A Dynamic Life-course Approach to Genocide

Hollie Nyseth Brehm[1], Christopher Uggen[2],
and Suzy McElrath[2]

Abstract

We argue in this article that the study of genocide would benefit from the application and use of theoretical tools that criminologists have long had at their disposal, specifically, conception and theorization surrounding the life course. Using the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi as a case study, we detail how the building blocks of life-course criminology can be effectively used in analyses of (1) risk factors for the onset of genocide, (2) trajectories and duration of genocidal violence, and (3) desistance from genocidal crime and transitions after genocide. We conclude by highlighting the conceptual gains for research on genocide and political conflict by briefly discussing the analytic implications for future genocide research.

Twenty-three years ago, a country the size of Maryland experienced a cataclysmic crime wave. In less than four months, 1 million people were killed, an estimated 250,000 were raped, countless others were tortured, and thousands of homes were destroyed. We write, of course, of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In this article, we argue that criminological theory, and especially its stands surrounding development and life-course processes, is well suited for studying and understanding genocide and provides an important set of conceptual and analytic tools for this task. Just as life-course thinking has revolutionized the study of more prosaic criminal activities, a dynamic life-course approach to genocide has the potential to simultaneously inform both genocide scholarship and criminology. Drawing on the 1994 genocide in Rwanda as an illustrative example, we show how some of the building blocks central to life-course criminology operate before, during, and after genocide at the individual, organizational, subnational, and national levels. These include (1) *risk factors*

for the *onset* of genocide, (2) *trajectories* and *duration* of genocide, and (3) *desistance* from genocidal crime and *transitions* after genocide.

Genocide as Crime

Although the term "genocide" typically invokes images of the Nazi Holocaust, systematic violence has long been implicated in territorial conquest. Throughout history, empires routinely expanded their boundaries through genocidal means that were understood as customary or even celebrated as heroic (Savelsberg 2010). In time, however, the actions that constitute genocide have come to be viewed as

[1]The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA
[2]University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA

Corresponding Author:
Hollie Nyseth Brehm, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University, 238 Townshend Hall, 1885 Neil Ave. Mall, Columbus, OH 43210, USA.
Email: brehm.84@osu.edu

intolerable, and a criminal label has been applied to such actions.

Horrified by the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, a Polish-Jewish lawyer named Rafael Lemkin coined the term "genocide" in the early 1940s to denote a coordinated plan of actions intended to destroy a group's foundations of life. Shortly thereafter, the United Nations adopted the term in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, defining genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such . . ." (1948). This definition has been included in subsequent treaties, such as the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court, although it has also been expanded through case law (e.g., the summary judgment for Jean-Paul Akayesu) and scholarship.

Genocide violates international law and causes great harm, meeting criteria of crime both as a violation of criminal law (Sutherland, Cressey, and Luckenbill 1992) and as a form of social harm (Hillyard and Tombs 2007). Furthermore, while genocide is constituted by a collection of actions, many discrete acts committed during genocide—such as murder, rape, and robbery—are considered crimes in virtually every criminal code. Genocide also shares much in common with other forms of crime. For instance, it is defined by actions targeting social groups, much like hate crime; is typically committed through co-offending networks, much like gang-related violence; and often involves the state, much like state-corporate crime.

Due in part to these similarities, several criminologists played active roles in the criminalization of genocide. Most notably, Sheldon Glueck (1946)—best known today for his criminal careers research with Eleanor Glueck—helped lay the foundation for the prosecution of prominent Nazis (Rheinstein 1947). Although criminologists have generally been slow to follow Glueck's lead, some criminologists have applied well-tested theories to the crime of genocide (e.g., Alvarez 1997; Savelsberg 2010), while others have developed new or refined models (e.g., Hagan and Rymond-Richmond 2009; Karstedt 2013;

Rafter 2016). A criminology of genocide is far from established, however, and many potentially valuable innovations—including those in life-course criminology—have yet to be theorized. We believe they may have great utility.

Life-course Thinking and Genocide

Following Elder, Johnson, and Crosnoe (2003:10), we view the life course as a broad theoretical orientation "that guides research on human lives within context." Life-course perspectives employ diverse methodologies and data to study social pathways in historical time and place. Foundational texts such as Shaw's (1930) *The Jack-roller* and Sutherland's (1937) *Professional Thief* used life histories to depict dynamic individual criminal careers. More recently, Sampson and Laub (1993; Laub and Sampson 2003) adopted a mixed methods approach to identify the determinants of continuity and change for hundreds of men from adolescence to age 70. Despite methodological differences, these works shared the hallmark of developmental and life-course research: documenting change rather than stability in criminal behavior and situating this change within larger historical and structural contexts (Elder 1998; Sampson and Laub 1993).

In many ways, life-course thinking revolutionized criminology by establishing connections between life events and criminal behavior and by analyzing how social structures dynamically influence the causes and the consequences of crime. This scholarship often focuses on the individual, although "life-course" studies of institutions and organizations have also yielded productive insights. Research on terror organizations has revealed developmental trajectories in attack patterns, for instance (LaFree, Yang, and Crenshaw 2009), as well as the factors that influence their demise (e.g., Cronin 2009).

These life-course approaches complement genocide scholarship that emphasizes patterns within seemingly chaotic events, and studies of genocide have likewise examined dynamic actors and actions within broader structural contexts. Here, we suggest that life-course thinking will facilitate understanding of time

and process at multiple analytic levels, some of which have previously been overlooked. In addition, we argue that concepts from life-course theory—especially pertaining to the societal and structural factors that influence change over time—can inform emerging empirical research in genocide studies. To illustrate, we consider the case of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. After providing some brief background on the case, we address four basic levels of analysis—individual, organizational, subnational, and national levels.[1] We place particular emphasis on the individual level due to its prominence in life-course criminology, and we consider each level before, during, and after genocide.[2]

Background: The Case of Rwanda

The case of Rwanda aptly illustrates the value of life-course thinking as applied to genocide. The 1884 Berlin Conference assigned Rwanda to Germany, marking the beginning of the colonial era. When Germany lost territory after World War I, Belgium gained colonial authority in Rwanda. New colonial officials racialized existing identities by attempting to "document" distinct phenotypical characteristics and creating ID cards that reified ethnic categories (Mamdani 2001). Colonial authorities also enacted policies that privileged Tutsis, an ethnic minority (Lemarchand 1970; Newbury 1998).

As independence drew near during the late 1950s, many colonial authorities shifted their support to Rwandan Hutus, who had begun to express discontent at years of mistreatment despite their numerical majority. A Hutu emancipation movement emerged, culminating in Rwandan independence in 1962 and a Hutu president. New political leaders suggested that Tutsis were to blame for the previous marginalization of Hutus. As Hutus stepped into positions of power, tens of thousands of Tutsis were killed, many more fled the country, and those remaining faced overt discrimination in employment and education.

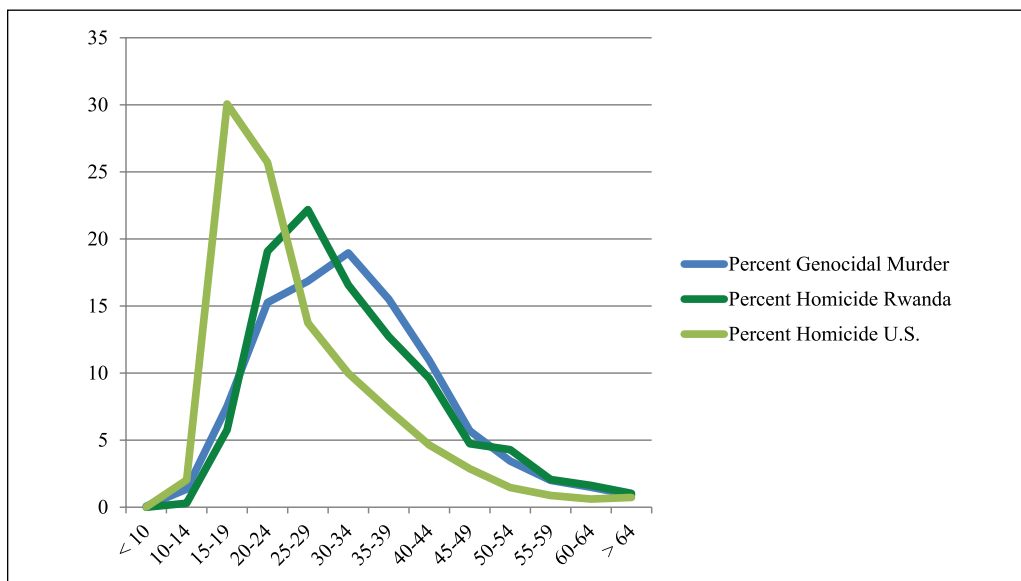Fear of Tutsis increased following the 1972 Burundian genocide, in which a Tutsi-led government targeted Hutus. The Rwandan government seized this opportunity to incite fear of Tutsis across the country, and some Rwandan Hutus began to worry about attacks from Rwandan Tutsi. In the following year, General Juvénal Habyarimana, the most senior officer in the army, rose to power in a coup d'état, capitalizing on panic within Rwanda and on political rifts in Hutu political parties. Rwanda became a one-party state, and sporadic violence and discrimination against Tutsis continued (Prunier 1995; Straus 2006).

Tensions escalated in 1990 when a Tutsi-led army of refugees, known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), invaded Rwanda. The attack and resulting civil war placed great strain on the government. It also offered the government a way to garner support by rallying Rwandans against the RPF and, by extension, all Tutsis. After a year and a half of violent conflict, peace negotiations began. Many government officials feared losing power through the peace process. Sporadic violence and inflammatory rhetoric targeting Tutsis escalated, and the 1993 assassination of Burundi's first democratically elected Hutu president stoked unease (Hintjens 1999). Then, on April 6, 1994, unknown assailants shot the Rwandan president's plane as it was landing in the capital, killing the occupants immediately. Several hours later, targeted killing of Tutsi leaders and moderate Hutus began, marking the beginning of the genocide.[3]

Before Genocide: Risk Factors and Onset

Hundreds of thousands of people—including both soldiers and civilians—took part in the subsequent violence. Life-course theories regarding the onset of criminal behavior and risk factors for violence have yet to be applied to genocide but hold much promise for explaining why people participate in genocidal crime. In much the same way, these theories should be extended to risk factors and onsets at the organizational, subnational, and national levels.

At the individual level, genocide scholars have attempted to profile people who participate in genocide, with many researchers suggesting that they are typically young men in

Figure 1. Age-crime curve of genocidal murder in Rwanda, homicide in Rwanda, and homicide in the United States
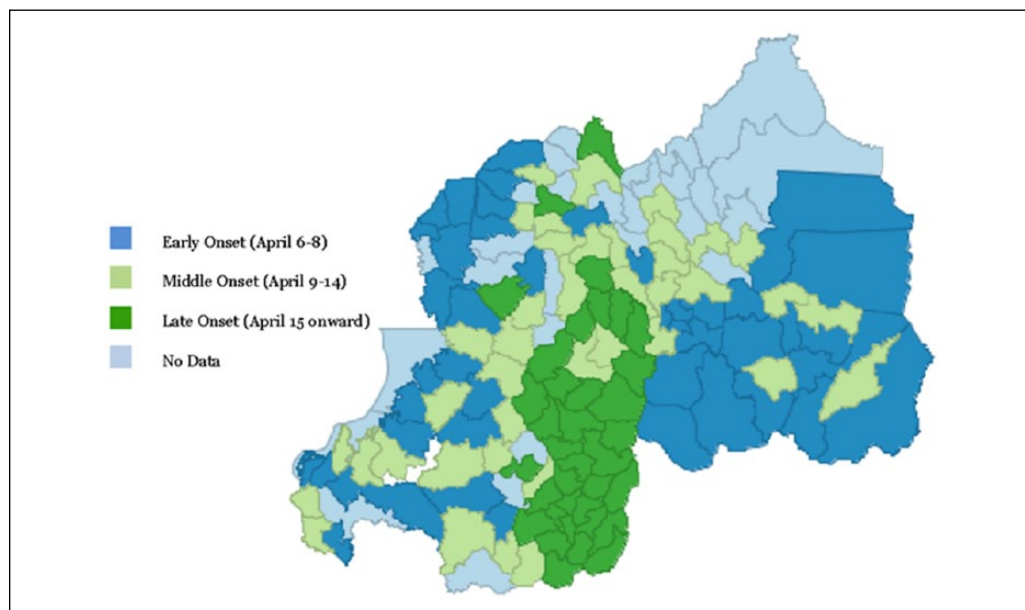*Note.* Please see Nyseth Brehm, Uggen, and Gasanabo (2016) for data definitions and the periods covered in these data.

their teens and early twenties (Des Forges 1999; Jones 2002). However, new data from Rwanda suggest that the majority of trials in the postgenocide court system involved people who were, on average, 34 years old in 1994. As seen in Figure 1, the age distribution for participating in killing or other crimes against people during the genocide is markedly older than the age distribution for participating in homicide in other contexts, including the United States and Rwanda.

A dynamic life-course perspective suggests that we look to age-, sex-, and ethnic-specific role expectations to understand the age of onset in participation in genocide (Laub and Sampson 1993; MacLeod, Grove, and Farrington 2012). In Rwanda, the government framed Tutsis as a threat to the nation, and adult Hutu men were expected to defend their families. This suggests that some citizens could "age into" genocide participation as they take up the duties of adult citizenship, just as life-course criminology has documented that delinquent youth typically "age out" of crime as they fulfill similar duties and obligations. This process likely explains the older age-crime distribution observed in Rwanda and

illustrates the value of applying life-course criminology to genocide (Nyseth Brehm, Uggen, and Gasanabo 2016). Future work can similarly assess whether life-course transitions—such as marriage, parenthood, or employment—influence participation, given the salience of these transitions in studies of crime (Sampson, Laub, and Wimer 2006). These statuses and transitions could also be associated with variation in the onset of individuals' participation during genocide—such as whether they participate immediately or several weeks later—although such factors have yet to be explored.[4]

Thinking about genocidal violence in terms of onset and risk factors may also prove useful at other analytic levels. Militias (like the well-known *Interahamwe)* and other organizations, such as Radio RTLM (a hate-speech radio station), predated the genocide and became increasingly instrumental as it progressed. Scholars could analyze the factors that lead to the "birth" of such organizations and their propaganda arms, much as criminologists analyze the origins of street gangs, hate groups, and transnational criminal organizations such as drug cartels. In the contemporary United

Figure 2. Commune onset of genocidal violence in 1994 Rwanda.
Note. See Nyseth Brehm (2014) for a detailed description of these data used to create this figure and additional information on the communities without data.

States, for example, sociologists are similarly identifying risk factors for the formation and public acceptance of alt-right political organizations (Bail 2014). King (2009) likewise takes a life-course perspective on the birth of police organizations, pointing to legitimation needs within communities and local political climates in understanding their origins.

We can also identify the risk factors and onset of genocide at subnational levels during genocides, although few scholars have done so to date. As Figure 2 illustrates, each community in Rwanda essentially operated on its own "clock" during the genocide, with killings starting immediately in some places and much later in others. McDoom (2014) suggests that elite competition for control and ethnic segregation influenced variation in onset, while Straus (2006) and Campbell (2015) likewise highlight the role of local elites. The question of why communities experience distinct onsets of violence could also be informed by studies of crime rates across subnational regions (e.g., Sampson and Groves 1989). Indeed, the notion that crime unfolds differently in distinct places has long been a hallmark of criminological inquiry.

Ecological studies of subnational crime consequently point toward many other structural factors (such as employment levels, community cohesion, and signs of social and physical disorder) that may influence the onset of violence at various subnational levels but that have yet to be applied to the onset of genocide (Sampson and Groves 1989; Nyseth Brehm 2014).[5]

Finally, a focus on risk factors and onset extends easily to the country level. This is not new to genocide scholars, who have identified state-level risk factors of genocide such as civil wars and exclusionary ideologies (Goldsmith et al. 2013; Harff 2003).[6] This work has also placed genocidal violence within historical trajectories (e.g., colonialism) and regional dynamics (e.g., violence in Burundi), aligning with life-course criminology's emphasis on situating change within larger structural contexts. Cutting-edge research in this area is now analyzing the triggers of violence—such as the assassination of the Rwandan president—to better theorize why some places where risk factors are present experience genocide while others do not (Straus 2015). In much the same way, studies of crime have

documented how triggers vary across developmental states (Blokland and Nieuwbeerta 2005; Loeber et al. 1991). Applying this insight could lead to important findings regarding variation in the triggers of genocide across historical time and societal contexts, such as the political system.

During Genocide: Trajectories and Duration

Once genocide begins, violence ebbs and flows across time. Such dynamic patterns of action lie at the heart of life-course thinking, and criminologists have accordingly examined the trajectories and related durations of offending throughout the life course. We suggest that analyses of individuals' trajectories and duration both during an episode of genocide as well as across their life course will bring new insights and likewise consider trajectories and durations of violence at organizational, subnational, and national levels.
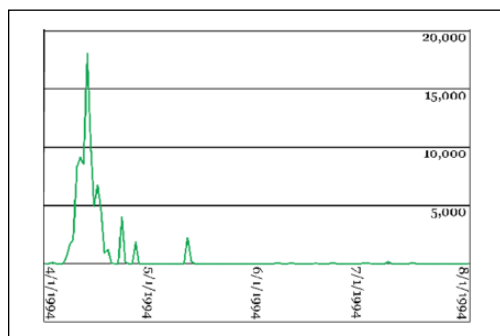
Scholars have yet to understand the trajectories of people who commit genocide, and multiple motives, identities, and contexts likely influence their actions at different times (Fujii 2009). Genocide scholars have recently suggested that categories such as "victim," "perpetrator," or "bystander" are consequently problematic, as some Rwandans participated in violence one day, rescued someone the next, and were subsequently victimized (Campbell 2015; Luft 2015). This dynamic view of action aligns with well-established life-course research noting that the world cannot be neatly divided into strict categories of offenders and nonoffenders. Thus, some of the factors found to influence trajectories of offending at different points during the life course—such as friends who commit crime, drug and alcohol use, or a stake in conformity (Piquero, Farrington, and Blumstein 2003)—may consequently prove useful in understanding individual trajectories of participation during genocide. Genocide scholars could likewise assess the overlap between offending and victimization, following research on homicide and other crimes that identifies high-risk victim-offender groups likely to experience both phenomena (Jennings, Piquero, and Reingle 2012).

In addition, the individual rate of offending surely varies during genocidal violence. Some people committed a single murder in Rwanda, while others committed multiple killings, although little is known about their distinctive characteristics or trajectories. Studies in life-course criminology seek to distinguish life-course trajectories of high- and low-rate offenders and have documented variation in age, environmental factors, and type of crime among these groups (Piquero, Sullivan, and Farrington 2010). These insights should be applied toward understanding the individual rate of offending during genocide. For instance, our preliminary data suggest that high-rate offenders in Rwanda (those who were found guilty of at least five instances of genocidal murder) were more likely to be in their late teens and early twenties than in their thirties. Much more remains to be understood, such as whether a small group of individuals were responsible for a large proportion of the violence (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin 1987). Researchers could also assess the life histories of those who participate in genocide to theorize differences between the short-term offenders with no previous criminal record and those whose participation in genocide occurred within a longer line of criminal activities.

Genocidal organizations follow trajectories as well. For instance, the trajectory of Rwanda's *Interahamwe*—which had great activity some days and much less on others (Des Forges 1999)—could be compared with the trajectories of other violent militias or the national army. Analyses of the ebbs and flows in this collective action could specifically be informed by studies of ebbs and flows of gang violence. For instance, Papachristos, Hureau, and Braga (2013) examine how gang-level characteristics (e.g., size), neighborhood-level characteristics (e.g., poverty), spatial claims, and networks influence patterns of gang violence over time.

Life-course criminology likewise suggests ecological units (such as neighborhoods or regions) follow distinct trajectories of crime and disorder (e.g., Sampson 2012). Particular

Figure 3. Estimated killings per day in Kibuye prefecture, April–August, 1994.
Note. These data (Davenport and Stam 2012) are estimated with much error and are used for illustrative purposes only.

communities and regions in Rwanda also saw different trajectories of violence, as depicted in Figure 3, which shows estimated ebbs and flows in violence in a region in Western Rwanda. A comparison of multiple trajectories across communities could distinguish those marked by early and late onset and by the chronic or episodic nature of the violence, which could in turn be informed by an analysis of community characteristics associated with crime rates, such as marriage rates or population mobility (Sampson and Grove 1989; Nyseth Brehm 2017).

The trajectories of violence could also be examined within an episode of genocide. In Rwanda, country-level violence peaked in April and then gradually declined, although there were certainly ebbs and flows in country-level patterns of killing, displacement, and other forms of violence (Des Forges 1999). Such state-level trajectories of genocidal violence are likely influenced by structural factors and turning points, such as international interventions or the actions of particular leaders. Scholars could also consider comparisons of country-level trajectories and durations of genocide, and studies of the factors that influence variation in country-level crime rates— such as income inequality or type of government—may inform such endeavors (Krahn, Hartnagel, and Gartrell 1986). Finally, just as individual-level trajectories during genocide could be contextualized within an
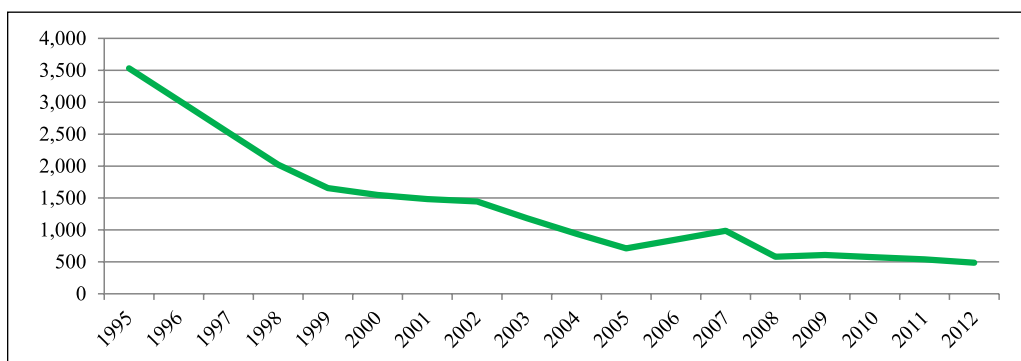
individual's life course, country-level trajectories of violence could be contextualized within each country's historical patterns of violence (Karstedt 2012).

After Genocide: Desistance and Transitions

People who participate in genocide eventually stop (or desist from) genocidal crime, and organizations, subnational regions, and countries likewise see the end of violence and experience subsequent transitions. Yet, comparatively little scholarship examines the processes that unfold after genocide. Life-course criminology's enduring emphasis on desistance and transitions points toward the importance of postgenocide processes and suggests fruitful areas of inquiry.

Individuals desist from genocide, just as they eventually desist from other forms of crime. In Rwanda, some people consciously desisted during the genocide (Luft 2015), while others did not cease until the genocide's end in July or even afterward (as sporadic attacks on Tutsis continued). Scholars have yet to assess the factors that influence desistance from genocide, although studies could examine factors that are often associated with desistance from other forms of crime, such as ties to adult institutions (Bushway, Thornberry, and Krohn 2003; Laub and Sampson 2001; Uggen 2000). Scholars could also consider how participation in genocidal violence influences subsequent participation in other forms of violence (Piquero, Jennings, and Barnes 2012) and whether such participation resembles the "chronic" or "zigzag" criminal careers observed in other studies of desistance (Laub and Sampson 2003). Life-course criminology would generally predict versatility rather than specialization in particular genocidal crimes, although this literature would suggest greater specialization for rape than for other violent or property offenses (Piquero et al. 2003). Applications of life-course criminology might further specify how desistance patterns vary across particular crimes of genocide as well.

Applying a life-course perspective to genocide may also shed insights on *responses* to the

Figure 4. Estimated incarceration rate in Rwanda, 1995–2012.
Note. These data were compiled from various sources and, thus, certainly include errors.

violence. Transitional justice responses to genocide often involve incarceration, which is typically followed by reentry and reintegration processes. Figure 4 shows the scale of this reentry phenomenon in Rwanda (Walmsley 2012), illustrating that hundreds of thousands of Rwandans who spent time in prison due to their genocide-related crimes have been reentering their communities. Scholars know little about individual reentry and reintegration processes in the aftermath of genocide, and research could productively examine the individual, family, community, and state-level factors that make for successful reentry and reintegration experiences, much in line with the recent application of life-course concepts to Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration processes after civil wars (Kaplan and Nussio 2016; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009). Such scholarship could test whether factors that facilitate reintegration of former prisoners in other contexts, such as secure housing, productive employment, and supportive families and communities (Morenoff and Harding 2014; Visher and Travis 2003), are also important following genocide and identify genocide-specific obstacles to reintegration.

At the organizational level, many of the organizations that were formed directly before or during the violence, such as the *Interahamwe*, officially disbanded after 1994. Others, such as the national army, went through a large transition, presumably recruiting new members to fill the roles of those who had committed violence. Yet others shifted form and continued their actions elsewhere, such as those who continued violent actions across the border in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Scholars could assess the decline of such organizations as well as the determinants of their persistence following the genocide, in line with work that examines the demise of terror organizations and finds that numerous factors—such as the degree of state support, the amount of funding, the persistence of leaders, or public opinion—are often at play (Cronin 2009).

Regional and other subnational dynamics of violence may also present opportunities for understanding desistance and transitions. Violence ended at distinct times in different communities, although no scholarship (to our knowledge) has examined why violence stops earlier in some communities. Criminologists' assessments of the social and economic interventions that may facilitate the cooling of local "hot spots" of persistent violence may consequently prove useful (Braithwaite 2012; Sherman and Weisburd 1995). Scholars could also examine community transitions that stem from transitional justice mechanisms. For instance, Rwanda's postgenocide *gacaca* courts functioned at the community level. Our preliminary work suggests that communities where *gacaca* courts handed down more

punitive sentences (such as life sentences) experienced higher crime rates than those with comparatively lighter sentences. Future work could draw upon life-course criminology's emphasis on the consequences of crime (and the impacts of judicial interventions) to better assess community transitions after genocide.

To date, research exploring how and why genocidal violence deescalates has focused on national-level dynamics, as the "ending" of genocide is often seen as a country-level event. Krain (e.g., 2005) has examined how armed intervention and other interventions affect genocide, for instance, although there is surprisingly little other research on how genocides end—an important area that life-course criminology suggests merits analytic inquiry.

Life-course approaches also coincide with conceptualizations of transitional justice and peace-building efforts as long-term, multidimensional processes that extend well beyond the cessation of mass violence. National studies of the effects of transitions after genocide, such as those brought about by transitional justice mechanisms, have focused on how such mechanisms influence country-level human rights records (Olsen, Payne, and Reiter 2010; Sikkink 2011). Future studies could view the transitional justice mechanism as a potential national turning point and assess whether such mechanisms influence crime rates and other national indicators.

Theoretical and Analytic Implications

We have argued that life-course approaches—which document change in criminal behavior and situate this change within historical and structural contexts—offer an underused set of tools for the study of genocide. In building upon the foundation of genocide scholarship and criminology, such tools can help explain genocide as a crime and as an intense period of dynamic and multifaceted social change. These include delineating risk factors for the onset of genocide; trajectories and duration of genocidal violence; and desistance and transitions from genocidal crime. We illustrated each of these concepts with examples from the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, although they can and should be tested on other cases of genocide. Likewise, we focused on the individual, organizational, subnational, and national analytic levels, although these approaches could be productively extended to social networks and other levels, while interconnections between all levels could be further explored.

We summarize these ideas in Table 1. This is not an exhaustive list of avenues for future research, although we hope it will lead to new insights regarding the crime of genocide. Such analyses will also inform and expand life-course criminology. For instance, above, we suggested that individuals may participate in genocide to fulfill an adult duty, which contrasts with other scholarship suggesting that criminal behavior does not align with conceptions of adulthood. In addition, we suggested that factors such as community cohesion might influence community-level dynamics. In some scholarship (e.g., Sampson and Groves 1989), crime occurs where there is low community cohesion because people are not able to work together to prevent crime (as indicated by high population mobility or divorce rates). Others (e.g., Lyons 2007) have found that certain types of crime—in this case, hate crime—unfold in communities with high social cohesion and specifically occur when communities seek to defend themselves from perceived threats. Testing these and other theories on the crime of genocide will allow for deeper expansions of life-course criminology and rigorous assessments of its theoretical propositions.

Although genocide has long been studied as a dynamic process, life-course approaches can nevertheless reveal new facets of this path-dependent sequence of events. Simultaneously, such research can expand the boundaries of genocide studies and criminology. Both criminologists and genocide scholars have much to gain from such productive interchange, which likewise holds the potential to yield useful tools for policy before, during, and after genocide.

Table 1. Avenues for Analysis Within a Dynamic Life-course Approach to Genocide.

Level	Before genocide: Risk factors & onset	During genocide: Trajectories & duration	After genocide: Desistance & transitions
Individual	• How social factors and ties (e.g., age, gender, social relationships, previous history of crime) influence individual onset of participation (1) within the individual life course and (2) at particular times during the genocide (i.e., as violence begins or several weeks later) • How life-course transitions, such as a new child or job, influence onset of participation (1) within the individual life course and (2) at particular times during the genocide	• How factors that influence trajectories of offending at different points in the life course—such as crime-involved peers or substance use—inform individual trajectories and duration of participation during genocide • Whether certain social factors distinguish high- and low-rate offenders during genocide (e.g., those who kill multiple people vs. those who kill one person) • How genocidal violence fits within broader individual trajectories of criminal offending, including overlap between victimization and offending	• How social factors, ties, and life-course transitions influence desistance from genocidal crime • How participation in genocidal violence influences subsequent participation in other violence and whether such participation resembles "chronic" or "zigzag" criminal careers • Whether factors that facilitate reintegration of prisoners in other contexts—such as housing, employment, and family support—are also important following genocide and whether there are genocide-specific obstacles to reintegration
Organizational	• How factors such as local political climates and community dynamics may lead to the "birth" of genocidal organizations and their propaganda arms	• Why different organizations exhibit distinct ebbs and flows in collective action and whether group-level characteristics (e.g., size), neighborhood-level characteristics (e.g., poverty), or social networks influence these patterns of violence over time	• How factors like state support, public opinion, or funding influence organizational demise or persistence following the genocide
Subnational	• How structural factors (such as employment rates, community cohesion, and signs of social and physical disorder) influence the onset of violence at various subnational levels	• How community characteristics (e.g., marriage rates, population mobility) influence community trajectories of violence, including chronic/episodic forms of violence and its duration	• Why violence stops earlier in some communities and whether social interventions help cool violent "hot spots" • How transitional justice responses influence community-level dynamics, such as subsequent crime
National	• How state-level factors, including historical trajectories and regional dynamics, influence the onset of genocide • How events and processes trigger genocidal violence, and whether these triggers vary across historical time and social context	• How structural factors and turning points, such as international interventions or the actions of particular leaders, influence state-level trajectories of violence • Whether factors that influence variation in national crime rates—such as income inequality or type of government—help explain variation in national trajectories of genocide • How genocide trajectories can be contextualized within national historical patterns of violence	• How and why genocidal violence deescalates and ends at a national level • Whether transitional justice efforts represent turning points in countries' histories and how such efforts influence subsequent country-level dynamics of violence

Authors' Note

Acknowledgment

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Notes

1. This is not an exhaustive consideration (for instance, international levels certainly matter as well).
2. As with other developmental processes, it is difficult to pinpoint precisely when a genocide begins or ends. Nevertheless, this organization serves to illustrate how the building blocks of life-course criminology can productively advance knowledge about the complex, dynamic crime of genocide.
3. For more on the preconditions of genocide in Rwanda, see Des Forges (1999), Longman (2009), Verwimp (2013), Carney (2014), and Guichaoua (2017). See Melvern (2006) regarding the political elites who orchestrated the violence and Melvern (2014) regarding international responses to the genocide.
4. But see Fujii (2009) and McDoom (2013) regarding the role of social networks.
5. Such factors may matter more in instances such as Rwanda, where civilian residents were responsible for much of the violence, than in other genocides where armies and militias comprised of nonlocal residents commit the violence.
6. Yet, as in criminological research, these risk factors are not necessarily reliable or sufficient predictors of genocide prospectively. This "false positive" problem is common in life-course criminology as well.

References

Alvarez, Alexander. 1997. "Adjusting to Genocide: The Techniques of Neutralization and the Holocaust." *Social Science History* 21:139–78.

Bail, Christopher A. 2014. *Terrified: How Anti-Muslim Fringe Organizations Became Mainstream*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Blokland, Arjan and Paul Nieuwbeerta. 2005. "The Effects of Life Circumstances on Individual Trajectories of Offending." *Criminology* 43:1203–40.

Braithwaite, John. 2012. "Cascades of Violence and a Global Criminology of Place." *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 45:299–315.

Bushway, Shawn D., Terence P. Thornberry, and Marvin D. Krohn. 2003. "Desistance as a Developmental Process: A Comparison of Static and Dynamic Approaches." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 19:129–53.

Campbell, Bradley. 2015. *The Geometry of Genocide: A Study in Pure Sociology*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.

Carney, J. J. 2014. *Rwanda before the Genocide: Catholic Politics and Ethnic Discourse in the Late Colonial Era*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. 1948. 78 U.N.T.S. 277. *Entered into force* January 12, 1951.

Cronin, Audrey Kurth. 2009. *How Terrorism Ends: Understanding the Decline and Demise of Terrorist Campaigns*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Davenport, Christian and Allan Stam. 2012. "Data on Violence in 1994." GenoDynamics. Retrieved December 2012 (www.genodynamics.com).

Des Forges, Alison. 1999. *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Elder, Glen H., Jr. 1998. "The Life Course as Developmental Theory." *Child Development* 69:1–12.

Elder, Glen H., Jr., Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Robert Crosnoe. 2003. "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory." Pp. 3–19 in *Handbook of the Life Course*. Boston, MA: Springer.

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2009. *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Glueck, Sheldon. 1946. *The Nuremberg Trial and Aggressive War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Goldsmith, Benjamin E., Charles R. Butcher, Dimitri Semenovich, and Arcot Sowmya. 2013. "Forecasting the Onset of Genocide and Politicide: Annual Out-of-sample Forecasts on a Global Dataset, 1988–2003." *Journal of Peace Research* 50:437–52.

Guichaoua, André. 2017. *From War to Genocide: Criminal Politics in Rwanda, 1990–1994*. Translated by Don E. Webster. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Hagan, John L. and Wenona Rymond-Richmond. 2009. *Darfur and the Crime of Genocide*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Harff, Barbara. 2003. "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955." *American Political Science Review* 97:57–73.

Hillyard, Paddy and Steve Tombs. 2007. "From 'Crime' to Social Harm?" *Crime, Law and Social Change* 4:9–25.

Hintjens, Helen M. 1999. "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37:241–86.

Jennings, Wesley G., Alex R. Piquero, and Jennifer M. Reingle. 2012. "On the Overlap between Victimization and Offending: A Review of the Literature." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17:16–26.

Jones, Adam. 2002. "Gender and Genocide in Rwanda." *Journal of Genocide Research* 4(1):65–94.

Kaplan, Oliver and Enzo Nussio. 2016. "Explaining Recidivism of Ex-combatants in Colombia." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Published electronically May 10. doi:10.1177/0022002716644326.

Karstedt, Susanne. 2012. "Contextualizing Mass Atrocity Crimes: The Dynamics of 'Extremely Violent Societies'." *European Journal of Criminology* 9:499–513.

Karstedt, Susanne. 2013. "Contextualizing Mass Atrocity Crimes: Moving Toward a Relational Approach." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 9:383–404.

King, William R. 2009. "Toward a Life-course Perspective of Police Organizations." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 46(2):213–44.

Krahn, Harvey, Timothy F. Hartnagel, and John W. Gartrell. 1986. "Income Inequality and Homicide Rates: Cross-national Data and Criminological Theories." *Criminology* 24(2):269–94.

Krain, Matthew. 2005. "International Intervention and the Severity of Genocides and Politicides." *International Studies Quarterly* 49:363–88.

LaFree, Gary, Sue-Ming Yang, and Martha Crenshaw. 2009. "Trajectories of Terrorism." *Criminology & Public Policy* 8:445–73.

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 1993. "Turning Points in the Life Course: Why Change Matters to the Study of Crime." *Criminology* 31:301–25.

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2001. "Understanding Desistance from Crime." *Crime and Justice* 28:1–69.

Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lemarchand, René. 1970. *Rwanda and Burundi*. New York: Praeger.

Loeber, Rolf, Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, Welmoet Van Kammen, and David P. Farrington. 1991. "Initiation, Escalation and Desistance in Juvenile Offending and Their Correlates." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 82:36–82.

Longman, Timothy. 2009. *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Luft, Aliza. 2015. "Toward a Dynamic Theory of Action at the Micro Level of Genocide Killing, Desistance, and Saving in 1994 Rwanda." *Sociological Theory* 33:148–72.

Lyons, Christopher J. 2007. "Community (Dis) Organization and Racially Motivated Crime." *American Journal of Sociology* 113(3):815–63.

MacLeod, John F., Peter G. Grove, and David P. Farrington. 2012. *Explaining Criminal Careers: Implications for Justice Policy*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 2001. *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

McDoom, Omar Shahabudin. 2013. "Who Killed in Rwanda's Genocide? Micro-space, Social Influence, and Individual Participation in Intergroup Violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 40:453–67.

McDoom, Omar Shahabudin. 2014. "Predicting Violence within Genocide: A Model of Elite Contestation and Ethnic Segregation from Rwanda." *Political Geography* 42:34–45.

McEvoy, Kieran and Peter Shirlow. 2009. "Re-imagining DDR: Ex-combatants, Leadership and Moral Agency in Conflict Transformation." *Theoretical Criminology* 13:31–59.

Melvern, Linda. 2006. *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide*. London, England: Verso.

Melvern, Linda. 2014. *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide*. New York: Zed Books.

Morenoff, Jeffrey D. and David J. Harding. 2014. "Incarceration, Prisoner Reentry, and Communities." *Annual Review of Sociology* 40:411–29.

Newbury, Catharine. 1998. "Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda." *Africa Today* 45:7–24.

Nyseth Brehm, Hollie. 2014. *Conditions and Courses of Genocide*. Doctoral Dissertation. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Nyseth Brehm, Hollie. 2017. "Subnational Determinants of Killing in Rwanda." *Criminology* 55(1): 5–31

Nyseth Brehm, Hollie, Christopher Uggen, and Jean-Damascéne Gasanabo. 2016. "Age, Gender, and the Crime of Crimes: Toward a Life-Course Theory of Genocide Participation." *Criminology* 54(4): 713–743.

Olsen, Tricia D., Leigh A. Payne, and Andrew G. Reiter. 2010. "The Justice Balance: When Transitional Justice Improves Human Rights and Democracy." *Human Rights Quarterly* 32:980–1007.

Papachristos, Andrew V., David M. Hureau, and Anthony A. Braga. 2013. "The Corner and the Crew: The Influence of Geography and Social Networks on Gang Violence." *American Sociological Review* 78:417–47.

Piquero, Alex R., David P. Farrington, and Alfred Blumstein. 2003. "The Criminal Career Paradigm." *Crime and Justice* 30:359–506.

Piquero, Alex R., Wesley G. Jennings, and J. C. Barnes. 2012. "Violence in Criminal Careers: A Review of the Literature from a Developmental Life-course Perspective." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17(3):171–79.

Piquero, Alex R., Christopher J. Sullivan, and David P. Farrington. 2010. "Assessing Differences between Short-term, High-rate Offenders and Long-term, Low-rate Offenders." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 37(12):1309–29.

Prunier, Gérard. 1995. *The Rwanda Crisis, 1959–1994: History of a Genocide*. London: Hurst.

Rafter, Nicole. 2016. *Toward a Criminology of Genocide: A Changing Crime in a Changing World*. New York: New York University Press.

Rheinstein, Max. 1947. "Review of the Nuremberg Trial and Aggressive War." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 14:319–21.

Sampson, Robert J. 2012. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Sampson, Robert J. and W. Byron Groves. 1989. "Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-disorganization Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 94:774–802.

Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub. 1993. *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points through Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sampson, Robert J., John H. Laub, and Christopher Wimer. 2006. "Does Marriage Reduce Crime? A Counterfactual Approach to Within-individual Causal Effects." *Criminology* 44(3):465–508.

Savelsberg, Joachim J. 2010. *Crime and Human Rights*. London: Sage Publications.

Shaw, Clifford Robe. 1930. *The Jack-roller: A Delinquent Boy's Own Story*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Sherman, Lawrence W. and David Weisburd. 1995. "General Deterrent Effects of Police Patrol in Crime "Hot Spots": A Randomized, Controlled Trial." *Justice Quarterly* 12:625–48.

Sikkink, Kathryn. 2011. *The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Straus, Scott. 2006. *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Straus, Scott. 2015. "Triggers of Mass Atrocities." *Politics and Governance* 3(3):5–15.

Sutherland, Edwin Hardin. 1937. *The Professional Thief*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Sutherland, Edwin Hardin, Donald Ray Cressey, and David F. Luckenbill. 1992. *Principles of Criminology*. 11th ed. Lanham, MD: General Hall.

Uggen, Christopher. 2000. "Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism." *American Sociological Review* 65:529–46.

Verwimp, Philip. 2013. *Peasants in Power: The Political Economy of Development and Genocide in Rwanda*. New York: Springer.

Visher, Christy A. and Jeremy Travis. 2003. "Transitions from Prison to Community: Understanding Individual Pathways." *Annual Review of Sociology*:89–113.

Walmsley, Roy. 2012. *World Prison Population List* (Rwanda archive provided via personal communication). London: International Centre for Prison Studies.

Wolfgang, Marvin E., Robert M. Figlio, and Thorsten Sellin. 1987. *Delinquency in a Birth Cohort*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.