

# Is Amnesty International Strategic, and Does it Matter? Evidence from a Split-Population Model<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Presentation at the International Political Economy Society Annual Meeting,  
Cambridge, 12-13 November 2010.

# Introduction

- ▶ **INGOs “Name & Shame” States**

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- ▶ INGOs “Name & Shame” States
- ▶ Is their “Naming & Shaming” strategic?
- ▶ Do organizational incentives conflict w/ credibility?
- ▶ **If so, does it matter for scholars studying rights?**

# AI and Rights Data

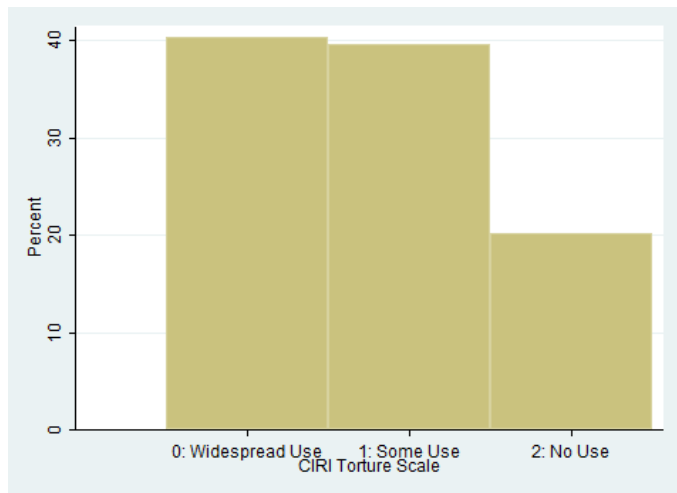
- ▶ **Political Terror Scale (PTS), Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI), etc.**

# AI and Rights Data

- ▶ Political Terror Scale (PTS), Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI), etc.
- ▶ **Data biased?**

# CIRI, 1981-2007

## Torture Practices





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# Why Might Data be Biased?

- ▶ Demand for Labor and Donations
- ▶ News: If it bleeds, it leads.
- ▶ Heterogeneous Information
- ▶ **Must be balanced against credibility**

# An Informal Model of HR Reporting

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- ▶ **State anticipates “Naming & Shaming” and acts accordingly.**



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- ▶ State better informed than Local NGOs
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- ▶ State anticipates “Naming & Shaming” and acts accordingly.
- ▶ **INGO confers with Local NGOs, then “Names & Shames.”**

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- ▶ Exaggerated claim that State is in the Worst Violators' Category rises as:
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  - ▶ Number of Local NGOs rises *given* that Size of Winning Coalition relative to Selectorate is sufficiently large;
  - ▶ **controlling for the usual suspects.**



# A Statistical Model

- ▶ **Zero-Inflated Ordered Probit (Harris and Zhao 2007)**

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- ▶ **Gamma Equation**
  - ▶ **Factors influencing probability of “always zero”**

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- ▶ Zero-Inflated Ordered Probit (Harris and Zhao 2007)
- ▶ Gamma Equation
  - ▶ Factors influencing probability of “always zero”
- ▶ **Beta Equation**
  - ▶ **Factors influencing rights abuses (as reported by AI), given accurate report**

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## ▶ Gamma Equation



$$a_i^* = \mathbf{z}_i' \boldsymbol{\gamma} + u_i \tag{1}$$
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$$\Pr(y_i) = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \Pr(y_i = 0 | \mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{z}_i) = [1 - \Phi(\mathbf{z}'_i \boldsymbol{\gamma})] + [\Phi(\mathbf{z}'_i \boldsymbol{\gamma})\Phi(-\mathbf{x}'_i \boldsymbol{\beta})] \\ \Pr(y_i = 1 | \mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{z}_i) = \Phi(\mathbf{z}'_i \boldsymbol{\gamma})[\Phi(\mu - \mathbf{x}'_i \boldsymbol{\beta}) - \Phi(-\mathbf{x}'_i \boldsymbol{\beta})] \\ \Pr(y_i = 2 | \mathbf{x}_i, \mathbf{z}_i) = \Phi(\mathbf{z}'_i \boldsymbol{\gamma})[1 - \Phi(\mu - \mathbf{x}'_i \boldsymbol{\beta})] \end{array} \right\} \quad (3)$$

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  - ▶ GDP/capita (natural log)
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  - ▶ **Dissident Violence**

# Results (Gamma)

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Media Reports	-.395** (.165)
W/S	.898** (.438)
INGO's	.001*** (.0002)
Terror Attacks	-.002 (.002)
Constant	.874** (.459)
Observations	1504

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\* $p < 0.10$ ; \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

## Results (Beta)

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W/S	-.161 (.388)
INGO's	-.002** (.001)
W/S X INGO's	.002*** (.001)
CAT Ratification	-.337*** (.115)
GDP per capita (logged)	.148* (.079)
Population (logged)	-.273*** (.064)
Terror Attacks	-.004*** (.001)
Constant	3.98*** (1.24)
$\tau_2$	1.57*** (.089)
Observations	1504

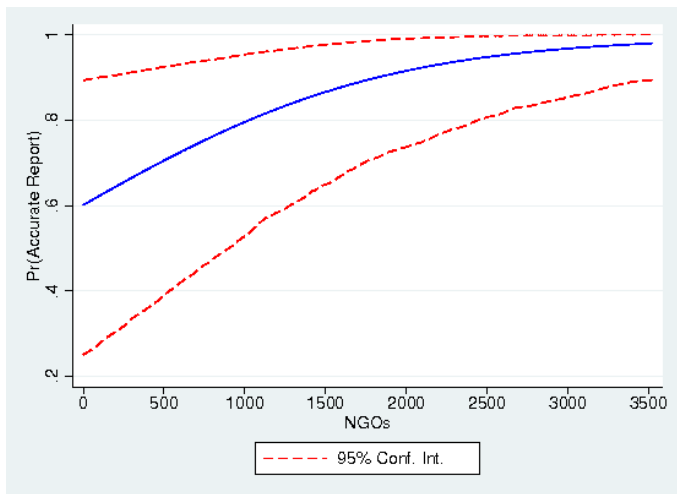
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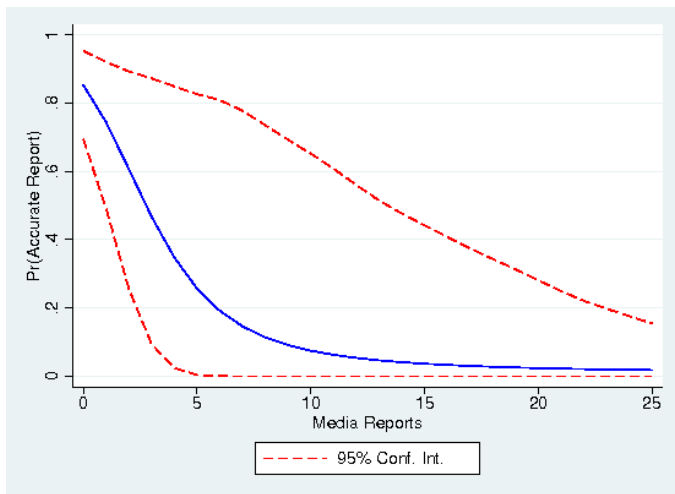
# Substantive Effects (Gamma)

Figure: Effect of NGO Presence on Probability of Accurate Report



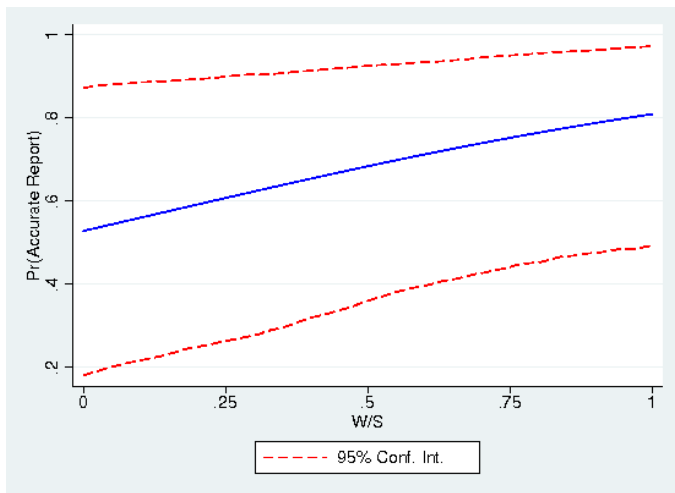
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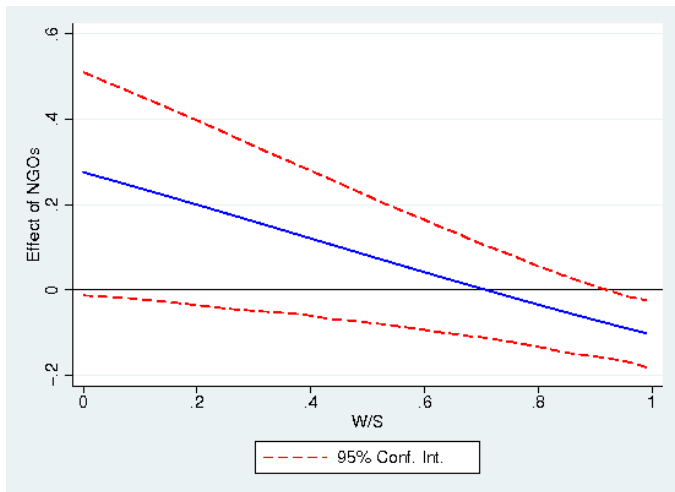
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Figure: Effect of W/S on Probability of Accurate Report



# Substantive Effects (Beta)

Figure: Effect of NGO Presence on Probability of Widespread Torture as W/S Changes



# Yes, they are strategic. Does it matter?

- ▶ No, credibility trumps organizational incentives (in CIRI data)
- ▶ Mean probability of “correct” detection in sample is .99
- ▶ Predicted “always” zero rate of roughly 1%
- ▶ Ordered Probit estimates not biased under these circumstances (Monte Carlos)

# Monte Carlo Results, Ordered Probit

Figure: Bias in Ordered Probit Estimates

