Two Perspectives on Civilian Fatalities in the 2003 Iraq War

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IBC vs. Pentagon’s Iraq War Logs

- **IBC**
  - UK NGO
  - **Media**, Iraqi government, morgues
  - Violent civilian deaths from beginning up to now

- **Iraq War Logs**
  - Pentagon’s archives
  - Leaked by Wikileaks in 2010 (Manning and Assange): “A scoop of the century”
  - Violent deaths between 2004 and 2009 (except May 2004 and March 2009)

- **Similarities**
  - Incident-based records (see picture)
  - Persistency
  - Behavioural differences between US military authorities and media
IBC vs. Pentagon’s Iraq War Logs cont.

- **IBC**
  - Only civilians (non-combatants)
  - **Minimum** and maximum
  - Police in non-paramilitary roles (i.e., traffic police)

- **Iraq War Logs**
  - **Civilians**: Civilians
  - **Host Nation**: Iraqi security forces (police)
  - **Enemy**: Insurgents and anti-coalition forces
  - **Friendly**: Coalition forces
## IBC vs. Pentagon’s Iraq War Logs cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Pentagon’s War Logs</th>
<th>IBC Dataset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Categories</strong></td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Host nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of deaths (Baghdad)</strong></td>
<td>66,081 (56%)</td>
<td>15,196 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of incidents</strong></td>
<td>34,009</td>
<td>8,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deaths per incidents</strong></td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>70 months during 2004-2009 (except May 2004 and Mar 2009)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IBC vs. Pentagon’s Iraq War Logs cont.

IBC

War logs

27000  64000  15000
Monthly Civilian Fatalities

Monthly death toll

Kolmogorov-Smirnov equality test $p$ value = .000
Without 2004 and 2005 = .280
Forecasting with VAR
Conclusion

- Both are incomplete lists
- Both are consistent with each other if excluding 2004 and 2005
- Comparative analysis could provide a clue of significantly different standards between US military authorities and media in counting violent civilian deaths
  - Media may have inflated the number of violent deaths
  - US military authorities might have been…
    - Less attentive in counting civilian deaths at the initial period
    - Less mindful in distinguishing civilian losses out of insurgent deaths in major military offensives
Conclusion cont.

“We don’t do body counts”
-Gen Tommy Franks, 2002-

- Political implications
  - Precise counting is requisite
    - To enhance civilian protection
    - To understand evolutionary intensity of war
  - If IBC is closer to true number, the US seems to have failed to grasp reality in Iraq at the initial period
  - Great transparency and consistency will help military authorities
    - To understand spread of violence
    - To prevent unnecessary escalation