

# Measuring (Sexual) Violence in Armed Conflict

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IGA-229: Sex, Violence, and Global Politics (Prof. Dara K. Cohen)

# Outline

Documenting violence: from narratives to data

Why do some events get reported, and others do not?

How can we figure out what the dark figure is?

Social media and conflict reporting

# Why document sexual violence?

- Remember every victim
- Post-conflict justice

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# Documenting violence (before the Internet)



# Getting the data

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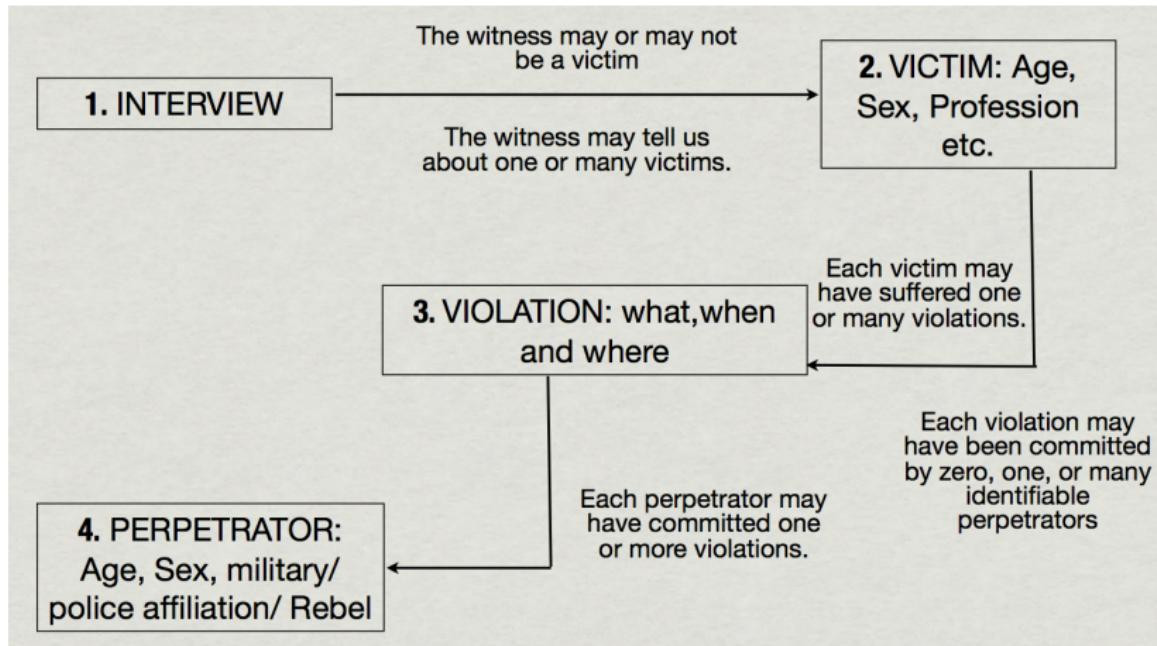
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# Making structure out of narrative



## From event to measure

*It was around three or four in the afternoon the day before market day.*

*Roger was out on the driveway washing the car. A small van driving by stopped right by the driveway and three men in uniforms got out. They grabbed Roger. He knew what was happening, so he struggled with the men. I heard a shot and Roger cried out and the struggling stopped. The men put Roger in their van and drove away. It all happened so fast. I haven't seen Roger since then and the police say they can't do anything.*

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field	coder #1
viol_type	killing
perp	army
vict_name	Roger
viol_date	day before market day

# Data Example

Focusing on the violation

ID	Sex	Age	Location	Date	Perp	List A	List B
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
948	F	32	south-west	1999	police	1	0
949	F	45	west	1995	police	1	0
950	M	30	south-west	1990	?	0	1
951	?	?	west	1991	rebels	1	0
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

# Data Example

How do we define an incidence of sexual violence?

<b>ID</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Perp</b>	<b>List A</b>	<b>List B</b>
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
948	F	32	south-west	May 1999	police	1	0
948	F	32	south-west	May 1999	military	0	1
948	F	32	west	Aug 1999	police	1	1
949	F	45	west	Feb 1995	police	1	0
950	M	30	south-west	Jul 1990	?	0	1
951	?	?	west	Dec 1991	rebels	1	0
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

# Violation types coded in Sierra Leone

ABA-CEELI Household Survey 2004

<i>Violation Name</i>	<i>HHS Violation/Victim-Death Code</i>
Amputation	20, 20a, 20b, 20c, 20d, 20e, 20f, 20g, 20h, 20i, 20k, 20m, 20o, 20p, 20r, 20s
Carving	21, 21a, 21b, 21c
Assault/beating	23, 23a, 23b, 23c, 23d, 23e, 23f, 23g, 23h, 23i, 23j, 23k, 23m, 27
Destruction of property	30, 31, 33
Property theft	34, 35
Forced displacement	40, 41, 42, 43, 47
Drugging	50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57
Disappearance	60
Arbitrary detention	61, 62, 62a, 62b, 63, 64, 67
Forced recruitment	70, 70a, 70b, 70c, 70d
Sexual slavery	71, 71a, 71b
Forced labour	72a, 72b, 73
Sexual abuse	80, 81, 82, 83, 87
Rape	84, 85, 86
Forced cannibalism	90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97
Killing	(vict_death =) 1, 2, 3, 1A, 1E, 1F, 1H, 1Z, 2A, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3E, 3H
Torture	-

# Sexual Violence coded in Sierra Leone

## ABA-CEELI Household Survey 2004

**Numeric codes for 6.7:** 60=disappeared; 61=detained in prison; 62a=detained in victim's home; 62b=detained in other person's home; 63=detained in camp; 64=detained and frequently moved; 67=other (specify); 68=NR; 69=DK.

**Numeric codes for 7.7:** 70a=forced to be a soldier; 70b=forced to carry weapons or ammunition; 70c=forced to commit abuses; 70d=forced to be a spy; 71a=forced to be a bush wife for one man; 71b=forced to be a sexual slave for multiple men; 72a=forced to be a cook; 72b=forced to forage; 73=forced to commit violations against others; 77=other (specify); 78=NR; 79=DK.

**Numeric codes for 8.7:** 80=forced nakedness; 81=fondling; 82=anal sex; 83=oral sex; 84=rape; 85=object rape; 86=multiple rape; 87=other (specify); 88=NR; 89=DK.

**Alphabetic codes for 8.7:** a=being forced to be the recipient of; b=being forced to perform; c=being forced to be the recipient of from a family member; d=being forced to perform on a family member; e=forced to watch, victim not member of family; f=forced to watch, victim member of family; x=other (specify); y=NR; z=DK.

**Numeric codes for 9.7:** 90=flesh; 91=organs; 92=blood; 93=feces; 94=urine; 95=rotten flesh; 96=fetus; 97=other (specify); 98=NR; 99=DK.

**Alphabetic codes for 9.7:** a=human(self); b=human(known); c=human(unknown); d=dog; e=snake; f=other (specify); g=NR; h=DK.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Alphabetic codes for 9.7:** s=cook; t=consume raw; v=consume cooked; w=cook and consume; x=other (specify); y=NR; z=DK.

# Why aren't all violations counted?

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- Perpetrator
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## Example: The TRC in Liberia

How Many Liberians had heard about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

[http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/  
interactivemaps/liberia#/?indicator=21\\_5\\_1](http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/interactivemaps/liberia#/?indicator=21_5_1)

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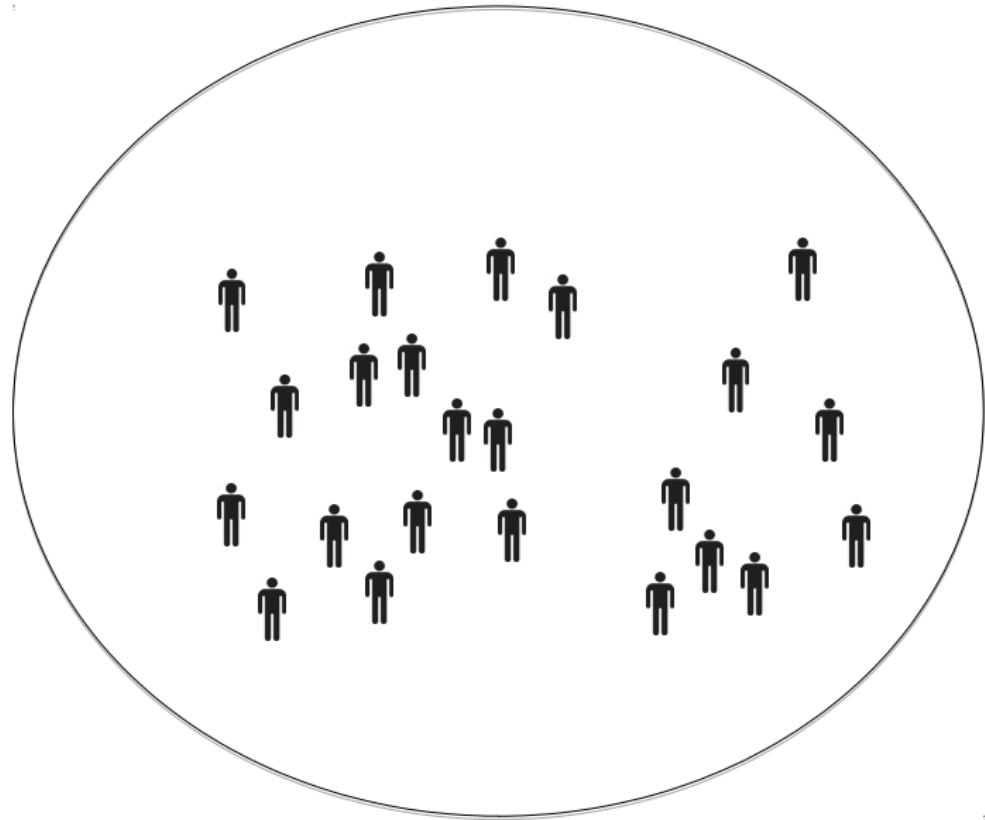
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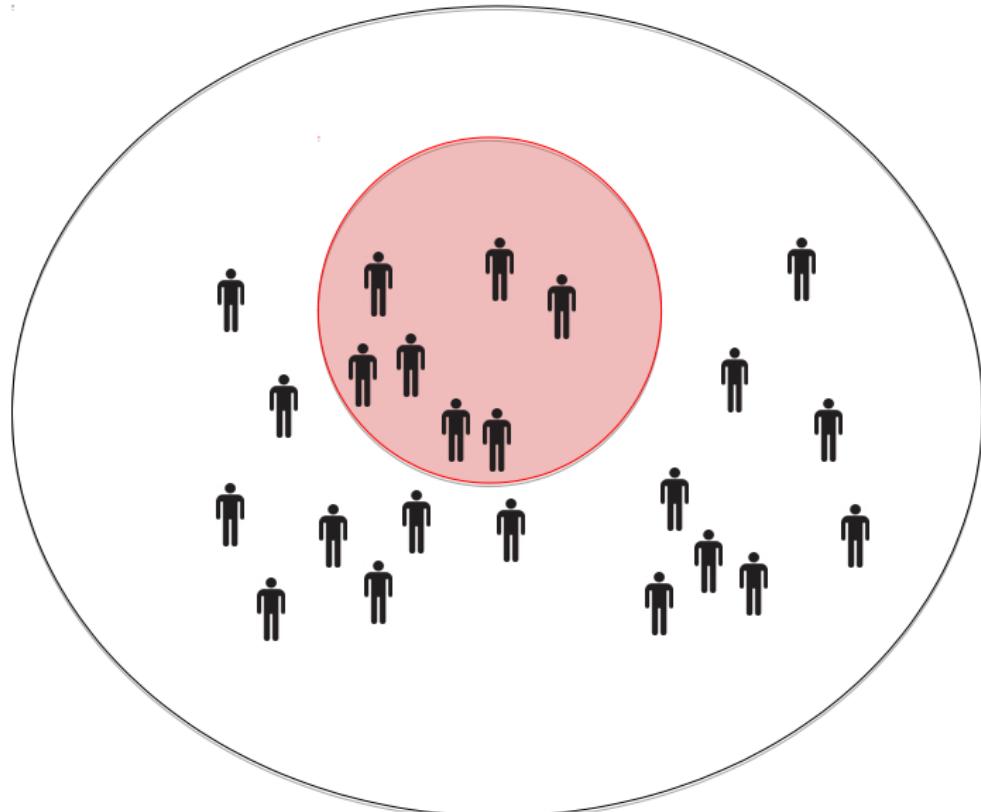
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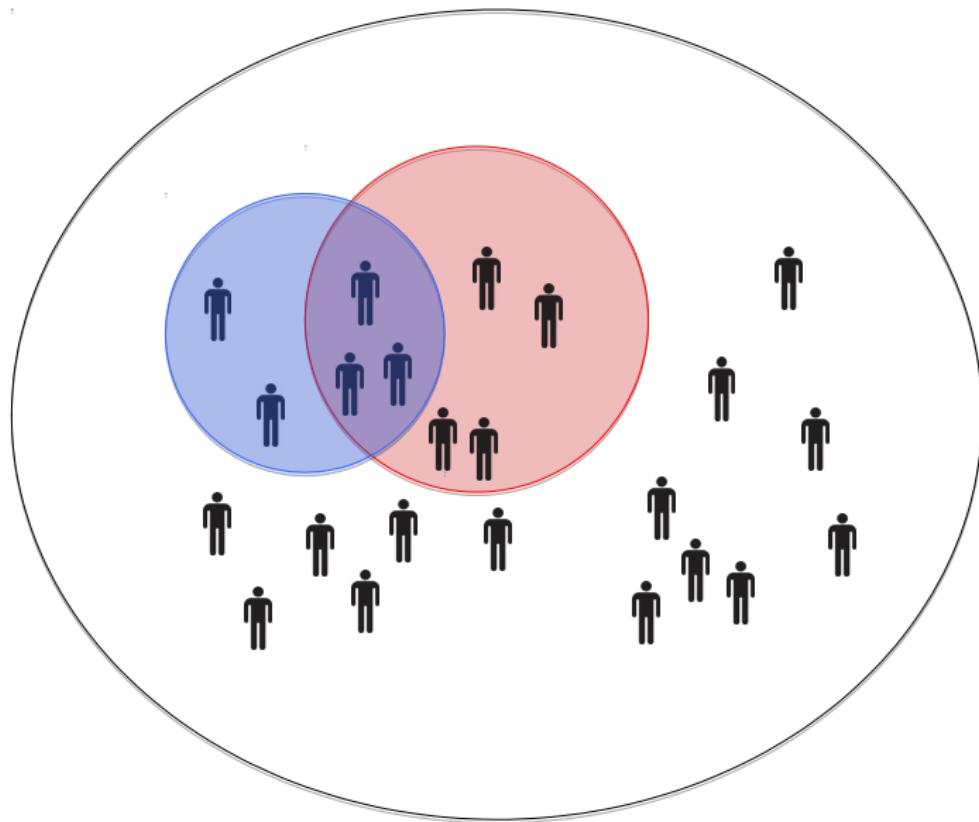
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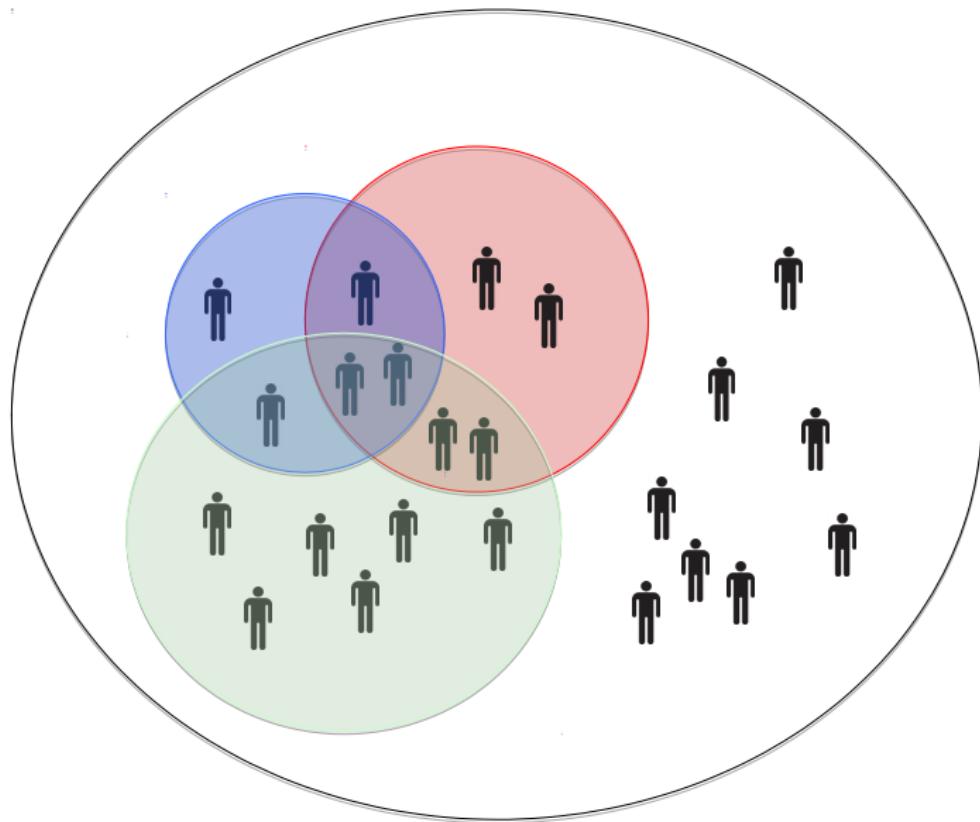
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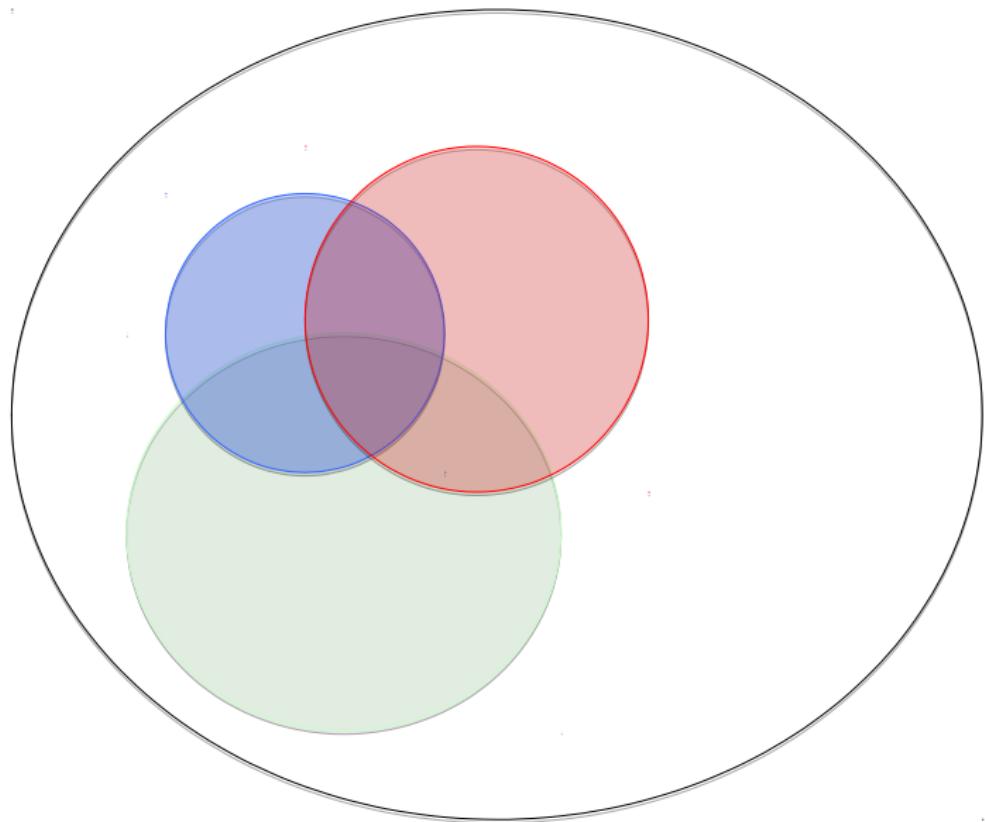
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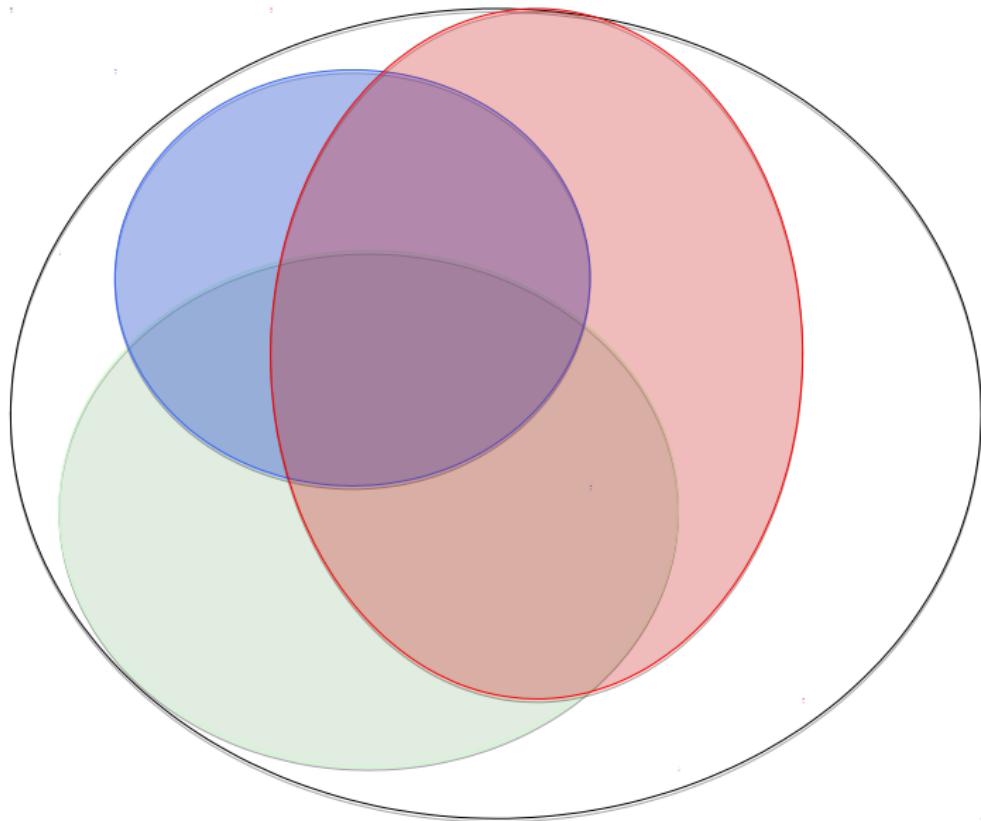


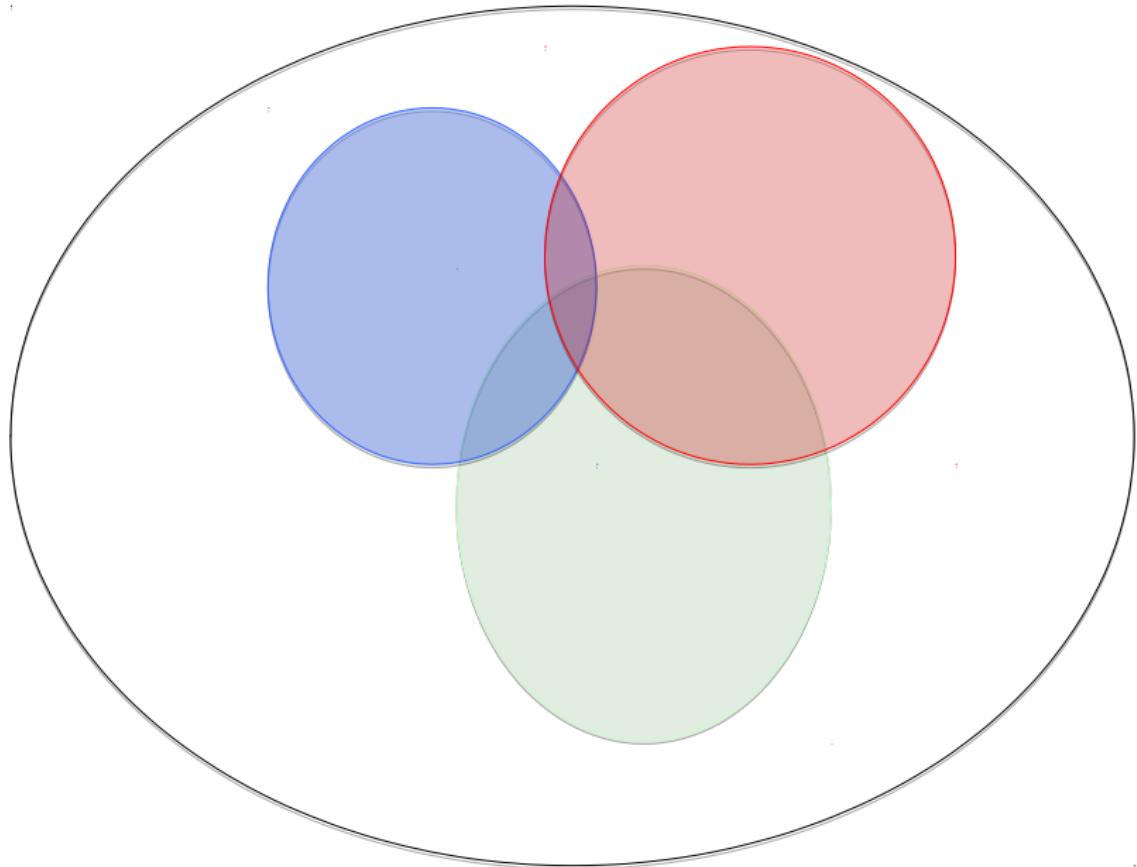












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# Social media and conflict reporting



Lynch, Freeelon and Aday, 2014

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- People
- Devices
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# The Syrian Conflict



MUHAMMED MUHEISEN / AP  
via FiveThirtyEight.com

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## syrianpresidency

Syrian Presidency Welcome to the official Instagram account for the Presidency of the  
Syrian Arab Republic - حساب رئاسة الجمهورية العربية السورية على إنستغرام -

348 posts

35.4k followers

0 following

December 2014



September 2014





## syrianpresidency

Syrian Presidency Welcome to the official Instagram account for the Presidency of the Syrian Arab Republic حساب رئاسة الجمهورية العربية السورية على إنستغرام - Instagram

364  
posts

36.5k  
followers

0  
following

April 2015



March 2015

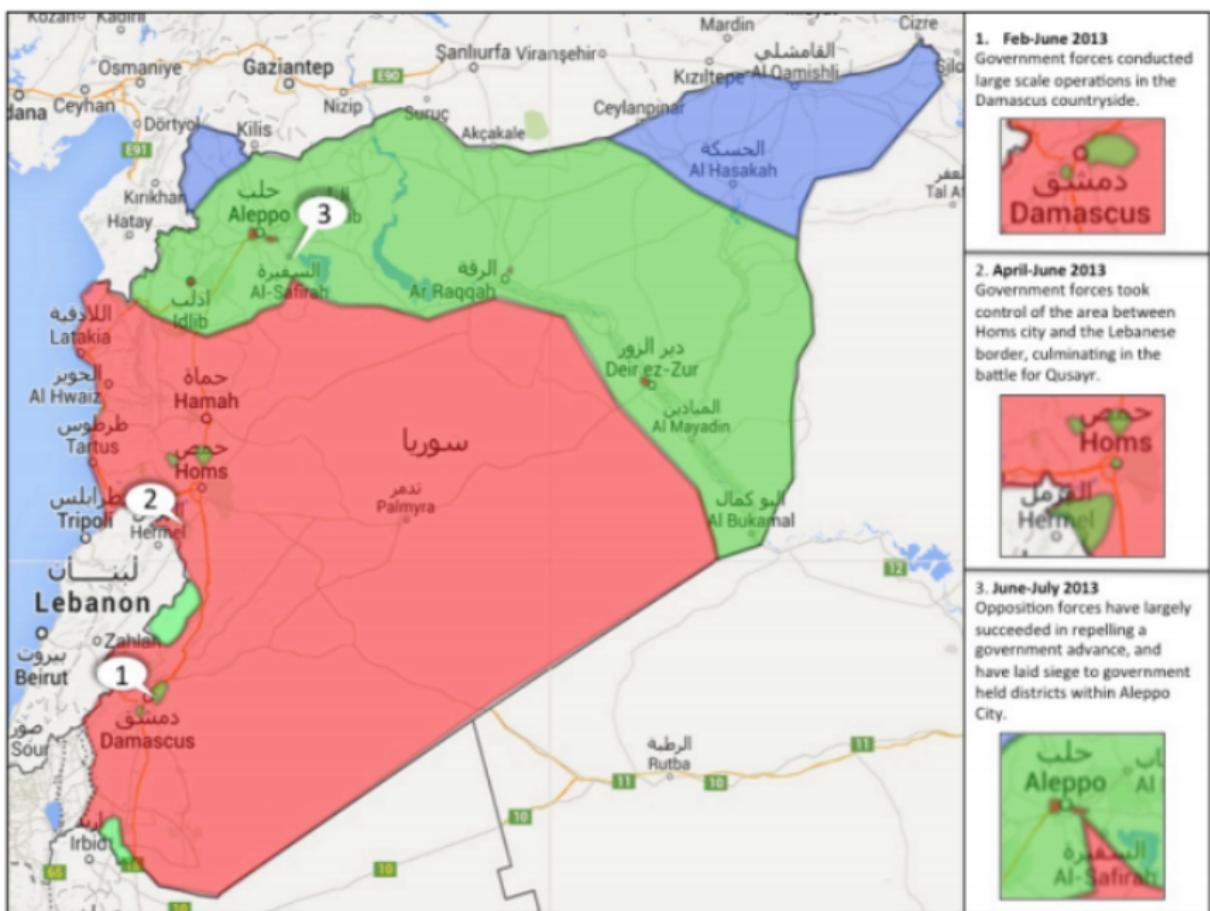


# Human Rights Watch Report

June 15, 2012

## Sexual Abuse in Detention, During Home Raids and Ground Operations

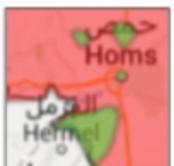
*Interviewees described a range of sexual abuse by Syrian security forces, the army, and pro-government armed militias referred to locally as shabiha. The full extent of sexual violence in and outside of detention facilities remains unknown. The stigma in Syria surrounding sexual violence makes victims reluctant to report abuse. Survivors also may face dangers when they make crimes public, and researchers have had limited access to the country to document abuses. In many cases interviewees [...] victims did not want their families or others in the community to know about the assault because of fear or shame. In one case, a female rape victim who was willing to be interviewed was not permitted by her husband [...].*



1. Feb-June 2013  
Government forces conducted large scale operations in the Damascus countryside.



2. April-June 2013  
Government forces took control of the area between Homs city and the Lebanese border, culminating in the battle for Qusayr.



3. June-July 2013  
Opposition forces have largely succeeded in repelling a government advance, and have laid siege to government held districts within Aleppo City.



Carter Center report: 20 August 2013

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# Thank you!

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