdf> (May 1990, accessed 25 May 2023).
96. Bandru. Ethnic conflict and state formation in post-colonial Africa: a comparative study of ethnic genocide in the Congo, Liberia, Nigeria, and Rwanda-Burundi. *J Third World Stud* 2010; 27: 149–169.
97. Conteh-Morgan, Kadivar. Ethnopolitical violence in the Liberian civil war. *Journal of Conflict Studies* 1995; 15: 30–36.
98. Swiss S. Violence Against Women During the Liberian Civil Conflict. *JAMA* 1998; 279: 625.
99. Hiltzik. Trappings of Comic Opera Masked Doe's Ruthlessness : Liberia: The president reportedly died in rebels' custody. His 10-year rule leaves the nation in ruins. *Los Angeles Times*, 11 November 1990, pp. 1–3.
100. Pilling. The mixed legacy of Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, <https://www.ft.com/content/1dabec18-f530-11e7-8715-e94187b3017e> (18 January 2018, accessed 25 May 2023).
101. Sesay. Charles Taylor Liberated Nimba County From Samuel Doe, Former Soldier Testifies, <https://www.ijmonitor.org/2010/05/charles-taylor-liberated-nimba-county-from-samuel-doe-former-soldier-testifies/> (6 May 2010, accessed 25 May 2023).
102. Amnesty International. A new peace agreement - an opportunity to introduce human rights protection. 20 September 1995.
103. IRIN. Liberia: Rape is the New War, <http://www.irinnews.org/report/87122/liberia-the-new-war-is-rape> (2009, accessed 17 May 2023).
104. Human Rights Watch. Liberia: A Human Rights Disaster Violations of the Laws of War by All Parties to the Conflict. 26 October 1990.
105. Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). Children in Crisis project: teacher training in River Cess. Monrovia, December 2011.
106. Dunbar, Hanson. Action research with Liberian District Education Officers: Meeting minute. USAID-EDC Advancing Youth Project.
107. Bøås. Liberia—the hellbound heart? Regime breakdown and the deconstruction of society. *Alternatives* 1997; 22: 353–380.
108. Gblowee. Mighty Be her Powers: How sisterhood, prayer and sex changed a nation. 2013.
109. Rota. Tough Talk in the Jungle. In: Firestone and the Warlord. ProPublica, <https://www.propublica.org/article/firestone-and-the-warlord-intro> (2015, accessed 25 May 2023).
110. Frontline. The Survivors of Liberia's War: Mary Pollee's Story. PBS, 2015.
111. UNHCR/SC-UK. Sexual violence and exploitation: experiences of refugee children in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. October 2001.
112. Isaac. The Liberian Civil War: Child Soldiers, Rape, and Higher Education . 2014.
113. Sullivan. Child Soldiers: Warriors of Despair. *Small Wars Journal* 2005; 36–38.
114. Swiss S. Violence Against Women During the Liberian Civil Conflict. *JAMA* 1998; 279: 625.
115. Harris D. From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president: how Charles Taylor won the 1997 Liberian elections. *J Mod Afr Stud* 1999; 37: 431–455.

116. Sawyer A. Emerging Patterns in Liberia's Post-Conflict Politics: Observations from the 2005 Elections. *Afr Aff (Lond)* 2008; 107: 177–199.
117. Lyons. Peace and elections in Liberia. . In: *Postconflict Elections, Democratization, and International Assistance*. 1998, pp. 177–183.
118. Podder. Child soldier recruitment in the Liberian Civil Wars: Individual motivations and rebel group tactics. . In: *Child soldiers: From recruitment to reintegration*. 2011, pp. 55–60.
119. Winter. New UN report urges Liberia to act on rape – 'legacy' of impunity from 14-year civil conflict. *UN News*, 14 October 2016, pp. 1–5.
120. Gershoni Y. War without End and an End to a War: The Prolonged Wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. *Afr Stud Rev* 1997; 40: 55.
121. Mam. The child soldier as a model of internalized perpetration. In: *The Alchemy of Wolves and Sheep: A Relational Approach to Internalized Perpetration in Complex Trauma Survivors*. 2013, pp. 28–36.
122. Haer R. Children and armed conflict: looking at the future and learning from the past. *Third World Q* 2019; 40: 74–91.
123. Ferris EG. Abuse of Power: Sexual Exploitation of Refugee Women and Girls. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2007; 32: 584–591.
124. Kieh. The roots of the Second Civil War. *International Journal on World Peace* 2009; 26: 7–29.
125. Hill K, Langholtz H. Rehabilitation programs for African child soldiers. *Peace Review* 2003; 15: 279–285.
126. Rees S, Silove D, Chey T, et al. Lifetime prevalence of gender-based violence in women and the relationship with mental disorders and psychosocial function. *JAMA* 2011; 306: 513–21.
127. Stark L, Wessells M. Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War. *JAMA* 2012; 308: 677.
128. Wratoo. Liberia: Cross-Cultural Healing for Former Child Soldiers. *Conflict Studies Quarterly* 2016; 14: 49–55.
129. Borisova II, Betancourt TS, Willett JB. Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone: The Role of Caregivers and Their Awareness of the Violence Adolescents Experienced During the War. *J Aggress Maltreat Trauma* 2013; 22: 803–828.
130. Coundouriotis E. The Child Soldier Narrative and the Problem of Arrested Historicization. *J Hum Rights* 2010; 9: 191–206.
131. Bara C, Deglow A, van Baalen S. Civil war recurrence and postwar violence: Toward an integrated research agenda. *Eur J Int Relat* 2021; 27: 913–935.
132. Kuperman AJ. How Humanitarian Intervention Can Succeed: Liberia's Lessons for the R2P. *Civil Wars* 2023; 1–35.
133. López CM, Hahn CK, Gilmore AK, et al. Tailoring Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Trauma-Exposed Persons Living With HIV. *Cogn Behav Pract* 2020; 27: 70–83.
134. Sperlich M, Seng JS, Li Y, et al. Integrating Trauma-Informed Care Into Maternity Care Practice: Conceptual and Practical Issues. *J Midwifery Womens Health* 2017; 62: 661–672.

PEER REVIEW

Not commissioned. Externally peer reviewed.



FIGURES

Figure 1: Liberian ethnic groups and linguistic map.

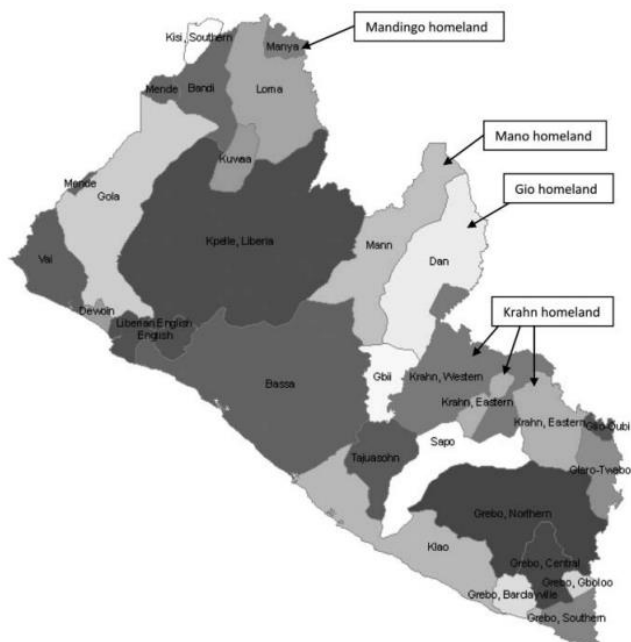


Figure 2: Historical timeline of Liberia.

