

Overall assessment:

We did quite well. None of the reviews are critically damaging and they all revolve around issues of clarification. Indeed, I think that much of it is a “love-fest”. In part, this is explained by the fact that we are not asking for a tremendous amount of money, which given the tentative nature of the enterprise is reasonable. After we have finished our initial examination, we can then (with cause) push for the larger effort.

Essentially, there are 4 points that require our attention. All are doable and I think that we can easily meet them by the January deadline.

- 1) We need to address the coding procedure. Numerous reviewers (especially the one that gave us a “poor”) highlight that they are not exactly clear what we will be coding. This is fair.
 - a. For example, they are not clear if Amnesty international already includes the 5 variables that we are interested in: NEITHER ARE WE (BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT SEEN THEM), BUT I BELIEVE THE ANSWER IS YES IT IS THERE BUT WE MUST EXTRACT IT. I SEE NO REASON THAT WE CANNOT USE THE SAME CRITERIA EMPLOYED BY GIBNEY/POE/TATE AND/OR CINGRANELLI AND RICHARDS. BOTH OF THESE PROJECTS HAVE RECEIVED NSF FUNDING.
 - b. they are not clear if we are coding from narratives or country reports, they are not clear on how feasible our effort is: NARRATIVE REPORTS
 - c. the “poor” reviewer is not at all happy about the fact that we keep talking about the different types of torture but we have not identified why this is important: SEE POINT 2 BELOW
 - d. we never address the fact that much of the information that we want will not be included within the relevant documents for it simply cannot be: REASONABLE COMMENT
 - e. we do not explicitly address where the structural characteristics will come from (a point noted by others): WE JUST NEED TO REEMPHASIZE THAT WE ARE DRAWING UPON EXISTING RESEARCH
 - f. we do not explicitly address how we overcome the deficiencies with the sources that we criticize. AS AUDREY HAS POINTED OUT TO ME, THE ANSWER IS SIMPLE: EVERYONE’S EFFORTS ARE LIMITED BECAUSE THEY HAVE RELIED UPON GROSS AGGREGATIONS REPORTED IN COUNTRY REPORTS. THERE ARE MORE SPECIALIZED REPORTS ON TORTURE PROVIDED BY THE SAME ORGANIZATIONS THAT WE WILL USE. WE WERE NOT CLEAR ON THIS POINT.

- 2) The “poor” and “good” reviewers remarks that they would like us to discuss the reasons why variation in torture is interesting theoretically as well as practically. IT SEEMS AS IF WE CAN EASILY DEVELOP A THEORY WHICH STIPULATES THAT THE TYPE OF TORTURE LIKELY USED IS RELATED TO NUMEROUS FACTORS:
 - a. THE LOCATION OF ACTIVITY (PUBLIC, PRIVATE, BOTH),

- b. THE OBJECTIVE (INFORMATION, REVENGE, BOTH) THE TYPE OF CONFLICT CONFRONTED (OVERT, COVERT, BOTH),
- c. THE PACE OF THE CONTEST (THE AUTHORITIES ARE WINNING, THE CHALLENGERS ARE WINNING, AND IT IS UNCLEAR),
- d. THE AFTEREFFECT (PHYSICAL PAIN OF VICTIM, FEAR WITHIN TARGET, BOTH)

THESE DIFFERENCES NOT ONLY RELATE TO CAUSES BUT ALSO TO INTERVENTIONS.

- 3) One of the “very goods” asked a very simple but important question: how will the accuracy of the reports be identified? WE NEVER ADDRESS THIS BUT I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN DEVELOP SOME SIMPLE DECISION RULES.
- 4) The “good” review pushes us on the aggregated nature of the data collection effort – which they identify is a “major drawback” in existing literature. AFTER SPEAKING WITH AUDREY, WHO IDENTIFIED THAT INFORMATION ON GUATAMALA AND ONE OTHER COUNTRY WOULD ALLOW US TO EXPLORE A MORE DISAGGREGATED COMPILATION – SETTING UP A LARGER EFFORT LATER, I SEE NO REASON WHY WE DO NOT INCORPORATE THE DISAGGREGATED DATA COLLECTION EFFORT INTO THE PILOT PROJECT. I CAN EASILY GENERATE SOME HYPOTHESES ABOUT SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL VARIATION WITHIN CASES. WE CAN ALSO RELATE THESE AGGREGATION/DISAGGREGATION ISSUES TO THE INTERVENTION ARGUMENT.