

Pakistani Opposition to American Drone Strikes

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AMERICA'S EMPLOYMENT OF WEAPONIZED unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), popularly known as "drones," to kill alleged terrorists in Pakistan's federally administered tribal areas (FATA) fuels sustained controversy in Pakistan. Pakistani outrage has steadily deepened since 2008, when the United States increased the frequency of the strikes.¹ The increasing use of "signature strikes" has been particularly controversial in (and beyond) Pakistan, because such strikes are targeted at "men believed to be militants associated with terrorist groups, but whose identities aren't always known."² Whereas personality strikes require the operator to

¹See New America Foundation, "The Year of the Drone: An Analysis of U.S. Drone Strikes in Pakistan, 2004–2012," 2013, accessed at <http://counterterrorism.newamerica.net/drones>, 9 May 2013.

²Adam Entous, Siobhan Gorman, and Julian E. Barnes, "U.S. Tightens Drone Rules," *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 November 2011, accessed at online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204621904577013982672973836.html?mod=WSJ_hp_LEFTTopStories, 9 May 2013.

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develop a high level of certainty about the target's identity and location, based on multiple sources such as "imagery, cell phone intercepts and informants on the ground,"³ operators may "initiate a signature strike after observing certain patterns of behavior."⁴ When conducting signature strikes, the United States assesses that the individuals in question exhibit behaviors that match a pre-identified "signature" (for example, pattern of observable activities and/or personal networks) that suggests that they are associated with al Qaeda and/or the Pakistani or Afghan Taliban organizations.⁵ Because the identity of the target is unknown, even during the strike, it is possible that these persons are innocent civilians, a possibility that both current and former U.S. government officials concede.⁶ While the George W. Bush administration employed both personality strikes from 2004 and signature strikes from 2008 in Pakistan, the administration of Barack Obama has redoubled the use of both types.⁷ This has ignited public protests against the drones in Pakistan, particularly in Pakistan's urban areas—far removed from the tribal areas where drones are employed. It has also galvanized a vigorous debate within Pakistan's National Assembly, which tried, but ultimately failed, to curtail the strikes.

While the use of armed drones clearly antagonizes segments of Pakistan's polity, it is only one of several issues causing conflict between Pakistan and the United States. Others include the infamous Raymond Davis affair of early 2011, in which Davis—a CIA contractor—shot and

³Greg Miller, "CIA Seeks New Authority To Expand Yemen Drone Campaign," *The Washington Post*, 18 April 2012, accessed at http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-04-18/world/35453346_1_signature-strikes-drone-strike-drone-program, 9 May 2013.

⁴Columbia Law School Human Rights Clinic and Center for Civilians in Conflict, "The Civilian Impact of Drones: Unexamined Costs, Unanswered Questions," 2012, 32–33, accessed at http://civiliansinconflict.org/uploads/files/publications/The_Civilian_Impact_of_Drones_w_cover.pdf, 9 May 2013.

⁵Micah Zenko, *Reforming U.S. Drone Strike Policies*, January 2013, accessed at <http://www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/reforming-us-drone-strike-policies/p29736?co=C009601>, 9 May 2013; "The Civilian Impact of Drones." Behaviors that the CIA may interpret as probative of involvement with hostile forces include traveling in convoys of vehicles that behave similarly to fleeing al Qaeda or Taliban; presence in areas that seem to be terrorist training camps; and participating in what the CIA judges to be militant gatherings, perhaps because they are armed, and so forth. See Cora Currier, "How Does the U.S. Mark Unidentified Men in Pakistan and Yemen as Drone Targets?" *ProPublica*, 1 March 2013, accessed at <http://www.propublica.org/article/how-does-the-u.s.-mark-unidentified-men-in-pakistan-and-yemen-as-drone-targ>, 9 May 2013. On the CIA targeting Pakistani Taliban members as well as al Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban, see Jonathan Landay, "Obama's drone war kills 'others,' not just al Qaida leaders," *McClatchy.com*, 9 April 2013, accessed at <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/04/09/188062/obamas-drone-war-kills-others.html#story-link=cpy>, 9 May 2013.

⁶"The Civilian Impact of Drones," 33.

⁷Entous, Gorman, and Barnes, "U.S. Tightens Drone Rules;" Cora Currier, "Everything We Know So Far About Drone Strikes," *ProPublica.com*, 5 February 2013, accessed at <http://www.propublica.org/article/everything-we-know-so-far-about-drone-strikes>, 9 May 2013.

killed two men whom he claimed were menacing him in Lahore. (Pakistan-based journalists suspect that the two men were in the employ of Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI.) The ensuing row over Davis's fate—the United States claimed that he had diplomatic immunity, while Pakistan insisted that he face trial for murder in Pakistan—spawned protests in Lahore and beyond and deepened Pakistanis' belief that the United States is indifferent to the loss of Pakistani life.⁸ Just as Washington and Islamabad were getting beyond the Davis-related turbulence, the May 2011 raid on Osama bin Laden's hideout in the Pakistani cantonment town of Abbottabad again rocked the relationship. As both countries struggled to overcome the resulting frost in relations, the November 2011 U.S.–NATO attack on a Pakistani military outpost at Salala, which led to the deaths of 24 Pakistani soldiers, and the U.S. refusal to apologize once more brought the relationship to the breaking point. Pakistan's civilian and military leaders face mounting pressure to cease active cooperation with United States, including on the drone program.⁹

Yet despite the many sources of strain in U.S.–Pakistan relations, drones are often depicted as the single most significant irritant. This view is buttressed by the belief—which has become a truism in Western and even Pakistani media—that not only do most Pakistanis know about the program, they overwhelmingly oppose it. Foes of the drone program also suggest that the strikes help to create more terrorists than they eliminate.¹⁰ But the conventional wisdom about Pakistanis' universal opposition to the drones is not empirically buttressed. Polling data from Pew¹¹ demonstrate that nearly two thirds of Pakistanis have never even heard of the drone program, despite the media coverage it has received in

⁸Omar Waraich, "U.S. Diplomat Could Bring Down Pakistan Gov't," *Time.com*, 9 February 2011, accessed at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2047149,00.html>, 9 May 2013; C. Christine Fair, "Spy for a spy: the CIA-ISI showdown over Raymond Davis," *ForeignPolicy.com*, 10 March 2011, accessed at http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/03/10/spy_for_a_spy_the_cia_isi_showdown_over_raymond_davis, 9 May 2013.

⁹For a succinct but insightful overview of this, see Teresita C. Schaffer and Howard B. Schaffer, *How Pakistan Negotiates with the United States: Riding the Roller Coaster* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2011).

¹⁰International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic At Stanford Law School and Global Justice Clinic at NYU School Of Law, "Living Under Drones: Death, Injury, and Trauma to Civilians From US Drone Practices in Pakistan," 2012, accessed at <http://livingunderdrones.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Stanford-NYU-LIVING-UNDER-DRONES.pdf>, 9 May 2013; Chris Woods, "Drone War Exposed—the Complete Picture of CIA Strikes in Pakistan," *Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 10 August 2011, accessed at <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/08/10/most-complete-picture-yet-of-cia-drone-strikes>, 9 May 2013.

¹¹Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, Spring 2010 Survey Data, accessed at <http://www.pewglobal.org/2010/05/08/spring-2010-survey-data/>, 9 May 2013.

Pakistan and beyond. Among the minority of respondents (35 percent) who had heard of the program, nearly one third said that drone strikes are necessary to defend Pakistan from extremist groups. A slight majority (56 percent) of the one third who were familiar with drones said that drone strikes are not necessary to protect Pakistan, and nearly one in two (49 percent) Pakistanis who were familiar with the program believe that the strikes are being conducted without their government's approval. Yet this figure is not that much greater than the 33 percent who believe that their government has given its approval for these strikes.¹² Clearly, Pakistani public opinion is less informed, and much less unanimous, than is often presumed.

In this paper, we seek to explain why some Pakistanis oppose the drone program while others support it. Because the vast majority of the sample indicated that they had not heard of the drone program, we must also determine the predictors of those who are unaware of this program, despite the enormous publicity it receives. To achieve the first goal, we rely upon elite discourse analysis of Pakistani writings on this sensitive subject. We examine arguments advanced by both Pakistani opponents and proponents of the use of drones to put forth several testable hypotheses that may explain support for and opposition to the U.S. drone program in Pakistan. To test these hypotheses, we leverage recent Pakistani survey data collected by Pew's Global Attitudes Project. This dataset provides us with a dependent variable (support for the drone program), as well as several potential explanatory variables that can instrument for our proposed hypotheses. Selection effects restrict the size and composition of persons answering the question that comprises our dependent variable. To contend with these selection effects, we employ the Heckman selection model, which allows us to control for the characteristics of those who are not familiar with the program as well as for other explanatory variables that may predict attitudes about the program among those who were familiar with it and expressed an opinion about it.

We find that more highly educated males with higher levels of Internet use are more likely than other groups to know about the program and thus to be included in our dataset. Among the minority of survey participants who both had heard of the program and expressed an opinion about it, opposition could be traced principally to the elite media discourse on the drone strikes. Media coverage of the strikes focuses on their human costs

¹²Pew Global Attitudes Project, "Little Knowledge of Drone Strikes in Pakistan," 12 August 2010, accessed at <http://pewresearch.org/databank/dailynumber/?NumberID=1069>, 9 May 2013.

and commonly expresses distrust of the United States. We show that less-educated Pakistanis, women, and persons who view the United States as an enemy are more likely to oppose the drone program, all else being equal. We do not find other potential explanations, such as support for political Islam, to be relevant.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. In the next section, we present a brief overview of the drone program in Pakistan and the controversy surrounding it. We focus on the debate in Pakistan, which is most germane to Pakistani opinion formation. Second, we draw several hypotheses from these debates that we will test through our probit models. Third, we present the data that we will use in this analysis and detail the methodology employed for data handling and modeling. Fourth, we present the main findings of this effort. This article concludes with a consideration of the implications of our findings.

U.S. DRONE STRIKES: INDISCRIMINANT DEATH FROM ABOVE OR THE LEAST-WORST OPTION

The American use of UAVs against militants in Pakistan probably began in 2004, with a strike in South Waziristan which targeted a militant commander named Nek Mohammad. Drone use remained sporadic for several years: between 2004 and 2007, there were only nine attacks. Yet the Bush administration became increasingly convinced that drone attacks were an effective way to defeat the militants in FATA, and in 2008, it launched 33 strikes, a major increase over previous years. When Barack Obama became President, he substantially increased the use of drone strikes, consistent with his strategic objective of defeating al Qaeda. In 2009, there were 53 drone strikes; in 2010, the “year of the drone,” there were 118 drone attacks; and in 2011, there were 70 drone attacks.¹³

Curiously, despite the attention on the drone program in international media, the program, which is conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), is still technically covert. Accurate information about the program is thus very difficult to obtain, and even accounts in peer-reviewed journals contain many errors.¹⁴ U.S. government officials are generally prohibited from even acknowledging any particular

¹³Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, *The Year of the Drone: An Analysis of US Drone Strikes in Pakistan, 2004–2010* (Washington, DC: New America Foundation, 2010); New America Foundation, “The Year of the Drone.”

¹⁴See, for example, Brian Glyn Williams, “The CIA’s Covert Predator Drone War in Pakistan, 2004–2010: The History of an Assassination Campaign,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33: 871–892. Williams’s account of the origins of the program is simply wrong in many places and is generally discordant with the history recounted to one of the authors by Richard Clarke and others.

drone strike in Pakistan, despite the fact that drones are heavily reported in Pakistani and international media.¹⁵ Author interviews with numerous U.S. and Pakistani officials since 2009, however, suggest that the program took shape during the tenures of Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and President Bush. As a U.S. official explained to one of the authors in 2009, President Musharraf originally authorized the drone strikes, although he restricted their use to FATA. In order to keep his authorization secret, however, Pakistan would “protest” such an ostensibly flagrant violation of Pakistan’s sovereignty.¹⁶ It remains contested to what degree Pakistan’s previous government—or elements thereof—continued to cooperate with the United States prior to its term ending in March 2013. While American officials interviewed by the authors maintain that the Pakistanis cooperate on selecting some targets, Pakistani civilian and military officials insist that there is no cooperation and that the attacks violate Pakistani sovereignty.¹⁷ It remains to be seen how the newly elected Pakistani government, under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), will contend with the drone program.

The Pakistani drone program may not long remain under the auspices of the CIA. Increasing judicial and congressional frustration with the official secrecy surrounding the otherwise extremely visible program, as well as nagging questions about the degree to which drone strikes are covered by the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force, have prompted Obama officials to consider shifting the program from the CIA to the Department of Defense.¹⁸ The CIA-conducted drone strikes are a covert action falling under Title 50. Should the Department of Defense assume control, the

¹⁵Acting U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan met with anti-drone Code Pink activists in November 2011. Even discussing the existence of the program and the possible outcomes of the strikes caused Hoagland to remark that “I probably just, you know, got into big trouble with what I just said.” “Acting US ambassador to Pakistan met with Code Pink, discussed ‘classified’ drone casualty counts,” *The Daily Caller*, 5 November 2011, accessed at <http://dailycaller.com/2012/11/05/acting-us-ambassador-to-pakistan-met-with-code-pink-discussed-classified-drone-casualty-counts/#ixzz2EJ4GxBjr>, 9 May 2013. However, in April 2013 the Obama administration offered its first detailed justification of a program it had previously refused to discuss. See Charlie Savage, “Top U.S. Security Official Says ‘Rigorous Standards’ Are Used for Drone Strikes,” *The New York Times*, 30 April 2013, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/01/world/obamas-counterterrorism-aide-defends-drone-strikes.html?_r=0, 12 May 2013.

¹⁶Jonathan Landay, “U.S. secret: CIA collaborated with Pakistan spy agency in drone war,” *McClatchy.com*, 4 April 2013, accessed at <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/04/09/188063/us-secret-cia-collaborated-with.html#storylink=cpy>, 9 May 2013.

¹⁷Landay, “U.S. secret;” Mark Mazzetti, “A Secret Deal on Drones, Sealed in Blood,” *The New York Times*, 6 April 2013, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/07/world/asia/origins-of-cias-not-so-secret-drone-war-in-pakistan.html?ref=markmazzetti&_r=0&pagewanted=all, 9 May 2013.

¹⁸Greg Miller and Karen DeYoung, “Administration debates stretching 9/11 law to go after new al-Qaeda offshoots,” *The Washington Post*, 6 March 2013, accessed at http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-06/world/37500569_1_qaeda-drone-strikes-obama-administration, 9 May 2013.

program would come under Title 10 and would be carried out as a clandestine activity. Although the two are often conflated, the distinction between clandestine and covert action is important. A covert action is one in which the involvement of the sponsoring government is meant to remain secret. A clandestine activity, on the other hand, is intended to remain a secret, but should it be revealed, it can be publicly acknowledged.¹⁹ Thus, if the drone program came under Title 10, U.S. officials *could*, in principle, discuss it. But while there may be more transparency under Title 10, such activities actually receive less oversight than those carried out under Title 50, which are under the purview of the intelligence committees of both the House and the Senate. Thus, it remains unclear whether transferring the drone program to the Department of Defense will have a significant effect on the transparency of the program.²⁰

The restriction of drone strikes within Pakistan to FATA, which comprises seven tribal agencies and six frontier regions, is important for several often-underappreciated reasons. First, and foremost, Pakistan's constitution does not apply to FATA. Instead, FATA is governed by a colonial governance instrument called the Frontier Crimes Regulation, or FCR. As a consequence, foreign journalists are prohibited from travelling to FATA without the approval of the ministry of interior and/or an escort from the military and intelligence services. Even ordinary Pakistanis cannot legally visit the area unless they themselves have family ties there. Thus, it is extremely difficult to obtain accurate information from what has long been something of an informational black hole. These restrictions serve the Pakistani state's interests because it has long used FATA to host a dizzying array of Islamist militant groups operating in Afghanistan, India, and even Pakistan itself.²¹ Thus, some of Pakistan's most-hardened Islamist militants have found sanctuary in FATA.

Second, each agency is governed by a government representative known as a "political agent." The political agent works with tribal elders, called maliks, who collaborate, in part because of their desire to retain their privileged status and in part because of payments received from the

¹⁹Andru E. Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate: Distinguishing Military Operations, Intelligence Activities & Covert Action," *Harvard Law School National Security Journal* 3 (December 2011): 85-142.

²⁰Spencer Ackerman, "Little Will Change if the Military Takes Over CIA's Drone Strikes," *Wired.com*, 20 March 2013, accessed at <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2013/03/military-drones>, 9 May 2013.

²¹Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005); Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Praveen Swami, *India, Pakistan and the Secret Jihad: The Covert War in Kashmir, 1947-2004* (London: Routledge, 2007).

government via the agent. The political agent is responsible for administrative duties and ordinary law and order. At his discretion, he can refer a civil dispute to a council of maliks (*jirga*), which decides how the dispute should be resolved. The *jirga*'s decree is final and binding and no appeal is available. Perhaps the most-controversial aspect of the FCR is the wide-scale coercive powers it affords the state for "controlling, blockading, and taming a 'hostile and unfriendly tribe.'"²² These coercive powers include "collective punishment," under which the state is authorized to seize "wherever they may be found, all or any of the members of such tribe, and all and any property belonging to them or any of them" for any offense committed by one or more members of a tribe. The state can even banish or exile an individual or group of individuals from an agency altogether.²³ In effect, entire communities can be ousted from their homes, fined, and have their revenues and properties seized or even forfeited altogether, "simply because a murder or culpable homicide was committed or attempted in their area."²⁴ Because "the application of collective punishment...disregards individual culpability and identifies the innocent with the guilty" and violates numerous provisions of Pakistan's own constitution, the applicable provisions have been struck down by Pakistan's high courts, with no effect.²⁵ The FCR is also inconsistent with several international conventions to which Pakistan is a signatory, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affords everyone the right to an effective remedy by competent national tribunals and protection from arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile.²⁶

Despite the fact that Pakistan's own high courts have demanded that the FCR be repealed, no government has ever done so. In fact, the state has long made use of the coercive powers it provides. In 2004, the Pakistani Army, under the leadership of Army Chief and President Pervez Musharraf, used collective punishment to roust foreign Islamist militants in Waziristan. They used and threatened to use home demolition, the seizure of businesses, and the forfeiture of other properties and assets to persuade locals to surrender

²²Osama Siddique, "The Other Pakistan: Special Laws, Diminished Citizenship and the Gathering Storm," 5 December 2012, accessed at <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2185535>, 9 May 2013.

²³Gulman S. Afridi, "FCR's Collective Responsibility," *The Dawn*, 2 January 2012, accessed at <http://dawn.com/2012/01/02/fcrs-collective-responsibility>, 9 May 2013.

²⁴Siddique, "The Other Pakistan," 11.

²⁵Afridi, "FCR's Collective Responsibility."

²⁶Aamenah Yusufzai, "Bringing Justice to FATA," *Dawn.com*, 23 November 2010, accessed at <http://blog.dawn.com/2010/11/23/bringing-justice-to-fata>, 9 May 2013. Technically, aspects of the FCR have been amended via a presidential order in August 2011. However, none of these have been implemented. G.M. Chaudhry, *The Frontier Crimes Regulation, 1901—as amended on 27 August 2011: summary of 2011 amendments* (Islamabad: National Democratic Institute, 2013).

foreigners living amongst them. During Pakistan's military operations in FATA, which began in 2002 and continue today, the army has denied individuals and specific tribes access to major roads that prevented them from escaping the conflict and reaching humanitarian aid.²⁷

These aspects of FCR, which render Pakistanis who live in FATA "lesser citizens," have enormous and nearly universally unacknowledged implications for the U.S. use of armed drones in FATA. As noted above, under the FCR, an entire family or clan can be punished just because one member has granted terrorists sanctuary in his home. This clause has been used to justify the Pakistani air strikes and draconian army operations that have caused enormous civilian casualties and forced displacement. As of March 2013, the United Nations reported that there were still some 758,000 persons who had been internally displaced due to ongoing security operations in FATA as well as parts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.²⁸ Part of the unrecognized legitimizing discourse surrounding the use of armed drones in FATA is the unfortunate fact that residents of FATA are second-class citizens, and the legal regime under which they are governed permits the state to ignore individual innocence and guilt. The United States exploits this predicament, but Pakistan perpetuates it by sustaining a legal regime that discriminates between the citizens of the so-called "settled areas," where the constitution applies, and those lesser citizens under the rule of the FCR.

There is a third, equally unappreciated aspect of the tribal areas: because FATA is governed under the FCR, it has no police forces; instead, paramilitary, military, and tribal militia forces keep order. Thus, the arrest of militants, collection of evidence, and subsequent prosecution in Pakistan's courts is not a viable option in FATA. (In contrast, high-value targets captured in the rest of Pakistan are tried under Pakistani law or, in some cases, remanded to the United States.) Thus, while law-and-order approaches may be infinitely preferable to the use of armed drones, successive Pakistani governments have closed this route by choosing to defer bringing the area and its people fully under Pakistan's constitution.²⁹ Thus, the only alternatives to doing nothing to combat the militants in FATA, who operate

²⁷Yusafzai, "Bringing Justice to FATA;" Azmat Hayat Khan, "FATA," in Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and Maqsoodul Hasan Nuri, eds., *Tribal Areas of Pakistan: Challenges and Responses* (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Institute, 2005). Surprisingly the FCR was critically discussed in U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "2004 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—Pakistan," 28 February 2005, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41743.htm>, 9 May 2013.

²⁸United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Dashboard—Pakistan," March 2013, accessed at <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan/reports-media/ocha-reports>, 9 May 2013.

²⁹Joshua T. White, "The Shape of Frontier Rule: Governance and Transition, from the Raj to the Modern Pakistani Frontier," *Asian Security* 4 (2008): 219–243.

against international forces in Afghanistan and who are responsible for killing some 43,000 Pakistanis since September 11, are devastating and indiscriminate Pakistani military operations or Special Forces raids into Pakistani territory by Afghanistan-based troops.³⁰

American and Pakistani officials understood that the FCR would frustrate the ability of foreign and even Pakistani journalists to learn about the drone program, allowing both states to cultivate confusion about its origins. Indeed, in the early years, the Pakistan military actually took credit for the attacks, which they said were conducted with conventional attack aircraft (for example, F-16s and attack helicopters).³¹ Daniel Markey, a member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff from 2003 to 2007, has said that

Musharraf's consent represented both that of the Pakistani military and its civilian government. Not only did he grant his consent, but initially, the Pakistani military tried to take credit for these kinds of attacks—claiming that they weren't the work of drones, but Pakistani air strikes. This wasn't a very credible claim on Pakistan's part, but it worked for a while because the strikes were initially much less frequent than they are now. And the misdirection helped the Pakistani government weather the domestic backlash.³²

Musharraf did not follow through on any of his public complaints, confirming the mutual understanding that such protests were political drama for domestic consumption. Markey explains that “one can only assume ...

³⁰Like many databases, the Pak Institute for Peace Studies is not always clear about what sorts of attacks it tallies and what criteria it uses to code different kinds of violence. These numbers are taken from their annual reports from 2008 and 2011. They reported that 7,107 Pakistanis had been killed in 2011; 10,003 in 2010; 12,632 in 2009; 7,997 in 2008; 3,448 in 2007; 907 in 2006; and 216 in 2005, for a total of 42,310. Pak Institute for Peace Studies, *Pakistan Security Report 2008* (Islamabad: PIPS, 2008); Pak Institute for Peace Studies, *PIPS Security Report 2009*, accessed at <http://san-pips.com/index.php?action=books&id=main>; Pak Institute for Peace Studies, *Pakistan Security Report 2011* (Islamabad: PIPS, 2011); Pak Institute for Peace Studies, “Civilian Casualties in Armed Conflicts in Pakistan: Timeline 2012,” 2012, accessed at <http://san-pips.com/index.php?action=reports&id=tml2>, 9 May 2013.

³¹In March 2013, *The New York Times* reported that the United States had taken the unusual step of disavowing two drone strikes. Such a disavowal is odd, since the drone program is a covert action and thus U.S. officials cannot acknowledge its existence. Given that Pakistan has no armed drone capability, there are a few possible explanations for the event. First, it is possible that the attack was a conventional strike, carried out by Pakistan, which the Pakistanis wanted to blame on the United States. Second, the strike may have been carried out by an American drone after all, and the officials cited in the story were simply wrong or seeking to engage in information management. Third, it may be that there was no drone strike to begin with. Because no Pakistani or U.S. official will discuss this incident with the authors, we are unable to evaluate the merits of the story. Declan Walsh, “U.S. Disavows 2 Drone Strikes Over Pakistan,” *The New York Times*, 4 March 2013, accessed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/05/world/asia/us-disavows-2-drone-strikes-over-pakistan.html?pagewanted=all>, 9 May 2013.

³²Daniel Markey comments transcribed in Ritika Singh, “Lawfare Podcast Episode #20: Daniel Markey on U.S.–Pakistan Terrorism Cooperation and Pakistan's Extremist Groups,” 27 September 2012, accessed at <http://www.lawfareblog.com/2012/09/daniel-markey-on-u-s-pakistan-terrorism-cooperation-and-pakistan-extremist-groups>, 9 May 2013.

that the private messages from the Pakistani government were different from their public messages.”³³

As Markey makes clear, however, Pakistan was unable to sustain the pretense that its military was conducting the operations. Local residents found missile fragments with American markings, and Pakistani media eventually caught on to the story. Furthermore, the increasing U.S. use of drone attacks made the cover story increasingly untenable. Throughout much of the Bush presidency, American drones were rarely employed in Pakistan, and thus, Pakistan’s claims of responsibility were not robustly challenged. This changed as drone strikes became increasingly common under the first Obama administration and as Pakistan transitioned from a military government led by President Musharraf to one that is nominally democratic.

From Washington’s point of view, it may be enough that the United States conduct drone operations in Pakistan with the continued support of Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the Interservices Intelligence Directorate (ISI), and the army, which oversees the ISI.³⁴ But the drone program raises many questions for Pakistan’s citizens. For one thing, Pakistanis routinely hear their politicians decrying the drones, yet the strikes continue. As the Pew data indicate, many Pakistanis suspect that their government is colluding with the United States, but so far, few Pakistanis have demanded that their government make clear the extent to which it tolerates or even actively facilitates U.S. drone operations. Politicians remain silent, even as media reports continue to reveal the degree to which the Pakistani civilian government and military have been complicit in the program.³⁵

In the wake of the November 2011 US–NATO attack on the Pakistani military outpost at Salala, Pakistan civilian and military stakeholders came under increasing pressure from a restive population to decrease cooperation with United States, including their facilitation of the drone program. Pakistanis, like Americans, are generally not privy to details about the

³³Singh, “Lawfare Podcast Episode #20.”

³⁴For a graphic of all suspected U.S. drone bases in Pakistan, see The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, “CIA drones quit one Pakistan site – but US keeps access to other airbases,” 15 December 2011, accessed at <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/12/15/cia-drones-quit-pakistan-site-but-us-keeps-access-to-other-airbases>, 9 May 2013.

³⁵“Wikileaks: Kayani wanted more drone strikes in Pakistan,” *Pakistan Express Tribune*, 20 May 2011, accessed at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/172531/wikileaks-kayani-wanted-more-drone-strikes/>, 9 May 2013; Rob Crilly, “Wikileaks: Pakistan privately approved drone strikes,” *The Telegraph*, 1 December 2010, accessed at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/wikileaks/8172922/Wikileaks-Pakistan-privately-approved-drone-strikes.html>, 9 May 2013; Jim Sciutto and Lee Ferran, “WikiLeaks: Pakistan Asked for More, Not Fewer Drones,” *ABC News The Blotter*, 20 May 2011, accessed at <http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/wikileaks-cable-pakistan-asked-fewer-drones/story?id=13647893#.ULQtE-NewV8E>, 9 May 2013; Landay, “U.S. secret;” Mark Mazzetti, “A Secret Deal on Drones.”

degree to which the Pakistani security establishment collaborates with the United States on drone operations and, like American opponents of the program, often object to it as a violation of Pakistani sovereignty.³⁶ In an effort to publicly punish the United States and appease increasing public outcry over the Salala episode, while making few actual changes to the status quo, Pakistan's Parliament forced the United States to cease operations at the Shamsi airbase. Shamsi, however, was only one of the bases that the United States used to stage drone strikes in Pakistan.

The ruckus over Shamsi exposed significant fissures in Pakistan's civil-military relations. First, the declaration was political theatre in the first degree: no U.S. personnel were stationed at Shamsi at the time. Second, the United States continues to use other bases in Pakistan for drone flights. Third, U.S. government officials have told the authors that Pakistan's intelligence agency continues to collaborate with the CIA on these strikes. (Pakistani officials deny that they are doing so.) Moreover, while political actors publicly question the army's right to sell Pakistan's sovereignty to the United States,³⁷ U.S. State Department cables released, without authorization to Wikileaks, show that Pakistan's current political elites are at most indifferent to drone strikes, and that many, in fact, support the program.³⁸

Thus, ordinary Pakistanis are left to question why drones are used against citizens and foreigners alike in FATA and which (if any) Pakistani authority authorizes the strikes. The program also raises troubling questions about civil-military relations in Pakistan: what—if any—powers do civilian leaders wield over the program, not to mention the Pakistani military, which is supposed to be subordinate to civilian control? Equally,

³⁶See Chris Rogers, "Legality of U.S. Drone Strikes in Pakistan," Center for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad. N.d., accessed at <http://crss.pk/downloads/Reports/Special-Posts/Legality-of-US-Drone-Strikes-in-Pakistan.pdf>, 9 May 2013; Joshua Foust and Ashley S. Boyle, "The Strategic Context of Lethal Drones: A framework for discussion," American Security Project, 16 August 2012, accessed at <http://americansecurityproject.org/featured-items/2012/the-strategic-context-of-lethal-drones-a-framework-for-discussion/>, 9 May 2013.

³⁷Inter alia, John Reed, "Pakistan Boots U.S. From Drone Base," *Defensetech.com*, 30 June 2011, accessed at <http://defensetech.org/2011/06/30/pakistan-boots-u-s-from-drone-base/>, 9 May 2013; "US-Pak intelligence cooperation continues," *The Dawn*, 23 January 2012, accessed at <http://dawn.com/2012/01/23/us-pak-intelligence-cooperation-continues/>, 9 May 2013; Chris Woods, "CIA drones quit one Pakistan site — but US keeps access to other airbases," *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*, 15 December 2011, accessed at <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/12/15/cia-drones-quit-pakistan-site-but-us-keeps-access-to-other-airbases/>, 9 May 2013; "Pakistan Helps U.S. Drones Campaign: Reuters," *HuffingtonPost.com*, 22 January 2012, accessed at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/22/pakistan-us-drones-campaign_n_1221774.html, 9 May 2013.

³⁸"US embassy cables: Pakistan backs US drone attacks on tribal areas," *The Guardian*, 30 November 2010; Jim Sciutto and Lee Ferran, "WikiLeaks: Pakistan Asked for More, Not Fewer Drones," *ABCNews.com*, 20 May, 2011, accessed at "US embassy cables: Pakistan backs US drone attacks on tribal areas," *The Guardian*, 30 November 2010.

Pakistanis—and Americans—lack knowledge about basic aspects of the program: who is targeted and why, with what actual outcome, and with what eventual effect upon Pakistani or American security?

THE ARGUMENT

Pakistan's Urdu-language media (private television, radio, and print) is almost universally anti-drone, while Pakistan's English-language publications, aimed at an elite readership, take a slightly more sympathetic attitude. Given unequal access to these debates across Pakistan (a function of access to media, as well as of literacy in Urdu and English), we seek to understand how those Pakistanis who are aware of the drone program form an opinion about it. Since the average citizen of any country does not know much about security policy issues, how does she form her views? Public opinion researchers have argued that societal and political elites play a very large role in shaping what the public thinks about policy issues, particularly policy issues they do not understand very well. John Zaller,³⁹ in a seminal book on the origins of public attitudes, argues that elites play a large role in framing issues and shaping their presentation in the mass media and public discourse. The role of elites in shaping opinion is even greater in developing countries with relatively low literacy rates, where the governing elite have a high control over information. Members of the mass public most often assume that elites have better information on issues than they themselves do, and take their cues on complex issues from those whom they consider knowledgeable.⁴⁰ As Arthur Lupia argues,⁴¹ the more expert the elite is assumed to be on an issue, the more likely it is that citizens will follow elite cues on that issue.

Not only is the perceived expertise of the opinion maker important to shaping views on security issues, but so is the ability of the individual to discern a strong argument from a weak one. People who are better educated will probably have access to a greater base of knowledge and to more channels of information than those with a very basic level of education or no education at all. Thus, the more-educated have the tools to be more discriminating about the information that media outlets provide on security issues.

How does the argument about elite discourse pertain to Pakistan and the drone debate? The Pew data show that most Pakistanis are not aware of

³⁹John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁴⁰Arthur Lupia, *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴¹*Ibid.*

the drone campaign; only about one third of the public is aware that drones are being used to kill militants on Pakistan's soil. Our Heckman selection model analysis shows that those who do offer an opinion on the drones are those who are more educated, male, and have access to the Internet. Thus, the data suggest that the Pakistani debate over drones is waged among elites, who nonetheless differ in key ways, such as level of education, literacy in English, access to non-Urdu media, and the like.

We contend that the information available to Pakistanis is central to forming their attitudes on the drone program. The less educated a Pakistani is, the more likely it is that she will have access to limited sources of information about the drone program, and that those sources of information will be in the vernacular and take a more-nationalistic tone. Literate but moderately-educated Pakistanis will have access to Urdu newspapers and (for the minority who can afford it) Urdu television; the Urdu media is overwhelmingly against the strikes. Highly educated Pakistanis, on the other hand, have access to the more-positive accounts of the drone program available through English-language television (including foreign channels) and newspapers, and the Internet. Thus, less-educated Pakistanis are less likely to be positive about the drone program than are the highly educated.

The highly educated population, most of which speaks English, has access to a broader and more-diverse media selection, such as newspapers like *The Dawn*, *The Express Tribune*, and the *Daily Times*, among others. While most of the coverage of drones in Pakistani English-language media is negative, the English-language media gives space to pro-drone views that are completely absent from the Urdu language media. Thus, higher levels of education provide elite Pakistanis with a broader range of views on the desirability of the drone strikes. Most importantly, higher levels of education, and the ability to read and understand English, give a citizen access to pro-drone arguments, which in Pakistan are only available in English-language sources. We argue that those Pakistanis who have positive attitudes toward the drone strikes are the elite *within* the elite in Pakistani society.

The nature of the media coverage in Pakistan means that those who are exposed solely to Urdu-language media are unlikely to hear any pro-drone arguments. The less educated an individual is, the more likely it is that he or she does not speak English and seeks only Urdu media, which is overwhelmingly anti-drone. Thus, the less-educated have narrower exposure to views on the subject and are likely to be more opposed to the drones. This argument produces the following hypothesis:

H1: The lower the respondent's level of education, the more likely the respondent is to oppose drone strikes in Pakistan.

There is an important gender component to this argument. Pakistani men tend to be far better educated and better informed about political matters than Pakistani women, and as a result, they have much greater access to different channels of information. The differences in education between the genders in Pakistan are quite stark: among males above the age of 10, 69 percent are considered “literate,” and 69 percent have had some kind of formal education. In contrast, among females above 10 years of age, only 45 percent are literate and 44 percent have had some kind of formal education.⁴² Thus, we surmise that women are more likely than men to oppose drone strikes because of their lower levels of education and access to information. This yields our second hypothesis:

H2: Women are more likely to oppose drone strikes than men.

To understand how elite discourse may shape opinion, it is necessary to first describe the lineaments of the drone debate in Pakistan. Whereas most discussions of the drone program primarily concentrate on the arguments of those who oppose it, we must also identify the reasoning put forth by those who support drone use. These arguments—for and against—are laid out in the next section.

ANTI-DRONE ARGUMENTS IN PAKISTAN

Pakistanis who oppose drone strikes offer numerous criticisms of the program. First and foremost is the issue of sovereignty. Pakistan’s Foreign Minister, Hina Rabbani Khar, among numerous other Pakistani leaders, denounced the strikes as “unlawful, against international law, and [a] violation of sovereignty.”⁴³ It may be that the many Pakistanis who hear such cries of protest from their government officials become convinced that the drone strikes violate domestic and international legal norms and are not representative of the wishes of their democratically elected government. Thus, some Pakistanis may conclude that the drone strikes are carried out in defiance of the wishes of Pakistan’s democratic government. This gives rise to an important testable hypothesis:

H3: Those who value democracy more in Pakistan will be more likely to oppose drone strikes.

⁴²Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, “Percentage Distribution of Population by Age, Sex Literacy [sic] and Level of Education-2008-09,” n.d., accessed at http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/Labour%20Force/publications/lfs2008_09/t03.pdf, 9 May 2013.

⁴³“Drones violate sovereignty, Pakistan tells UN,” *PakTribune*, 31 October 2012, accessed at <http://paktribune.com/news/Drones-violate-sovereignty-Pakistan-tells-UN-254545.html>, 9 May 2013.

A second important issue is the lack of information about who was targeted in the drone strikes, with what cause, and with what outcomes. Various international and Pakistani organizations have attempted to investigate civilian casualties resulting from the strikes. Prominent organizations involved in this effort include the International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic at Stanford Law School and the Global Justice Clinic at the NYU School of Law;⁴⁴ the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (BIJ);⁴⁵ and the New America Foundation (NAF).⁴⁶

According to the BIJ, there have been 352 drone strikes in Pakistan, of which 300 have taken place under the Obama administration. Together, these drone strikes have killed between 2,590 and 3,383 persons, of whom anywhere between 472 and 885 have been civilians, including 176 children. In addition, the BIJ assesses that between 1,255 and 1,408 persons have been injured by drones.⁴⁷ NAF reaches somewhat similar figures (to be expected, as it uses essentially the same news reports): “337 CIA drone strikes” since 2004, which have killed between 1,932 to 3,176 people. Of those killed, between 1,487 and 2,595 were reported to be militants, and between 257 and 310 civilians.⁴⁸ Despite the uncertainty about the actual status of the victims of the strikes, the attacks receive regular coverage in the Pakistani print media (such as the newspapers *The Dawn* in English and *Jang* in Urdu), as well as television and radio. The coverage focuses upon the alleged collateral damage from drone strikes, including scenes of destroyed vehicles and houses, and the bodies of people supposedly killed in the strikes.

A third interesting element of the Pakistani debate over drones is the involvement of Islamist militant leaders. One of the most important anti-drone spokesmen from this group is Hafez Saeed, the leader of the international terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT, now operating under the name Jamaat-ud-Dawa, JuD). (The United States Department of State has declared both LeT and its alias, JuD, to be foreign terrorist organizations.) Saeed has petitioned the Punjab High Court to declare the strikes

⁴⁴International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic At Stanford Law School and Global Justice Clinic at NYU School Of Law, “Living Under Drones.”

⁴⁵Bureau of Investigative Journalism, “The Covert Drone War,” accessed at <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones>, 9 May 2013.

⁴⁶New America Foundation, “Year of the Drone.”

⁴⁷Bureau of Investigative Journalism, “Covert War on Terror—The Data,” accessed at <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drone-data>, 9 May 2013.

⁴⁸New America Foundation, “Year of the Drone.”

illegal,⁴⁹ and his organization has led many protests against the drone program and other forms of cooperation with the United States. JuD also took the lead in organizing an alliance of Islamist political leaders and militant activists called the Difah-e-Pakistan Council (Defense of Pakistan Council).⁵⁰ Given that the drone strikes target al Qaeda and the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban, the allies of JuD and other jihadi groups, we may surmise that those who do not fear the influence of such groups may be more likely to oppose drone strikes. This gives rise to a fourth hypothesis:

H4: Those who do not believe that al Qaeda poses a serious threat to Pakistan will be more likely to oppose drone strikes.

That said, mainstream Islamist political parties (often called Ulema parties because of their involvement with the ulema, or religious scholars), and right-of-center politicians, such as Imran Khan and Nawaz Sharif, also oppose drones.⁵¹ Opposition to drones overlaps significantly with support of an increased role for Islam in governance: Nawaz Sharif made a highly publicized effort to impose Islamic law in Pakistan and even tried to declare himself the “Amir-ul-Momineen” (leader of the faithful) before he was deposed by General Musharraf in 1999.⁵² Imran Khan, a former cricketer and international lothario, has in recent years re-invented himself as a pious Pakistani and nationalist politician who has voiced vocal support for Sharia.⁵³ In some cases, furthermore, Islamist political actors are identical with, or have strong ties to, overtly militant leaders.⁵⁴ This gives rise to another testable hypothesis:

H5: Those who want to see Islam play a greater role in the state should be more likely to oppose drone strikes.

⁴⁹JuD drone petition: LHC postpones hearing of case,” *Pakistan Express Tribune*, 2 November 2012, accessed at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/459621/jud-drone-petition-lhc-postpones-hearing-of-case>, 9 May 2013.

⁵⁰See “Drone, NATO attacks, MFN decision blasted,” *The Nation*, 23 January 2012, accessed at <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/23-Jan-2012/drone-nato-attacks-mfn-decision-blasted>, 9 May 2013.

⁵¹“Imran Khan’s Pakistan anti-drone drive halts for night,” *BBC News.com*, 6 October 2012, accessed at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19854297>, 9 May 2013; “Nawaz demands end to drones,” *The Nation*, 30 August 2012, accessed at <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/lahore/30-Aug-2012/nawaz-demands-end-to-drones>, 9 May 2013; “Jamaat e Islami calls to shoot down drones,” *Lahore Times*, 6 June 2012, accessed at <http://www.lhrtimes.com/2012/06/06/jamaat-e-islami-calls-to-shoot-down-drones/#ixzz2E0tqNWDm>, 9 May 2013.

⁵²“PML(N)-A Family Affair,” *Pakistan Today*, 6 March 2012, accessed at <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/03/06/comment/editors-mail/pmln-a-family-affair>, 9 May 2013.

⁵³See “Imran Khan demands the imposition of shariat in Pakistan,” *Daily Express*, 21 January 2009, accessed at <http://letusbuildpakistan.blogspot.com/2009/01/imran-khan-demands-imposition-of.html>, 9 May 2013.

⁵⁴C. Christine Fair, “The Militant Challenge in Pakistan,” *Asia Policy* 11 (January 2011): 105–137.

Finally, at the core of the drone debate is a deep suspicion about the United States and its intentions vis-à-vis Pakistan. Survey data now show that Pakistanis view India, their traditional rival, more favorably than they do the United States. Many Pakistanis believe that the Americans are at war not with terrorists, but with Islam and Muslims.⁵⁵ The Pakistani public has a long and deeply held antipathy toward the United States. Table 1 shows the pattern of anti-American views among Pakistanis dating back to 2002, when Pew started asking about favorability toward the United States in Pakistan.

As can be seen in the table, 69 percent of Pakistani respondents had an unfavorable view of the United States in 2002, and only 10 percent had a favorable view of the country. In 2010, 68 percent of Pakistanis had an unfavorable view of the United States, and only 17 percent had a favorable view of the country. Given that the drone strikes did not really start in a significant way in Pakistan until 2008, we cannot logically surmise that the high degree of disfavor toward the United States, has been principally driven by the drone strikes. Most Pakistanis were anti-American before the drones became a subject of public discourse. The drone strikes definitely did not help America's image with most Pakistanis, but they are not the primary cause of anti-Americanism in the country.

Anti-Americanism has deep roots in Pakistan. This legacy of negative opinions of the United States comes from a sense that the United States has

TABLE 1
Opinion Toward the United States

| | <i>Favorable</i> | <i>Unfavorable</i> | <i>DK/Refused</i> |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Pakistan | | | |
| Spring 2010 | 17 | 68 | 16 |
| Spring 2009 | 16 | 68 | 16 |
| Spring 2008 | 19 | 63 | 17 |
| Spring 2007 | 15 | 68 | 16 |
| Spring 2006 | 27 | 56 | 17 |
| Spring 2005 | 23 | 60 | 17 |
| Spring 2004 | 21 | 60 | 18 |
| May 2003 | 13 | 81 | 6 |
| Summer 2002 | 10 | 69 | 20 |

Source: Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project

⁵⁵Pew Research Center, "Pakistani Public Opinion Ever More Critical of U.S: 74% Call America an Enemy," 27 June 2012, accessed at <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/27/pakistani-public-opinion-ever-more-critical-of-u-s/>, 9 May 2013; World Public Opinion.org; "Public Opinion in the Islamic World on Terrorism, al Qaeda, and US Policies," 25 February 2009, accessed at http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/feb09/STARTII_Feb09_rpt.pdf, 9 May 2013; World Public Opinion.org, "Muslims Believe US Seeks to Undermine Islam," 24 April 2007, accessed at <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brmid-dleeastnafricara/346.php>, 9 May 2013.

often wronged Pakistan over the decades. Many Pakistanis felt that the United States abandoned Pakistan after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988, leaving Pakistan to deal with the resulting chaos. The United States also imposed harsh sanctions on Pakistan after it tested nuclear weapons. Finally, the United States has historically been willing to support military dictators in Pakistan as long as those individuals were viewed as pro-American. The United States appears as an impediment to the growth of a stable, functioning democracy in Pakistan, and the majority of Pakistanis view it with distrust. This gives rise to a fourth testable hypothesis:

H6: Those who believe the United States is an enemy of Pakistan are more likely to oppose drone strikes than those who do not see the United States as an enemy.

ARGUMENTS OF PAKISTANI DRONE PROPONENTS

While the voices of Pakistan's drone supporters are rarely heard, the Pew data demonstrate that a sizeable number of Pakistanis who know about the drones support their use. We can discern the bases of their support by reviewing the pro-drone op-eds written by Pakistanis in Pakistani and foreign newspapers. These writers argue that something must be done to eliminate the Islamist militants in the tribal areas and the threat they pose to Pakistanis. Pakistan's military operations have not always been successful and they have often come at a high price: the Pakistani army's spring 2009 operation against the Pakistani Taliban in Swat displaced over 3 million persons, over and above the 800,000 (or more) who had been displaced that year from the tribal areas due to military operations.⁵⁶ In late summer 2009, a fact-finding mission sent to Swat by Pakistan's Human Rights Commission documented extrajudicial killings by the security forces and even mass graves.⁵⁷ U.S. State Department cables released through Wikileaks reveal that U.S. officials knew about the killings but kept them secret.⁵⁸ The United States did not act until October 2010, after a video surfaced that appeared to show Pakistani troops shooting bound and

⁵⁶Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Millions of IDPs and Returnees Face Continuing Crisis," 2 December 2009, accessed at [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/9F1885E236952592C12576800057602F/\\$file/Pakistan_Overview_Dec09.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/9F1885E236952592C12576800057602F/$file/Pakistan_Overview_Dec09.pdf), 9 May 2013.

⁵⁷Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, "Serious concerns over mass graves, extrajudicial killings, IDPs' plight in Swat: HRC," 12 August 2009, accessed at <http://hrpcb.org.wordpress.com/2009/08/22/serious-concerns-over-mass-graves-extrajudicial-killings-idps%E2%80%99-plight-in-swat-hrcp>, 9 May 2013.

⁵⁸Declan Walsh, "US 'kept Pakistani army Swat murders secret,'" *The Guardian*, 30 November 2010, accessed at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/30/us-pakistani-army-swat-murders-secret>, 9 May 2013.

blindfolded young men. The United States invoked Leahy Amendment sanctions, precluding U.S. military assistance to the units involved in the abuses.⁵⁹ Pakistanis are also very familiar with the devastation associated with Pakistan's use of combat aircraft in Swat, South Waziristan, and elsewhere. In October 2009, Pakistan deployed fighter-bomber aircraft in the tribal areas, causing residents to flee when their homes were destroyed.⁶⁰

Given that the various displaced persons fled to major cities throughout the country, and also the vigorous media coverage of these unpopular military operations, Pakistanis are fully aware that the alternative to the drones may be much more unpleasant. Thus, those who support the drones do so because they believe that the strikes are the least-bad option, and also that doing nothing is not acceptable.⁶¹ As with the foregoing section, we review these arguments in support of the drone program to generate testable hypotheses.

Perhaps the most important reason some Pakistanis support the use of drones is that they believe that the drones are killing terrorists, which Pakistan either cannot or will not tackle on its own. Moreover, drone proponents will often note that the drones kill foreign and Pakistani militants whose very presence in Pakistan vitiates Pakistan's claims of sovereignty and endangers the state. As one editorial in *The Pakistan Express Tribune* recently opined, "The real threat to our nation comes from the heavily armed outfits marching across our northern areas, rather than the strikes made by unmanned planes."⁶²

Drone supporters may also weigh the potential loss of innocent life due to drones against the much larger problem of terrorism in Pakistan. Mohammad Taqi's critique of the Stanford–NYU Law School report on drones for the English-language *Daily Times* argues that the report is

^{59a}"Abusive' Pakistani units lose aid," *Al Jazeera*, 22 October 2010, accessed at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/americas/2010/10/2010102271611937887.html>, 9 May 2013. Unfortunately, this punitive measure was undermined by the nearly simultaneous announcement of 2 billion dollars in military aid to Pakistan. Eric Schmitt and David E. Sanger, "U.S. Offers Pakistan Army \$2 Billion Aid Package," *The New York Times*, 22 October 2010, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/23/world/asia/23policy.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0, 9 May 2013.

⁶⁰One of the authors visited South and North Waziristan with the Pakistan army in August 2010 and observed first-hand the massive devastation resulting from these strikes. See also, "Displaced tell of fear after 100,000 flee army assault," *The Dawn*, 19 October 2009, accessed at <http://archives.dawn.com/archives/145043>, 9 May 2013.

⁶¹C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Own War on Terror: What the Pakistani Public Thinks," *Journal of International Affairs* 63 (Fall/Winter 2009): 39–55.

^{62a}"A question of Sovereignty," *The Pakistan Express Tribune*, 13 December 2012, accessed at http://tribune.com.pk/story/478880/a-question-of-sovereignty/?fb_action_ids=10151199413465003&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_source=aggregation&fb_aggregation_id=288381481237582, 9 May 2013.

methodologically flawed,⁶³ but also points out that it is completely silent about

the psychological effects of terrorist attacks on the general population all over Pakistan.... For example, compared to a total of roughly 350 drone attacks since 2004, there were well over 600 terrorist bombings and more than 1,000 fatalities across Pakistan. In addition, over 35 targeted attacks on the Shia and other minorities took place in 2011, causing over 500 deaths. But apparently the idea of the study was to highlight only the alleged atrocities by the US, while glossing over the reign of terror unleashed over Pakistanis at large by those holed up in FATA and their handlers in and cohorts in 'mainland' Pakistan.⁶⁴

Thus, for Taqi, the costs of drones are worth paying if the strikes degrade the ability of terrorist groups' to attack Pakistanis. Taqi is essentially arguing that the drones serve Pakistan's interests while also advancing those of the United States.

Mohammad Zubair, a lawyer from Peshawar with family ties to the tribal areas, is a vocal supporter of drones. He recalls the revelations of Air Chief Marshal (Retired) Rao Qamar Suleiman, who admitted in a 2011 *Daily Times* article that Pakistan's Air Force had flown "5,000 strike sorties and dropped 11,600 bombs on 4,600 targets in Pakistan's troubled tribal areas since May 2008."⁶⁵ In contrast to what he calls the "media's unverifiable

⁶³This report did, in fact, have numerous methodological flaws. First and foremost, it relied upon interviews conducted among a convenience sample of 130 persons. These interviews were conducted well outside of the tribal areas and were "arranged through local contacts in Pakistan....The majority of the [69] experiential victims were arranged with the assistance of the Foundation for Fundamental Rights" (International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic At Stanford Law School and Global Justice Clinic at NYU School Of Law, "Living Under Drones," 2-3). The Foundation for Fundamental Rights is the leading opponent of drones in Pakistan and thus is a party to the debate rather than an impartial organization dedicated to an objective understanding of the issue. Much of the report's evidence is thus derived from interviews fielded among a small sample that is deeply tainted by selection bias. The authors make no attempt to identify Pakistanis who evince some support for drones, much less incorporate their views into the report. Equally dismaying, the authors of the report take all interview-derived information as authoritative and make no effort to independently confirm oral statements by invoking forensic or munitions experts or other scientific means of validating witness statements. The authors do not disambiguate the various causes of similar outcomes. For example, they note that Pakistani interlocutors described these "experiential victims" as exhibiting clinical signs of post-traumatic stress disorder due to their experience (howsoever direct or indirect) of either drone strikes or drone surveillance. Although the strikes are carried out in areas that are also tormented by enormous terrorist violence, restrictive and violent social regimes enforced by the local Taliban, extensive Pakistani military and paramilitary and intelligence presence, the authors simply assume that any such instances of depression can be attributed to drones alone. In short, the authors arrive at sweeping conclusions that are fundamentally unsupported by the report's thin and dubious empirical foundation.

⁶⁴Mohammad Taqi, "Shooting down drones with academic guns?" *The Daily Times*, 4 October 2012, accessed at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012\10\04\story_4-10-2012_pg3_2, 9 May 2013.

⁶⁵Muhammad Zubair, "Drone attacks: myth and reality," *The Daily Times*, 4 June 2012, accessed at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012\06\04\story_4-6-2012_pg3_4, 9 May 2013.

reports” of innocent drone casualties, “the internally displaced persons of South Waziristan and people of North Waziristan [from the bombing campaign of the Pakistan Air Force] tell a different story about such attacks, albeit in whispers, due to fear. The IDPs claim that drones did not disrupt their social life or cause infrastructural damage or kill innocent civilians because of the precise and targeted nature of their attacks.”⁶⁶ Thus, Zubair’s arguments in support of drones derive from a reasoned comparison of the other more-damaging options to eliminate a threat that he believes is real and a menace to the state.

Zubair is not alone in voicing the view that the drones largely kill actual terrorists and are much preferable to the massive damage caused by the air force’s bombing campaign, which displaced millions of Pakistanis and destroyed whole villages. Nor is he alone in condemning the Pakistani state for failing to exert itself over these areas to protect these vulnerable citizens.⁶⁷ Farhat Taj, an outspoken Norway-based researcher from the Tribal Areas, has questioned many of the reports of high civilian casualties, based on their failure to provide “verifiable evidence of civilian ‘casualties’...i.e. names of the people killed, names of their villages, dates and locations of the strikes,” as well as an “inadequate” collection methodology.⁶⁸

Ali Arqam, writing in English on the Internet, presents a similar set of arguments for drone attacks. He argues that whatever harm drones do, it is less than that done by Pakistan’s military actions and the “indiscriminate suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks by the nexus of Jihadist groups that have taken over” parts of the tribal areas.⁶⁹ Arqam, like Taqi, criticizes the recent Stanford–NYU Law School report for ignoring the effect that terrorism has had on many Pakistanis. He observes that no one asked the “46,000 and counting victims of Jihadist terrorism in Pakistan about the psychological effects of seeing their near and dear ones obliterated in market places”; the authors did not ask Pakistan’s religious minorities, who are the targets of sectarian terrorist groups, “about the psychological effects of seeing gruesome beheadings and executions of pilgrims and laborers on the basis of their religious identity”; nor did the report address the concerns of “Pashtun families as well as PPP, ANP, JUIF and other political activists, leaders and even those Deobandi clerics who were massacred for opposing the Taliban and their

⁶⁶Zubair, “Drone attacks: myth and reality.”

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Farhat Taj, “Drone attacks: challenging some fabrications,” *The Daily Times*, 2 January 2010, accessed at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\01\02\story_2-1-2010_pg3_5, 9 May 2013.

⁶⁹Ali Arqam, “Questioning the veracity of FFR-assisted Stanford report on drone attacks,” *Let Us Build Pakistan*, 5 October 2012, accessed at <http://criticalppp.com/archives/229457>, 9 May 2013.

methods?”⁷⁰ For Arqam, doing nothing will ultimately result in a greater loss of life, well beyond the tribal areas; drones are preferable to the alternative (military action) because they target terrorists more accurately and thus cause less loss of innocent life.⁷¹

These authors provide some insights into the factors that lead Pakistanis to support drones. Pakistani drone supporters recognize that the drones do kill innocent civilians. But they still support the strikes because they believe that FATA-based terrorists do more harm than the drones, and that targeted killings are the least-bad option for dealing with Pakistan’s terrorism problem. This reasoning is thrown into sharp relief by the fact that many of these drone supporters (including Taj, Taqi, Shah, and Zubair) have family ties to FATA. Thus, we suspect, along the lines of H4, that those who believe al Qaeda and other militant groups pose a serious threat to Pakistan are more likely to support drones and less likely to oppose them. It is also worth noting that authors from FATA understand the implications of the FCR: families offering shelter or other assistance to “terrorists” put their household and extended families at risk. Thus, for those in FATA, “innocence” has a different legal and social connotation than it does in the rest of Pakistan. Unfortunately, Pew did not survey FATA residents. Finally, conspicuously absent in these pro-drone pieces is any expression of the belief that the United States is at war with Pakistan. For these interlocutors, it is not that the Americans are trampling Pakistan’s sovereignty; rather, Pakistan has not bothered to exert its own sovereignty over FATA. Thus, we anticipate that, consistent with H6, those who do not believe that the United States is an enemy of Pakistan are less likely to oppose U.S. drones in Pakistan.

DATA AND METHODS

The data used in this analysis came from the 2010 Pew Global Attitudes survey, which included questions about drone strikes in Pakistan.⁷² The survey was conducted in Pakistan’s four provinces: Punjab, Sind,

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹There are numerous pro-drone articles in the Pakistani media, most making the same arguments as the pieces discussed above. See, for example, Saroop Ijaz, “Game of Drones,” *Pakistan Express Tribune*, 6 October 2012, accessed at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/447920/game-of-drones/>, 9 May 2013; Pir Zubair Shah, “My Drone War,” *Foreign Policy*, 27 February 2012, accessed at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/27/my_drone_war; Farhat Taj, “A Survey of Drone Attacks in Pakistan: What Do the People of FATA Think?” 5 March 2009, accessed at <http://www.airra.org/newsandanalysis/droneattack-survey.php>, 9 May 2013.

⁷²We employ 2010 data from the Pew Global Attitudes Project because that is the most-recent survey to include a battery of questions about the drone program in Pakistan and for which full access to the dataset is available. The 2012 dataset was still embargoed at the time of writing.

Northwest Frontier Province (now known as Khyber Paktunkhwa), and Balochistan. For security reasons, the survey was not fielded in FATA. To get an idea of how much Pakistanis know about the drone strikes, respondents were asked: *How much, if anything, have you heard about drone attacks that target leaders of extremist groups: a lot, little, or nothing at all?* Of the responses, the largest category was nothing at all, with 43 percent. Don't know/refused was the second largest response category with 22 percent. Of those who responded that they knew something about the drones, 21 percent said they knew a little and 14 percent said they knew a lot. Thus, in 2010, only 35 percent of the sample claimed that they knew something about the drone program, whereas 43 percent stated they knew nothing about it. It is clear from these responses that a minority of Pakistanis are familiar with the drone strikes.

In order to gauge opposition to the drone strikes, the respondents were asked: *Please tell me whether you support or oppose the United States conducting drone attacks in conjunction with the Pakistani government against the leaders of extremist groups.* The breakdown of response to this question was that 23 percent support the drone strikes, 32 percent oppose the drone strikes, and 45 percent do not know or refuse to answer the question. Thus, a plurality of Pakistanis either does not know about the drone strikes or refuses to answer the question. Table 2 shows a breakdown of Pakistani attitudes toward drone strikes among those respondents who answered the question.

TABLE 2

Please tell me Whether you Support or Oppose the United States Conducting Drone Attacks in Conjunction with the Pakistani Government Against Leaders of Extremist Groups

| | <i>Pakistan</i> (<i>n</i> = 1,040) | <i>Punjab</i> (<i>n</i> = 568) | <i>Sind</i> (<i>n</i> = 273) | <i>Balochistan</i> (<i>n</i> = 66) | <i>Northwest Frontier Province(NWFP)</i> (<i>n</i> = 133) |
|---------|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Support | 40.2 percent | 42.8 percent | 35.9 percent | 39.4 percent | 38.3 percent |
| Oppose | 59.8 percent | 57.2 percent | 64.1 percent | 60.6 percent | 61.7 percent |

As the table shows, the majority of respondents who knew about the drone strikes or offered an opinion were opposed to them, with nearly 60 percent opposed to 40 percent in favor. A minority, albeit a significant minority, views the drone strikes as positive.

The 2010 Pew survey allows us to examine some of the attitudes that surround the topic of drone strikes. The survey instrument includes a series of questions dealing with the necessity of the strikes, their toll on innocent civilians, and the degree to which the Pakistani government is assenting to the American drone strikes. Table 3 shows the results of answers to these questions, first across Pakistan and then by province.

TABLE 3

For each of the Following Statements about the Drone Attacks, Please Tell me Whether you Agree or Disagree

| <i>They are necessary to defend Pakistan from extremist groups</i> | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | <i>Pakistan</i> (n = 629) | <i>Punjab</i> (n = 320) | <i>Sind</i> (n = 201) | <i>Balochistan</i> (n = 8) | <i>NFWP</i> (n = 100) |
| Agree | 37.2 percent | 33.4 percent | 37.3 percent | 50.0 percent | 48.0 percent |
| Disagree | 62.8 percent | 66.6 percent | 62.7 percent | 50.0 percent | 52.0 percent |
| <i>They kill too many innocent people</i> | | | | | |
| | <i>Pakistan</i> (n = 689) | <i>Punjab</i> (n = 339) | <i>Sind</i> (n = 213) | <i>Balochistan</i> (n = 23) | <i>NFWP</i> (n = 114) |
| Agree | 94.8 percent | 95.6 percent | 92.0 percent | 100.0 percent | 96.5 percent |
| Disagree | 5.2 percent | 4.4 percent | 8.0 percent | 0.0 percent | 3.5 percent |
| <i>They are being done without the approval of the Pakistani government</i> | | | | | |
| | <i>Pakistan</i> (n = 586) | <i>Punjab</i> (n = 312) | <i>Sind</i> (n = 175) | <i>Balochistan</i> (n = 14) | <i>NFWP</i> (n = 85) |
| Agree | 55.6 percent | 64.1 percent | 46.3 percent | 42.9 percent | 45.9 percent |
| Disagree | 44.4 percent | 35.9 percent | 53.7 percent | 57.1 percent | 54.1 percent |

The first question to examine is: *How much, if anything, have you heard about the drone attacks that target leaders of extremist groups—a lot, a little, or nothing at all?* This is the gateway question to the questions about the merits and drawbacks of the drone strikes. If a respondent answers *nothing at all*, they are not asked the immediate subsequent questions about the drone strikes. If they answer, *a lot* or *a little*, they are asked what they think about the drone strikes. The responses to this question are discussed above.

The first follow-up question is: *For each of the following statements about the drone attacks, please tell me whether you agree or disagree: They are necessary to defend Pakistan from extremist groups.* Thirty-seven percent of Pakistanis agreed with this statement and 63 percent disagreed. Thus, a pattern emerges that is very similar to the question about support for and opposition to drone strikes.

The next question in the series concerned collateral damage. It asks: *For each of the following statements about the drone attacks, please tell me whether you agree or disagree: They kill too many innocent people.* This question elicited very strong responses. Ninety-five percent of those surveyed agreed that the strikes killed too many innocents, while only 5 percent believed that they did not.

The final question in the series asked: *For each of the following statements about the drone attacks, please tell me whether you agree or disagree:*

They are being done without the approval of the Pakistani government. The responses to this question show that Pakistanis are much less united on this point than on the question of civilian casualties. Fifty-six percent agreed that the drone strikes are carried out without the approval of the Pakistan government, and 44 percent disagree.

In summary, these questions show that more Pakistanis oppose the drone strikes than favor them, that they think the strikes kill too many innocent people, and that they are slightly more likely to believe that the United States carries out the strikes without the consent of the Pakistani government.

While the targets of the drone strikes are religiously motivated militants, religious beliefs are not at the root of opposition to drone strikes. This study argues that the principal determinant of opposition to the drone strikes in Pakistan is the degree to which a Pakistani has access to a range of different opinions on the drone attacks. In other words, the less educated a citizen is, and the less access she has to information and commentary about the drone strikes, the more likely she is to oppose the attacks.

MODELING OPPOSITION TO U.S. DRONE STRIKES IN PAKISTAN

This study uses a Heckman probit model to explain opposition to U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan. The model tests hypotheses related to respondents' attitudes toward the United States, various Pakistani authorities, and militant groups, their religious beliefs, and their exposure to various types of media. Because of the larger number of missing cases resulting from some questions, we would be left with a significantly smaller sample if we opted to not employ an appropriate Heckman selection model. Why are there so many missing cases?

The literature on public opinion gives two general reasons why respondents choose not to answer survey questions. The first has to do with actual and perceived knowledge. Krosnick and Milburn argue that some individuals simply do not know enough about the subject of a question and choose not to answer for fear of appearing foolish.⁷³ Others perceive themselves as insufficiently knowledgeable and also do not answer. Thus, one reason for non-response is a lack of objective knowledge of the subject matter, and another reason is a lack of confidence that one is able to answer such questions. Krosnick and Milburn find that both the less-knowledgeable

⁷³Jon Krosnick and Michael Milburn, "Psychological Determinants of Political Opinionation," *Social Cognition* 8 (1990): 49-68.

and women (no matter their level of knowledge) tend to have higher non-response rates than males and the more-knowledgeable.

Adam Berinsky argues that another reason individuals may choose not to answer some survey questions is social desirability effects.⁷⁴ If a question comes up and the respondent does not want to give her sincere answer, which may be one that she believes to be socially undesirable, she may choose to simply not answer the question and avoid the discomfort of either lying or stating her true beliefs.

Both types of reasons may be at play in the data utilized here. Pakistan is a highly unequal society when it comes to education. The illiteracy rate, particularly among women, is very high by international standards. Drone strikes and terrorism are both highly controversial issues, and asking about them can easily cause discomfort among respondents. Table 4 shows the correlations of the don't know/no response with the independent variables used in the study's analysis.

As we can see from the correlations, the Pakistanis most likely to refuse to answer the drone question or to say they don't know are the less-educated, women, and less-informed. These results make sense in light of the political knowledge and social desirability effects discussed above. The less-educated and women are likely to be less aware of the drones issue and are also less confident about their responses being based on correct information; therefore they chose not to respond.

We thus chose to utilize a Heckman selection model, which includes a selection function and a response function. In this case, the selection function will be similar to a regular binary logistic model, analyzing the

TABLE 4
Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Independent Variables and Don't Know/No Response Respondents

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Correlation</i> |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Education | -.272** |
| Gender | -.254** |
| Internet usage | -.167** |
| Pro-democracy | -.149** |
| United States is enemy | -.136** |
| Islamic influence | .059* |
| Income | .049* |
| Al Qaeda is a threat | .003 |

**Correlation significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

⁷⁴Adam Berinsky, "The Two Faces of Public Opinion," *American Journal of Political Science* 43 (1999): 1209-1230.

factors that contribute to disapproval of drones. In this case, the dependent variable in the second model is also dichotomous. Thus, we use the Heckman probit model (as opposed to the standard Heckman selection model in which the response function uses ordinary least squares). Specific problems related to model specification are discussed below.

The dependent variable that we use in this analysis is a question that asks: *Now I'm going to ask you a list of things that the United States might do to combat extremist groups in Pakistan. For each one, please tell me whether you would support or oppose it.* The respondent is then offered: *Conducting drone attacks in conjunction with the Pakistani government against leaders of extremist groups.* The respondent is then offered the choice of: support, oppose, don't know, or refuse to answer.⁷⁵

The independent variables are operationalized in the following manner. Education is operationalized with a question that asks the respondent the highest level of education she has completed. The more educated one is, the more likely one is to oppose drone strikes. We also use gender as a proxy for level of information, as we know that men tend to be more informed about political issues in Pakistan than women.

The anti-Americanism argument is operationalized using a straightforward question about favorability toward the United States: *Overall, do you think of the United States as more of a partner of Pakistan, more of an enemy of Pakistan, or neither?* We predict that respondents who say that they view the United States as more of an enemy of Pakistan will be more likely to oppose the drone strikes.

The argument about support for democratic norms is operationalized using the question: *Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.* The respondent was given the option of agreeing or disagreeing with that statement. We hypothesize that those who agree with the statement will be less supportive of drones.

One of the major arguments made in favor of drone strikes in Pakistan is that they kill foreign terrorists such as al Qaeda. Thus, we hypothesized that those who fear al Qaeda would be more in favor of drone strikes. We used the following question to operationalize this: *How serious a threat is al Qaeda to our country? Is it a very serious threat, a somewhat serious threat, a minor threat, or not a threat at all?* We predict that those who do not

⁷⁵Given that many of the independent variables ask respondents questions that could pull on the same underlying values, it is important to ensure that multicollinearity is not an issue for our model. To do so, we obtained Variance Inflation Factor Scores. The mean VIF was 1.26, with the highest 1.64. All are well below the typical threshold of 10 for excessive collinearity.

think al Qaeda is a threat to Pakistan will be more opposed to the drone program.

The variable relating to a respondent's view on the role Islam should play in Pakistan is operationalized by the question: *How much of a role do you think Islam plays in the political life of our country—a very large role, a fairly large role, a fairly small role, or a very small role?* If the respondent answered the question, they were then asked: *In your opinion, is this good or bad for the country?* If the respondent answered that Islam played a fairly small or very small role in the political life of the country and that this was bad, signifying Islamist tendencies, we expect that he or she would be more likely to oppose drone strikes. Likewise, if the respondent said that Islam played a fairly or very large role in the political life of the country and that this was good, we would expect him or her to be more likely to oppose drone strikes.

We do not use the survey questions about the necessity of drone strikes, whether too many innocents are killed, or whether they are done with or without the approval of the Pakistani government, because these questions had too many missing cases and would not allow for analysis of the variation in responses toward the dependent variable.

We add a control for income. This variable is added because it could have effects on the dependent variable, although we do not have theoretical priors about its causal relationship to the dependent variable.

ANALYSIS

The data came from the 2010 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, which collected the views of 2000 Pakistanis on a range of issues. Because of missing cases resulting from some questions, we used a sample of 1,681 respondents.

Before proceeding, a brief discussion of the Heckman model is necessary. Although the purpose and nature of the methodology is clear, there is some disagreement about model specification and execution. Derek Briggs suggests that “it does not matter whether the covariates in the selection function differ from those in the response schedule.”⁷⁶ He goes on to note that it is often suggested that the selection function contain at least one variable not included in the outcome model or that the response model contain none of the variables included in the selection function. In a test of the Heckman model, Briggs found that selection functions containing slightly different model specifications can produce vastly different results.

⁷⁶Derek C. Briggs, “Causal Inference and the Heckman Model,” *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics* 29 (2004): 397–420, at 404.

Furthermore, flawed model specification can produce inflated standard error results due to multicollinearity.

The first model in Table 5 presents an analysis of which Pakistanis opt to respond to questions related to drones. While our previous analysis of the correlation between “don’t know” responses and our dependent variable demonstrates which citizens are more or less likely to respond, the response model allows us to use the Heckman model to do so. We suggest that males are more likely to respond, along with individuals who are more highly educated and better informed. Since we must include a variable in the response model that is not in the selection model, we choose to include a variable that asks respondents how often they use the Internet. We believe those who use the Internet more regularly will be more aware of and knowledgeable about the drone program, and consequently more likely to respond. The same logic applies to Pakistanis who are more educated. Ultimately, we find evidence that being male, highly educated, and a regular Internet user makes respondents significantly more likely to respond to the question about drones that we use as our dependent variable in the response model.

TABLE 5
Heckman Logistic Regression Results

| <i>Dependent Variable-Oppose Drones</i> | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Independent Variables</i> | <i>Selection Model</i> | | <i>Response Model</i> | | <i>Marginal Effects</i> |
| | <i>Coeff.</i> | <i>Standard Error</i> | <i>Coeff.</i> | <i>Standard Error</i> | |
| Pro-democracy (high = agree) | | | -.081 | .070 | |
| Al Qaeda is a threat (high = very serious threat) | | | .007 | .030 | |
| Islamic influence (high = large and good) | | | .020 | .013 | |
| Education (high = post-graduate) | .273*** | .030 | .131*** | .041 | .038 |
| Gender (high = male) | .713*** | .065 | .538*** | .085 | .157 |
| United States is enemy (high = more of an enemy) | | | -.143** | .053 | .042 |
| Income (high = more income) | | | -.043 | .032 | |
| Internet usage (high = more usage) | .419*** | .135 | | | |
| Constant | -1.130 | .083 | -1.296 | .248 | |
| N | 888 | | 793 | | |
| Wald χ^2 | 90.84 | | | | |
| Prob > χ^2 | .000 | | | | |
| Log likelihood | -1,539.18 | | | | |
| LR test of independent equations | 4.22 | | | | |
| Prob > χ^2 | .040 | | | | |

Note: Figures are unstandardized coefficients shown alongside standard errors.

* $p < .1$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$.

The second model in Table 4 shows support for different hypotheses raised in this study. We will discuss each of our hypothesized categories of explanations presented in the response model. Beginning with the democratic norms category, we find no statistically significant relationship between attitudes toward democracy and attitudes toward drone strikes.

Looking at the support-for-militancy category, we do not find a significant relationship between Pakistani attitudes toward al Qaeda and support for drone attacks. Likewise, support for Islamism is not found to be a significant predictor: the variable utilized in our analysis (which combines questions about the amount of influence Islam has in Pakistan along with whether that influence is good or bad) does not have a clear relationship with citizen opinions of drones. Attitude toward the United States—as measured through a question asking if the United States is an enemy of Pakistan—is found to be a significant predictor of opinion about drones at the .01 level. Individuals who believe the United States is an enemy are more likely to oppose drone strikes.

Turning to our hypothesis regarding access to information, both predictors are statistically significant at the .01 level. Individuals with more education and males are both more likely to support the use of drones in Pakistan than other categories of respondents. Our sole control variable—income—does not emerge as a significant predictor in our response model.

Because we use the Heckman probit, the coefficients we present in Table 4 do not portray the marginal effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. To help present a fuller picture, we report the marginal effects of our significant variables in Table 4 as well. The marginal effects measure the probability of a respondent opposing drones when all independent variables are held at their mean except for the variable of interest, which is moved from its minimum to its maximum value. Thus, we are able to assess the substantive effect of each independent variable to explain variation in the dependent variable. When we examine our model, the most substantively significant variable appears to be gender, with a first difference of .157. This means that solely by moving the variable from female to male, while holding all other variables at their mean or median, we see a 15.7 percent increase in the likelihood that a respondent will oppose drone strikes. Perceptions of the United States as an enemy (4.2 percent) and education (3.8 percent), all have smaller substantive effects.

CONCLUSIONS

This analysis sought to understand the landscape of Pakistani public opinion about American drone strikes in FATA. We used a Pew Global Attitudes Project survey from 2010 that has one of the best available

question sets on Pakistani attitudes toward drone strikes. Our overview of Pakistani attitudes toward drone strikes shows that most Pakistanis (at least 43 percent) are unaware of the drone strikes in FATA. Those who are aware of the strikes and have an opinion oppose them by a margin of 20 percent.

The next goal of the study was to explain the variation we see in Pakistani public opinion toward the drone strikes: why do some Pakistanis oppose the drone strikes while others do not? We hypothesized that the primary driver of opposition to the drone strikes was the anti-drone discourse in the popular media. Since most Pakistanis' only source of information on the drone program is the Urdu-language media, they are exposed to a steady stream of negative stories about the drone strikes. We expected that the most-educated Pakistanis would be more likely to support the drone strikes because they tend to have access to more-varied sources of information (some of them in English) and thus are exposed to the pro-drone arguments presented in more-sophisticated Pakistani media sources, as well as in foreign media.

The results of the analysis bear out our argument. Pakistanis who have little education are most likely to be opposed to the drone strikes. Pakistani women, who are generally poorly educated and excluded from political discussions, tend to be more negative about the drones than men, as we expected.

We also found, as we expected, that views on the United States predict respondent views on drone strikes. The more negative the respondent was about the United States in general, the more likely he or she was to oppose drone strikes.

Interestingly, our prediction that a respondents' views on political Islam would influence her attitude toward the drone strikes was not borne out by the data. Respondents with Islamist tendencies did not seem more likely either to oppose or favor the strikes. This result illustrates the breadth and diversity of the Islamist spectrum in Pakistan; most Islamists do not support the militants who are the targets of the strikes.

Fear of or support for al Qaeda also does not seem to have much effect on Pakistanis' thinking about drones. This may be because Pakistanis think of the Pakistani Taliban as the main target of drone strikes. The Pakistani Taliban poses a much greater threat to Pakistan than al Qaeda does.

What do these results tell us about where public opinion in Pakistan is headed? We know that Pakistani public opinion matters when it comes to this issue. The media reacts to it, as does the government and even the military. Public opinion does not drive policy on this issue, but it constrains the range of options available to U.S. and Pakistani authorities. The United

States is trying to reduce the negative consequences of drone strikes, in FATA in particular, in order to minimize the chances of enflaming public sentiment. This effort includes the use of new, more-accurate weapons, but also a reduction in strikes. The United States is even giving Pakistan unarmed surveillance drones so that the drone war will no longer be solely an American effort. The drone war is not just a war against militants; it is also a fight to win over the Pakistani public.

This analysis makes a case that the U.S. government should be more assertive and transparent about its use of armed drones in Pakistan, and also that it should try to reach the large percentage of the population that does not know about the program in order to shape opinion in favor of the drone strikes. This outreach may involve radio, non-cable TV (such as *Pakistan TV*), or even local media, such as SMS texting in Urdu. The fact that so few Pakistanis have fixed attitudes about the program shows that there is, in fact, room for a genuine struggle over Pakistani public opinion. But the U.S. government, which has refused to discuss the program in Pakistan or even the United States, has not even entered the fray.