

## Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics

### *Victims*

The following table provides additional descriptive statistics about the 208 kidnapping victims in the dataset. The table includes information about each hostage's profession, the outcome of the kidnapping, details about the kidnapping, and the region where the kidnapping occurred.

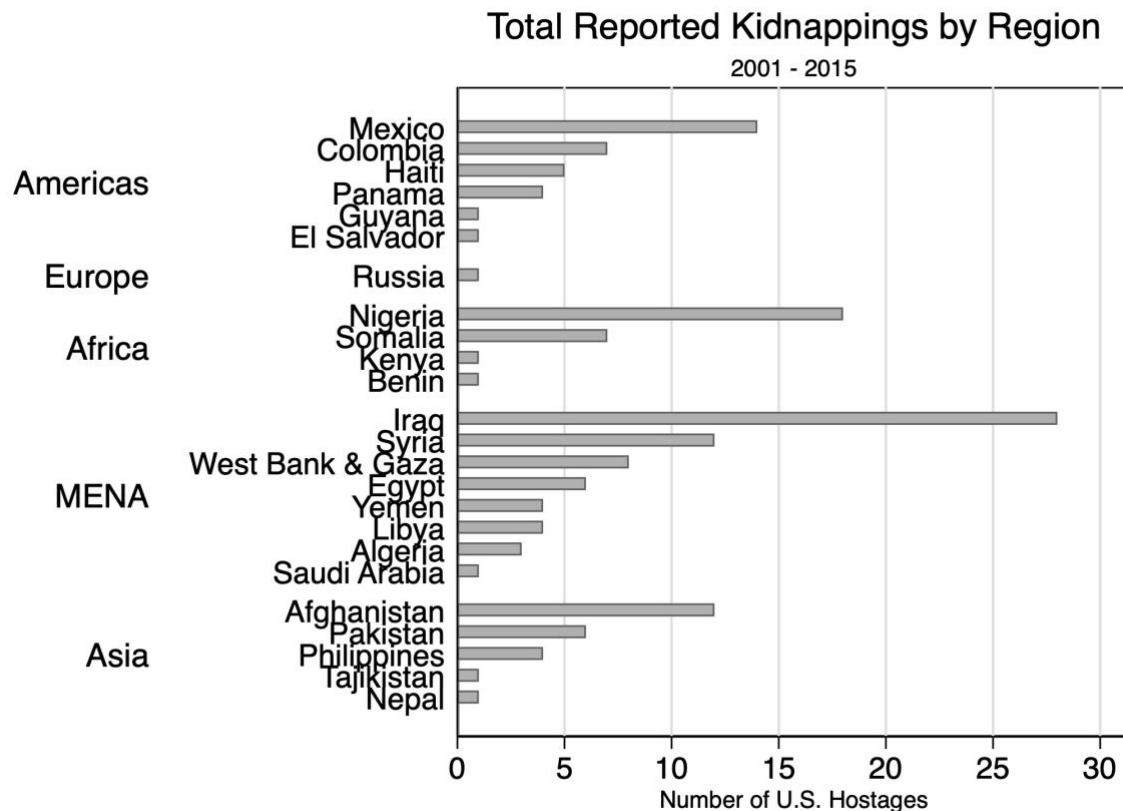
Table A1. Descriptive Statistics II (N = 208).

Variable	Frequency
<i>Hostage's Profession</i>	
Journalist	15.87% (N = 33)
U.S. Military	2.88% (N = 6)
Aid Worker/ Missionary	14.42% (N = 30)
Contractor	17.79% (N = 37)
Tourist	14.90% (N = 31)
Corporate Employee	18.27% (N = 38)
<i>Kidnapping Outcome</i>	
Missing	14.90% (N = 31)
Released	57.69% (N = 120)
Escaped	5.77% (N = 12)
Killed	20.19% (N = 42)
<i>Kidnapping Details</i>	
Reported Ransom Demand	29.81% (N = 62)
Raid/Rescue Attempt	15.38% (N = 32)
Reported in NYT	45.19% (N = 94)
<i>Region of Kidnapping</i>	
Americas	19.23% (N = 40)
Europe	0.96% (N = 2)
Africa	21.63% (N = 45)
Middle East/ North Africa	42.79% (N = 89)
Asia	15.38% (N = 32)

### *Geographical Variation*

For a more detailed overview of geographic variation of the incidents, Figure A1 shows the number of kidnappings per country in the dataset, ranging from 37 kidnappings of Americans in Iraq to one each in Benin, Chad, El Salvador, Guyana, Kenya, Nepal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Ukraine.

Figure A1.



The subsequent two tables provide additional information on the kidnappings by country (A2) and perpetrator (A3). In Table A2, each country where one of the 208 victims was kidnapped is listed along with the total number of kidnappings per country in the data; a ranking of kidnapping risk in that country, based on State Department travel warnings (see Appendix D); the total number of U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations based in that country; and the list of those FTOs. Table A3 is a list of all identified perpetrator groups in the data with their corresponding number of kidnapping victims in the dataset.

Table A2. Country Level Kidnappings and State Department Designations

Country	Number of Kidnappings	State Dept Warning	Number of FTOs	Designated FTOs in the Country
Afghanistan	17	3*	1	al-Qaeda
Algeria	10	3*	2	al-Multhamun Brigade; al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
Benin	1	0	0	
Chad	1	1	0	
Colombia	9	3*	3	National Liberation Army (ELN); Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)
Egypt	6	0	4	Anjad Misr; Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis; Gama'a al-Islamiyya; Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem
El Salvador	1	2	0	
Guyana	1	0	0	
Haiti	6	3*	0	
Honduras	2	3	0	
Iraq	37	4*	5	Abdulah Azzam Brigades; al-Qaeda Kurdish Battalions; Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS); Kata'ib Hezbollah; Kongra-Gel
Kenya	1	4*	0	
Libya	4	3*	3	Ansar al-shari'a in Benghazi; Ansar el-Shari'a in Darnah; Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
Mexico	14	4*	0	
Nepal	1	1	1	
Nigeria	34	4*	2	Ansaru; Boko Haram
Pakistan	7	4*	4	al-Qaeda; Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM); Lashkar I'Jhangvi; Lashkar-e Tayyiba (LET); Tehrik-I Taliban (TTP)
Panama	4	0	0	
Peru	3	0	1	Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path)
Philippines	6	4*	2	Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP/NPA)
Russia	1	1*	0	
Saudi Arabia	1	1	2	al-Qaeda; al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
Somalia	8	1*	1	Al-shabaab
Sudan	1	3*	0	
Syria	12	4*	3	Al Nusra Front; Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS); Kongra-Gel
Tajikistan	1	0	0	
Ukraine	1	1*	0	
West Bank & Gaza	10	1	7	Abu Nidal Organization (ANO); Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades; Army of Islam; Hamas; Islamic Jihad Group; Palestine Liberation Front (PLF); Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
Yemen	8	3*	0	

Table A3. List of Perpetrators

Perpetrator	Number of Hostages
1920 Revolution Brigade	1
Abu Sayyaf	5
Al Qaeda	7
Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	2
Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)	10
Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades	2
Army of Islam/ Holy Jihad Brigades	1
Asaib al-Haq	2
Baluchistan Liberation United Front	1
Bini-Oru	1
Chechen Rebels	1
Fatah Hawks	1
Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)/ Al Qaeda	1
Hadi Saud	3
Haqqani Network	1
Houthi rebels	4
ISIS	4
Iraqi insurgents	1
Islamic Army in Iraq	1
Islamic Companies	4
Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)	1
Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT)	1
Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)	17
National Liberation Army (ELN)	2
Nusra Front	2
Promised Day Brigades	1
Revenge Brigades	1
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	6
Somali pirates	1
Swords of Righteousness Brigade	1
Taliban	15
Taliban/ Haqqani Network	1
Tawhid and Jihad	3
United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)	3

Note: The remaining perpetrators were described in the media as follows: "armed gang," "armed men," "armed tribesmen," "Bedouin gunmen," "forces loyal to Qaddafi," "gang members," "gunmen," "men posing as Nepalese police," "militant youths," "militants," "pirates," "rebels," "thieves," "tribal warlord," and "unknown."

## Appendix B: Incident-Level Analysis

In addition to analyzing coverage at the level of individual victims, I also measure coverage across hostage-taking incidents. The results are included below in Table B1. Models 1 and 2 test the central hypotheses across all hostages (model 1) and American hostages (model 2); models 3 and 4 add in the incident-level relevant alternatives and controls.

Table B1. News Coverage by Kidnapping Incident (N = 140)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Proportion terrorism stories	6.214*** (0.787)	6.046*** (0.772)	3.761** (1.032)	3.732** (1.035)
Total hostages kidnapped	-0.017* (0.008)	-	-0.002 (-0.016)	-
American hostages	-	-0.024 (0.173)	-	0.089 (0.130)
FTO perpetrator	-	-	0.615 (0.392)	0.569 (0.369)
Muslim perpetrator	-	-	1.234*** (0.355)	1.250*** (0.354)
Proof of life/ video	-	-	0.817 (0.507)	0.834 (0.506)
Constant	3.555*** (0.221)	3.550*** (0.396)	2.815*** (0.195)	2.683*** (0.282)
inflate Proportion terrorism stories	-531.302*** (29.163)	-531.020*** (29.203)	-538.574*** (28.923)	-634.504*** (29.927)
Single hostage	1.444 (0.746)	1.462 (0.783)	1.104 (0.571)	1.080 (0.571)
_Constant	-1.963** (0.684)	-1.991** (0.721)	-1.563*** (0.456)	-1.543*** (0.450)
/				
Inalpha	0.617*** (0.162)	0.630*** (0.167)	0.358** (0.152)	0.352* (0.154)
N	140	140	140	140

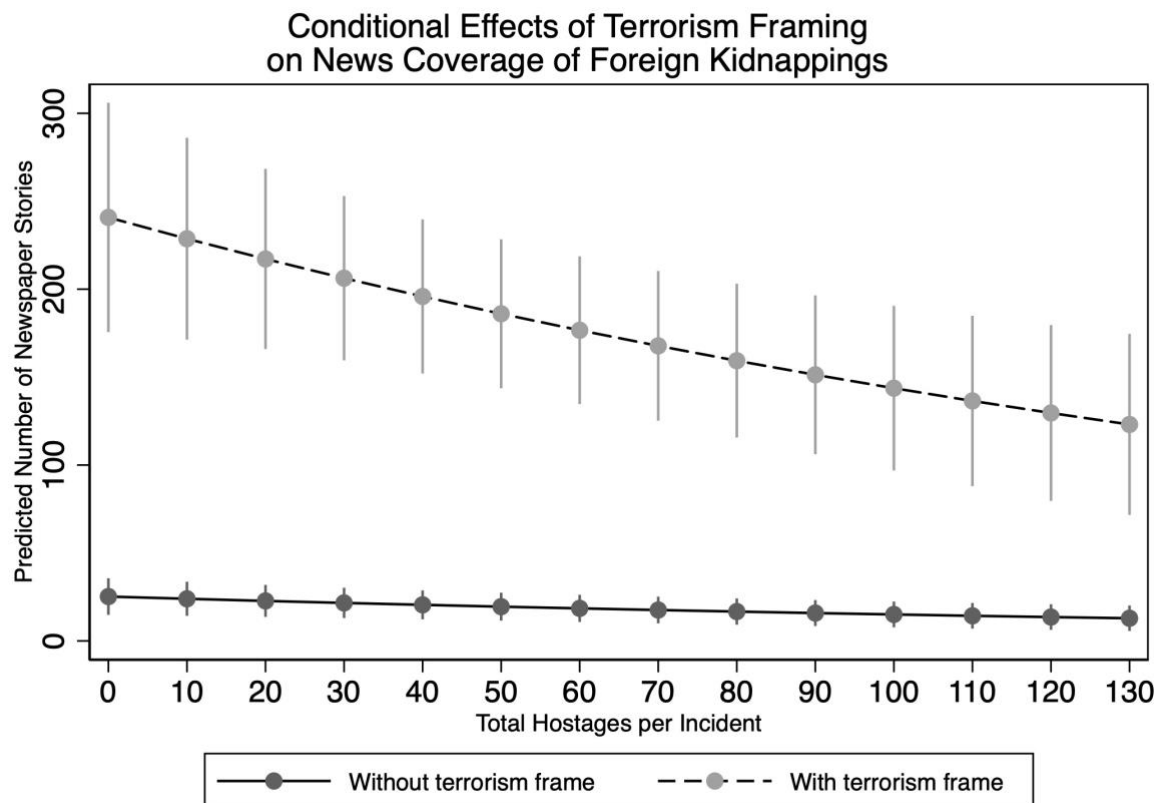
Standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Figure B1 shows the conditional effects of terrorism framing, by the number of total hostages (American or non-American) per attack. This figure illustrates the strong support for these two hypotheses clearly, as well as their important moderating effect: With all other variables held at their means, there are significantly more stories written about kidnappings labeled “terrorism” than those without such framing. This effect is moderated as the

incident's number of hostages increases. This figure on a much larger scale than the similar figure within the body of the paper, as the largest hostage incident (the In Amenas attack in Algeria) had 132 total hostages, including ten Americans.

Figure B1.



## Appendix C: Creating the Dataset and Newspaper Coverage

### *Creating the Dataset*

As described in the paper, I constructed this dataset by gathering all publicly reported instances of American civilians captured around the world since 9/11. While some of these kidnappings were reported in the newspaper, others came from non-news sources. I began with a LexisNexus search of “American hostage,” “American(s) kidnapped,” and “civilian(s) killed” in *The New York Times* during the relevant timeframe, and I read through each result to begin constructing the data. I then expanded this search to all newspapers in the US Newsstream Database. I then sorted the Global Terrorism Database (START 2016) by all kidnapping incidents; using Stata, I collected all cases in which an American is listed among any event hostages. I have included all kidnappings of American journalists listed on the website for the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ 2010), and several cases from the Aid Workers’ Security Database that were included in the Combatting Terrorism Center’s 2015 report (Loertscher and Milton 2015).

From 2005 to 2015, the Consular Affairs Bureau of the State Department posted annual terrorism warnings, including a list of Americans kidnapped in terror attacks each year. These cases include at least one date relevant to captivity and location of the abduction; where enough information existed to identify a unique case, I include such cases in the dataset. I have identified what I believe are several errors on their website (regarding dates and locations of several kidnappings), but requests for clarification have gone unanswered. All incident source links are included in my master dataset, which is available as online supplementary material.

All of the dependent and independent variables in the dataset are coded using extensive searches of each individual hostage, to fill in as much information as I could find about each case. In cases where the victim name was unavailable, I used the best identifying details I could,

often the name of the hostage's employer. This is an imperfect tool, but it best allowed me to search for news attention to cases where the victim's identity was kept secret for privacy reasons. To code information about the perpetrators' FTO status, I used the State Department's list of designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations.

To measure the terrorism framing across stories of each hostage, I augmented each U.S. Newsstream story search with "(AND terroris\*)" to measure how many of the stories included a terrorism/terrorist perpetrator framework. I hand coded each of these observations, reading through the stories to determine if they were relevant to the case, or false positives. This is measured as a relative, rather than absolute value, as the count of terrorism framing stories will be a function of the total number of stories, the dependent variable in the model. As referenced in the paper, a complete, redacted set of international kidnappings could provide greater insights to scholars, policymakers, and practitioners and represents a much-needed data source for future investigation.

### *Newspaper Coverage*

While many Americans get their news from television or social media sources, newspapers remain an appropriate source for present analysis. Given that newspapers do not have strict constraints on limited on airtime like television and radio, newspapers are able to cover a greater number of stories each day, with larger variation in the length of each story (Kearns et al., 2019). Moreover, even as they developed social media presence, there is evidence that terror groups relied on traditional media sources to disseminate their propaganda through the 2000s (Nacos 2016). While the trend toward non-traditional media may accelerate in future years, I follow existing research in using newspaper attention for present analysis (Hayes 2008; Kearns et al., 2019).

The U.S. Newsstream database includes blogs, podcasts, websites; magazines;



newspapers; other sources; scholarly journals; trade journals; and wire feeds. I only include newspaper and wire hits (not blogs, podcasts, other sources) for three central reasons. First, newspapers are widely available in all parts of the United States, and have long served as a common source for scholarly examination of media matters (Hayes 2008; Kearns et al., 2019). Second, unlike blogs, podcasts, and scholarly journals, they are curated by journalist gatekeepers. Third, some of these sources – particularly blogs and podcasts – are relatively new as a source of news, and therefore would not be constant over the years of this study.

I did not differentiate among relative placement of news stories, nor the amount of text dedicated to an individual kidnapping incident, both of which may serve as relevant investigations for future research.

## Appendix D: State Department Warnings Coding

Table A2 in Appendix A presents the list of countries where the 208 kidnappings took place, along with a “State Department Warning” level. The chart below provides the details of that coding.

Table E1. State Department Warning

Threat	Definition	Countries	Examples
High (x = 4)	State Department warning includes a specific and high-risk kidnapping alert for Americans; the country has a recent history of Americans kidnapped and killed	Cameroon <sup>^</sup> , Iraq <sup>*^</sup> , Kenya <sup>^</sup> , Lebanon <sup>*^</sup> , Mexico <sup>*^</sup> , Nigeria <sup>^</sup> , Pakistan <sup>^</sup> , Philippines <sup>*^</sup> , Somalia <sup>^</sup> , Syria <sup>*^</sup> , Venezuela <sup>^</sup>	"The number of kidnappings throughout Mexico is of particular concern and appears to be on the rise. According to statistics published by the Mexican Secretaria de Gobernacion (SEGOB), in 2013 kidnappings nationwide increased 20 percent over the previous year... Mexico suffered an estimated 105,682 kidnappings in 2012; only 1,317 were reported to the police. Police have been implicated in some of these incidents. Both local and expatriate communities have been victimized. Nearly 70 kidnappings of U.S. citizens were reported to the U.S. Embassy and consulates in Mexico between January and June of 2014."
Substantial (x = 3)	State Department warning includes substantial risk of kidnapping, but the risk has either been reduced in recent years, or is primarily targeted at non-Americans.	Afghanistan <sup>^</sup> , Algeria <sup>^</sup> , Colombia <sup>*^</sup> , Djibouti, Democratic Republic of the Congo <sup>^</sup> , Haiti <sup>^</sup> , Honduras, Libya <sup>*^</sup> , Mauritania, Niger <sup>^</sup> , Sudan <sup>^</sup> , Yemen <sup>*^</sup>	"The incidence of kidnapping in Colombia has diminished significantly from its peak in 2000. However, kidnapping remains a threat. Terrorist groups and other criminal organizations continue to kidnap and hold civilians, including foreigners, for ransom. No one is immune from kidnapping on the basis of occupation, nationality, or other factors. The U.S. government places the highest priority on the safe recovery of kidnapped U.S. citizens, but it is U.S. policy not to make concessions to kidnappers."
Non-kidnap targeting (x = 2)	State Department warning emphasizes crimes and violence targeted at Americans, though no specific threat of kidnapping. This includes terror attacks, murders, robbery, and unjust imprisonment.	El Salvador, Iran <sup>^</sup> , North Korea	"Since January 2010, 33 U.S. citizens have been murdered in El Salvador including a nine-year-old child in December 2013. During the same time period, 366 U.S. citizens reported having their passports stolen, while others were victims of violent crimes. Typical crimes in El Salvador include extortion, mugging, highway assault, home invasion, and car theft. There have also been cases reported in which criminals observe and follow customers making withdrawals at ATMs and banks, then rob them on the road or at a residence."
No specific targeting (x = 1)	State Department warning emphasizes systematic danger in the country, but no specific targeting of Americans.	Burkina Faso <sup>^</sup> , Burundi, Central African Republic <sup>^</sup> , Chad, Eritrea, Guinea, Israel/West Bank/ Gaza, Lesoto, Liberia, Mali <sup>^</sup> , Mozambique, Russian Federation <sup>^</sup> , Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan <sup>^</sup> , Ukraine <sup>^</sup>	"Armed groups operate in Burundi. Weapons are easy to obtain and some ex-combatants have turned to crime or political violence. Crime, often committed by groups of armed bandits or street children, poses the highest risk for foreign visitors to both Bujumbura and Burundi in general. Exchanges of gunfire and grenade attacks are not uncommon but are usually not directed at foreigners."

Notes: Countries marked with \* indicate that they are in the top 20 countries for kidnapping risk globally; Countries marked with ^ indicate that they are on the State Department's 2019 list of countries with elevated kidnapping risk for Americans—a list with no discernible basis.

## Appendix E: References

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