Tuning in to the RTLM: How the Evolution of Language Influenced Perception in the Rwandan Genocide

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Abstract:

Academics have spent over a decade arguing the impact of the Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) on the public participation in the mass slaughter during the Rwandan genocide. The conception of the RTLM within the common literature gives no consideration to the evolution of the broadcast message over the duration of time leading up to and during the genocide. In an effort to understand this evolution, a selective content analysis was used to categorize the rhetoric within each broadcast disseminated by the RTLM. The language is broken down to summarize its use in evolving specific language, broadcasting racially charged messages, and urging public participation in the systematic eradication of the Tutsi people. By cataloguing the exact nature of this change, future scholars can better understand what factors contribute to the creation of hate media outlets in conflict areas.
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“We bring you the latest news without overwhelming you, real news, and ideas to help build our country. RTLM radio broadcasts your messages. RTLM makes you dance to the beat to dispel any unhappiness in your heart.”

– RTLM November 29, 1993

**Introduction**

As long as mass media has existed, fringe groups and political movements have utilized media outlets to present opinions separate from the domestic or global mainstream. The origin and evolution of these media outlets has been largely ignored scholars, even in such cases where the media is used to promote revolution, anarchy, and violence. Propaganda is used by all governments, and as Silverstein notes, is “a major factor in the workings of modern sociopolitical systems” (Silverstein, 1987). Political scientists have shown that propaganda is a frequent tool for promoting domestic interests, narrowing the scope of discussion, and fear mongering a threat to the existing political system. A great deal of scholarly attention has been devoted to understanding the ultimate impact of hate media, but few have tried to understand how that media outlet came to be. Contrary to what one might expect, publishers do not begin by filling pamphlets with hate; broadcasters do not use their first transmission to disperse the most radical theories. There is a period of transition where the public responds to an initial concept, and that transition shapes the nature of the propaganda to better integrate within a societal norm.

This paper is a result of a long-standing critique of the prevailing assumption that hate media and extremist propaganda simply emerges fully formed and is accepted by the public as truth. This project will directly confront this assumption by illustrating the evolution and adaptation of media outlets from largely benign and innocuous channels to
the radical and hate-fuelled broadcasts that exist in many situations of political and social unrest. A well-known example of this is the existence of the Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), a Hutu Power radio station that became infamous for its broadcasts during the Rwandan genocide. In general literature regarding the Rwandan genocide, the RTLM is viewed as a vile and poisonous outlet that existed for the sole purpose of inciting civilians to participate in the mass slaughter of Tutsi Rwandans. For instance, in his analysis of the RTLM, Rothberg finds,

The messages of hate for Tutsi that Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) disseminated, especially in Kinyarwanda\(^1\) (and not necessarily in French), were tellingly indicative of the plans that the ruling Hutu and their allies had prepared. RTLM’s messages ‘facilitated the genocide, contributed to the authoritativeness of the leaders’ orders to kill, and gave important early clues as to the intentions and thinking within the paranoid world of the genocidaires’ (Rothberg, 2010).

While reading excerpts of RTLM broadcasts would surely reinforce the convention that the radio station existed for the sole purpose of dispersing violent rhetoric, the majority of genocide scholars have simply assumed that this was representative of all RTLM broadcasts and that the content of the radio station’s message was consistent over time. The goal of my research is to discredit the concept that the RTLM was a consistently radical and violent radio station that was able to influence the population into participation in genocide and massive abuses of human rights. While scholars of the Rwandan genocide are content to accept the unchanging existence of the RTLM, my goal is to deconstruct how its message evolved over time from a politically biased talk-station to a radio channel that actively promoted participation in shortest and

\(^1\) Kinyarwanda is one of the official languages of Rwanda. At the time of the genocide, the other official language was French, although recently French was replaced with English.
bloodiest genocides in modern history. What forces promoted the existence of radical media in Rwanda, and in what way did those forces drive the external domestic political environment? How did the RTLM change, and what was the nature of that change? How does hate media come to be?

**Background**

*I. Impact of Colonialism on Identity in Rwanda*

The conflict that eventually led to the Rwandan genocide can be traced back to the twentieth century with the colonization of central Africa first by the Germans, and then later by the Belgians. For centuries before the arrival of these European settlers, Rwanda had been ruled by a monarchical Tutsi elite class, and tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi\(^2\) were limited. The people of Rwanda spoke a single language, Kinyarwanda, and the two ethnic groups frequently intermarried. It was the Belgians who forced a heightened awareness of racial differences starting in the early 1930s with the advent of identity cards that explicitly outlined the ethnic group of each Rwandan citizen. Although there are a number of different anthropological views as to the inherent differences and similarities of the Hutu and Tutsi people, many ascribe to the idea that before the arrival of the Belgians, the differences between Hutu and non-royal Tutsi were largely economically and socially based. A sense of social mobility existed where a Hutu with exceptionally good finances could become equal with middle-class Tutsi, just as Tutsi

\(^2\) Although Hutu and Tutsi make up the majority of Rwandan society, consisting of 85% and 14% respectively, there is a third ethnic group called the Twa who makes up less than 1% of the population. Given their limited role in the Rwandan genocide, I have chosen to largely exclude the Twa for clarity.
who did not maintain themselves and their estates especially well could find their status lower than a Hutu. This fluidity stagnated with the Belgian mandated identity cards, and ceased to exist entirely with the racialization experienced under colonialism.

Considering the 1930s in European history, it is not surprising that the Belgians in Central Africa became unduly concerned with ethnic groups and eugenics. The Belgians saw the Tutsi as the natural rulers of Rwanda, and supported the careers of favored Tutsi people in the new colonial governments. These Tutsi were also encouraged by Europeans to engage in large-scale cash cropping, rather than a traditional subsistence lifestyle, with labor provided by lower-class Hutu workers. A number of legal and societal reforms further allowed these Tutsi in power to abuse the system and prevented the peasantry from escaping oppressive situations. As can be expected, those Tutsi favored by the Belgians became especially comfortable with this new social construct and furthered their power and wealth at the expense of the lower-class Hutu. Bowing under pressure from the United Nations, in the late 1940s and 1950s the Belgians were forced to begin reforming the Rwandan system that only afforded education and governmental positions to those of the Tutsi group. These reforms opened education to some Hutu, but still prevented Hutu people from attaining positions of authority within the government or military. As these educated Hutus graduated, they formed their own political parties, which as Jefremovas argued “eventually coalesced into a Hutu extremist party, the Parmehutu, who rewrote history to reflect their claim that racially the Hutu held the right to rule Rwanda” (Jefremovas 1997, p. 97).
II. Rwandan Independence

The Tutsi monarchy was officially abolished in January of 1961, and the Belgians granted Rwanda independence a little more than a year later on July 1, 1962. These two events were instrumental in setting off tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi people over the next thirty years. Bowing under political pressure, the Belgians agreed to host municipal democratic elections in Rwanda in 1960, and the majority Hutu population overwhelmingly supported Hutu political candidates. As a result, when full independence was finally granted, the majority of government representatives were members of the Party of the Hutu Emancipation Movement, or MDR-Parmehutu, which left the Tutsi in an incredibly vulnerable state. Many Tutsi chose political exile rather than remain at the mercy of an extremist Hutu government that clearly remembered the social injustices just decades before. Those Tutsi who stayed frequently maintained positions of wealth, but held little political power in the new government. From the sixties through the nineties Rwanda experienced continued political upheaval as rival Hutu groups scrambled for political power. Meanwhile, in Uganda in the late eighties, Tutsi refugees formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a political organization that served to facilitate the return of refugees to Rwanda after experiencing harsh treatment in Uganda.

It was this group, the RPF, that initiated a violent conflict with the Rwandan government in the Fall of 1990. The RPF gained significant ground in northern Rwanda and even made close advancements onto Kigali within the first few weeks, but as the Rwandan government army recovered from shock at the invasion, they were able to push the RPF back with the assistance of French, Belgian, and Zairean troops. Rwanda

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3 Zaire was the name of the present day Democratic Republic of the Congo until 1997.
experts note the impact of this conflict on the perception of the RPF by the Rwandan people, as Mamdani explains below.

The civil war profoundly changed all those who took part in it. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) went into it [the civil war] as an army of liberation and came out of it as an army of occupation. The Habyarimana regime4 entered the war pledged to a policy of ethnic reconciliation and came out of it pledged to uphold Hutu Power” (Mamdani 2001, 185).

It can be said that this course of events created an environment within Rwanda with political officials and ordinary citizens hyper-aware of an inherent Tutsi threat to the government. After the Rwandan army pushed the RPF back into the mountainous border with Uganda, the two warring groups reached a stalemate as the RPF was reduced to traditional insurgency tactics.

III. Rwandan Civil War and the Arusha Accords

In an effort to reach a permanent cease-fire, in July of 1992 a series of mediated talks began between the RPF and the Rwandan government in Arusha, Tanzania. The Arusha Accords5 were signed in August of 1993 and involved the creation of a power-sharing administration wherein the RPF had the ability to participate within the Rwandan government. The Arusha Accords would also relinquish control of the northern territory currently occupied by the RPF from the Rwandan government’s control, effectively making it a separately governed province from the larger national territory. Other settlements included decisions on the reintroduction of long-term refugees and the creation of a military containing a unified force to replace the two forces of the government and the RPF (Clapham 1998, 202). The RPF made substantial gains from

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4 The Rwandan government, led by President Habyarimana.
5 The Arusha Accords is also known as the Arusha Peace Agreement, or the Arusha negotiations.
discussions at the Arusha Accord, having many of their major demands granted by the Rwandan representatives. However, it is important to note that a majority of these representatives of the Rwandan government present at the Arusha talks actually held very little power, or were from different political parties than the current ruling party. Essentially, these representatives were agreeing to terms and granting demands without the support of their own government. The “Hutu power” factions largely in control of the Rwandan government at the time of these talks made no appearances, and time would show that the Arusha Accords were impossible to implement and against the political goals of those still in power in Rwanda.

It was due to international and domestic pressures as well as increased violence in northern Rwanda that eventually Rwandan President Habyarimana was no longer able to disregard the Arusha Accords, and in March of 1994 he flew to Tanzania to attend a regional summit where President Habyarimana finally pledged to implement the Arusha Accords (Reed 1996, 496). On April 6, 1994, President Habyarimana was on board the presidential jet with a number of other officials, including the President of Burundi, when it was struck by two surface-to-air missiles. The plane erupted into flames before crashing onto the presidential palace, exploding on impact and killing everyone on board. The group responsible for the crash remains unknown. In the years immediately after the attack Hutu extremists from Habyarimana’s own party were considered responsible, using the attack as an excuse to begin violently eliminating Tutsi throughout Rwanda. In more recent years RPF leader and current Rwandan President Paul Kagame was targeted as an orchestrator, but has recently been cleared of these charges. Whatever the
circumstances behind the attack, the repercussions reverberated throughout Rwanda as this event marked the beginning of the genocide.

IV. Creation of the RTLM
The RTLM became a primary source of information for the public during the genocide as international news channels, broadcasting typically in French or English, were less accessible by the average Rwandan citizen. Even before the genocide began, the RTLM was one of the nation’s most popular news sources, frequently playing music and hosting interviews with popular political and social figures. The RTLM came about as a response to the Arusha Accords as a private news station quietly funded by some of the most powerful individuals within the Rwandan government, and it criticized the RPF’s involvement in the civil war and actively tried to discredit the entire Arusha process. It was the most successful form of Hutu power propaganda within Rwanda, as it had the ability to reach a greater audience than the Kangura newspapers and pamphlets. One of the provisions of the Arusha Accords was the restriction of the Rwandan government from actively propagating anti-Tutsi policies and rhetoric, but the same limitations were not applied to private media outlets. Because the initial equipment and funding was provided by powerful members of the Rwandan government, however, the RTLM served as a technically independent but heavily influenced media outlet. In the beginning the RTLM would broadcast on the same frequency as the government Radio Rwanda during off hours, creating a fluid transition between official state-sponsored

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6 A publication established in May 1990, famous for the publishing of the “Hutu Ten Commandments”. It was founded on radical Hutu power principles and advocated for the removal of Tutsi from Rwandan government and society.
media and the popular private media that propagated the opinions and attitudes the Rwandan government was barred from broadcasting.

Eventually, as the genocide began and the structural government within Rwanda collapsed, the RTLM increased frequency of transmissions and the nature of the broadcasts became highly contentious and strengthened the Hutu power extremism present within the country. The station is well-known by modern Rwandan scholars as encouraging mass participation in the genocide and rallying support for the Rwandan government’s armed forces fighting the majority-Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Their broadcasts continued for the duration of the genocide, ending only as the RPF overtook Kigali and the broadcasters were forced to flee from the station headquarters. Since the end of the genocide, the broadcasters who were employed by the RTLM were captured and tried by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and were all convicted for participation in inciting genocidal acts, as well as the crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity. One broadcaster who was actually a Belgian national who first became involved with Rwandan politics in 1993 admitted during his trial that “these are events which I regret, but they are the reality and I decided to admit them certain people were killed in Rwanda in 1994 and that I was responsible and culpable” ("Rwanda protests at," 2000).

While it is clear in retrospect that the RTLM played a significant role during the Rwandan genocide, it remains unclear exactly what that role was. It is important to understand first that the RTLM was not a proponent for genocide from its initial inception, and while the nature of the station was to undermine progress in the Arusha Accords, it may not have been the intent of the broadcasters to encourage one of the most
tragic cases of human rights abuse in modern history. Considering the existing literature on political propaganda and social identity theory rarely overlaps, it seems appropriate for the formation of a new sub-section in political psychology that addresses these issues. The question that should face modern academics is whether the RTLM was an active proponent of the genocide or whether it was a media outlet fighting to remain relevant as the sociopolitical environment within the country changed. Should consideration for media’s inevitable shifts be taken into consideration when condemning individuals for participation in events like the Rwandan genocide? And in the case of Rwanda, what did that shift look like?

**Literature Review**

The effect of independent or state-owned media propaganda on citizen behavior is a growing sub-field within the study of political psychology, and has a particular area devoted to understanding propaganda’s ability to manipulate innocuous people into actively participating or accepting human violence. It is important to note that despite the widespread acceptance of the role of propaganda, the existing literature is dispersed throughout several disciplines. Silverstein (1987) acknowledged that propaganda is used by all modern governments and has become “a major factor in the workings of modern sociopolitical systems” (Silverstein, 1987), yet lacks a comprehensive body of literature and accepted practices for evaluating propaganda’s efficacy. Literature specifically relating to the use of radio propaganda during the Rwandan genocide can be found in sociology, communication, and cultural studies in addition to political psychology, creating a unique divergence of multidisciplinary assumptions about the role of propaganda in society. Because political psychology is still an embryonic field, further
review of the evolution of radio-based propaganda during the Rwandan genocide can provide quantitative evidence of and lay a framework for further research.

Adina-Diaz (2007) argues that there are two ways one can consider media influence: the Reinforcement approach and the Attitudinal Orientations approach (Adina-Diaz 2007, 67). The first, Reinforcement approach, considers that media plays a role in affirming viewers’ or listeners’ preconceived opinions, thereby reinforcing a predetermined opinion. The second approach, Attitudinal Orientations, emphasizes the ability of media to shift the preconceived opinions of a viewer or listener to a new, distinctly separate opinion. The lower the distance between a viewer or listener’s preconceived opinion and the ideology of the media outlet, the easier influencing a consumer’s belief is. Adina-Diaz shows that both processes have legitimate application and a single media outlet can perform a dual-Reinforcement and Attitudinal Orientation approach. This is consistent with Entman’s (1989) opinions that the media is more a contributor to individual beliefs and ideologies than a controlling influence that stimulates emotional responses with slight rational content, and Bartel’s (1993) consideration of media’s influence being the greatest when prior opinions are weak and political advantage being when “consistent media messages [are] presented over relatively long periods of time” (Bartels, 1993).

This concept of active political influence by media propaganda is reinforced by Yelland and Stone (1996) in a study where they enlisted college students to participate in experimental studies designed to test whether simply providing subjects an excerpt of biased media could shift a subject’s opinion on the factuality of the Holocaust. The results of their study clearly illustrated that college students’ perception of the Holocaust
can be affected by Holocaust denial propaganda, especially those individuals who have an authoritarian personality. Interestingly they found no divergence of individuals within a specific political party, which suggests personal behaviors and beliefs are responsible rather than identified political ideologies. Another interesting point was the consideration of a student’s knowledge of World War II; the researchers guiding the study believed a higher knowledge of World War II history would influence belief in the Holocaust, but instead found that “both knowledgeable and less knowledgeable subjects believed less strongly in the Holocaust after reading the denial of the Holocaust” (Yelland and Stone 1996, 559). This study does not, however, control for the students having previous knowledge of the subject, and that the experiment was done by students for extra credit may have skewed results. It is clearly impossible to have controlled for every variable, but whether the findings could hold true throughout other, similar studies is uncertain.

Considering the concept that personality types are more easily manipulated into participation in belief of a generally agreed-upon truth, it is important to understand how different personalities are susceptible to participation in warfare and genocide. Midlarsky, Fagin Jones & Corley’s 2005 article was a qualitative study of non-Jewish participation in World War II done by measuring control, autonomy, risk taking, social responsibility, tolerance/authoritarianism, empathy, and altruistic moral reasoning of approximately 200 adults who had lived in Nazi-controlled Europe. The authors worked to understand why only approximately half of one percent of occupied Europeans actively rescued their

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7 Authoritarian personalities were described by early psychologists as those individuals especially vulnerable to anti-Semitic rhetoric and anti-democratic political beliefs. More recent studies by R. Altemeyer, a University of Manitoba Psychology Professor outline authoritarian personalities as being submissive to authorities, aggressive towards specifically targeted minority groups, and loyalty to values endorsed by leadership.
Jewish neighbors, while the vast majority of the population tolerated the gathering and mass slaughter of European Jews. Control of one’s own life, either by oneself (internally) or through luck, fate, or the hand of God (externally) has been found to correlate with likelihood of altruistic behaviors (Midlarsky, Fagin Jones & Corley 2005). Essentially, the authors find that those who are more autonomous and participate based on a sense of social responsibility were more likely to save their Jewish neighbors while accepting the risk to themselves. Alternatively, authoritarian personalities have a higher association with anti-Semitism and other minority groups considered intolerable by society, reflecting on the findings of Yelland and Stone.

Kotze’s (1986) study examined the varied media exposure between racial, cultural, and linguistic groups of South African students and their political attitudes. He defined political socialization as “the deliberate inculcation of political information, values and practices by instructional agents who have been formally charged with this responsibility” (Kotze 1986, 418). While Kotze recognized the long-term inherent influence of media propaganda on an individual’s political orientation, he concluded that “it is unlikely that the mass media can effect radical change in the political orientations of most people in a relatively short period of time” (Kotze 1986, 419). This reinforces Bartels’ (1993) earlier claim about the greatest strength in media influence is over a long period of time, which provides a better foundation for both the Reinforcement and Additional Orientation approaches. An individual’s knowledge and previous perception, or lack thereof, of an issue is a major indicator of how their specific personality trait will allow them to be influenced, and the longer they are exposed to media will dramatically affect their perception of political issues.
Kotze’s opinion on radical change over time contrasts starkly with academic literature focused on the RTLM, some of which argued that the RTLM broadcasts were able to force moderate Hutu supporters and unaligned Rwandan citizens into supporting a radically violent domestic movement. In a study of the RTLM, Gulseth (2004) states “the causal relationship between the killings and the propaganda is difficult to establish with certainty… but that does not mean that the radio station was not crucial in building and maintaining conditions which made genocide possible” (Gulseth 2004, 30). Considering that the RTLM was created in July of 1993, it would not have had the opportunity to slowly shift the political orientation of listeners within a nine-month period. Gulseth’s analysis of propaganda during the Rwandan genocide is one of the most comprehensive reports currently in existence, and certainly goes in great depth over the multiple types of propaganda used by the RTLM. A critical gap in his research is the development of the RTLM as an organization partially responsible for the mass killings of civilians in Rwanda. Gulseth’s paper outlined the tactics of the RTLM but not how those tactics evolved or gained efficacy over time. A limitation in his methodological review is that changes in the RTLM’s propaganda techniques before and after the death of President Habyarimana were presumed rather than documented (Gulseth 2004, 53).

For example, Kellow and Steeves’ (1998), analysis measured specific excerpts from the RTLM without allowing for contextual biases present in the broadcasts. The propaganda was dispersed through a reversal technique, which used an assumed Tutsi hate of the Hutu to incite Hutu hatred and violence against Tutsi. This left a critical gap in the research where there is an assumption of change rather than clear numerical evidence of change in the RTLM over time. The evolution of rhetoric is not a single event, but
rather a process that reflects the social and political changes within Rwanda during this highly volatile time. While it is easy to misunderstand the RTLM as a constant source of propaganda that is widely trusted and relied on by listeners, literature regarding the efficacy of propaganda illustrates that simply supporting a specific political party does not facilitate the acceptance of that party’s propaganda. We can only assume that the audience of the RTLM was slowly indoctrinated with the rhetoric over time, and that the rhetoric would have escalated slowly to match with the increased political and social unrest within Rwanda. In my research I work to show this theoretical gap by providing empirical evidence of numerical change, from which a discussion of propaganda and dissemination of information in the Rwandan genocide can take place.

**Methodology**

*I. Data Collection*

The primary source of primary data for this research came from the transcribed RTLM broadcasts only available from the Kigali Genocide Memorial’s Documentation Center, located in Kigali, Rwanda. These documents were taken from their original audio format and transcribed into Kinyarwandan, then later translated into French and English texts. This was done to provide evidence for the International Tribunal for Rwanda cases prosecuting the radio personalities that allegedly proliferated much of the propaganda during the genocide.

The author was given permission to copy all of the RTLM transcripts in the Documentation Center’s library for use in academic research. For a number of security reasons these documents are not made available to the public, largely for fear that the propaganda be recycled and reused to proliferate racial tensions in parts of the
Democratic Republic of the Congo bordering Rwanda. Paper copies of the transcripts were unavailable, so PDFs of originals were instead copied from the library’s mainframe for use in this research. The transcripts take place over an approximately, from November 24, 1993 until July 3, 1994, and vary from one to thirty-two pages in length. Some transcripts that were less than ten pages were special excerpts of especially condemning broadcasts, and was likely used to reinforce the broadcaster’s guilt during the ICTR trials. Mindful that this could potentially skew findings by trending numbers towards lower usage over time, documents shorter than ten pages were asterisked and final data analysis was done both including and excluding these files.

Given that over this vast length of time only 66 transcripts were done in English, it is inevitable that time gaps exist. It can be noted that the majority of time gaps took place early in the eight-month period, specifically in February when transcripts were lost due to a fire in the storage room in Arusha, Tanzania, where they were held during the ICTR trials. Arguably the most important time period, starting when Rwandan President Habyarimana’s plane was shot down by unknown assailants and continuing through the 100 days of genocide, had far less gaps between transcripts. This is important to allow reflection on the evolution and escalation of the broadcasted message. It should also be noted that during the genocide the RTLM had several radio personalities who would broadcast at different times and had different roles within the station. Throughout the eight-month time period, managers continued to play music segments and have segments unrelated to political or social news. Likely due to their political insignificance, broadcast translators did not accurately transcribe these sections. When the translations were done, they were often done inconsistently and by different translators, creating variation in the
format of broadcast information pages. Because of this, there was insufficient
information available on which radio personalities were presenting information and at
what times they were scheduled. Therefore, organizing by radio personalities would have
been a poor logistic choice due to insufficient evidence. It should be noted that there is no
evidence that all RTLM broadcasters actively participated in hate-speech, although
continued employment by such a racially biased organization would suggest
complacency with the targeted messages of the RTLM.

II. Content Analysis and Coding
To successfully analyze the content and evolution of the RTLM’s messages, a
quantitative coding method targeting specific words and phrases significant during the
Rwandan genocide was used. These words and phrases were decided on after sampling
ten percent of the transcripts and different periods and understanding their frequency and
use by RTLM radio personalities. The list of words and phrases are 1) cockroach/inyenzi,
2) RPF/inkotanyi, any derogatory reference to an 3) international organization, and 4) the
use of kill/dead in an active, violent setting. Cockroach, and its Kinyarwanda word
inyenzi, is well known as an offensive term used towards those individuals of the Tutsi
race. The RPF was the Tutsi militant group that launched major offensives against the
Hutu Interhamwe militia and eventually overthrew the Hutu Rwandan government out of
power. Inkotanyi is the Kinyarwandan word for ‘tough fighters, and became a code word
used by RTLM broadcasters in reference to the RPF forces (Reed 1996, 488). Because
RPF and Inkotanyi were most often used in conjunction, I decided to count them as the
same phrase within the transcripts. The derogatory reference towards international
organizations came after noticing increased antipathy towards groups like the United
Nations (UN) or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), especially after these organizations made efforts to intervene or provide victim’s assistance. Finally, the use of kill/dead in an active, violent way came from RTLM broadcasts that increasingly referenced the number of Tutsi RPF forces or Tutsi civilians killed in such a manner that encouraged further violence and higher death tolls. These are not the only major trends within the RTLM transcripts, but for understanding the evolution of the broadcasted message they were the clearest indicators of internal evolution that allowed for documentation.

Giving consideration to these four specific words/phrases, I went through each English-language broadcast and recorded the number of times each was used and the context in which it was used. When analyzing the organized data, a recurring timeline emerged that is useful in considering the value of each finding. This timeline is broken into three sections, the pre-genocide period (from November 24, 1993 to April 3, 1994), the early-genocide period (April 9, 1994 to May 23, 1994), and the late-genocide period (May 28, 1994 to July 3, 1994). The break-up of time is modeled this way because (1) the largest gaps of available transcripts take place over two evenly spaced points within the seven-month period and (2) because analysis of the data reflects a trending shift during each of these three major time periods. The count of each word or phrase during each period became the bulk of my raw data, from which stemmed my conclusions on the evolution of the broadcasted message over time. The count was performed digitally by first reading and highlighting, and then using the search function through each PDF file of transcripts in order to compile the most accurate numbers possible. From there the
numbers were manually entered into an Excel file where they were organized by date, file
number, and page length of each document.

**Data and Findings**

*I. Cockroach/Inyenzi-Overview/Summary*

When the term cockroach\(^8\) became a derogatory reference for the Tutsi ethnic
group is not clear, but in the time leading up to the genocide it was already well known
within the public sphere. One can assume that this term came into prominence after the
arrival of the Belgian colonists, who were largely responsible for creating an environment
of animosity between Hutu and Tutsi people. Regardless of the word’s origin, the
frequency of the word’s use grew in the months leading up to and during the genocide, as
can be seen in Figure 1. The nature of this change is reflective of the societal trend in
increasingly alienating the Tutsi minority during the seven-month period. Early use of the
term cockroach is infrequent and is used almost exclusively in reference to the RPF. The
RTLM broadcasters are careful to make a clear distinction between the RPF and the non-
RPF affiliated Tutsi living within Rwanda, and the majority of rhetoric consists of
criticisms and suspicions of RPF movements in the months leading up to the genocide.
It is only after the genocide has begun in the early-genocide period that the RTLM
increasingly uses the word cockroach in conjunction with the RPF, and while the
distinction between the RPF and the non-RPF affiliated Tutsi is lessening, the context of
discussion would show that use of cockroach is still largely attributed to the movements
of the RPF. Overall, the phrase *inyenzi inkotanyi*, meaning cockroach RPF, was used in

\(^8\) For the sake of brevity any reference to cockroach will also include the term *inyenzi*. Numerical data has been consolidated to reflect this.
conjunction a total of 216 times, the majority being in this pre-genocide and early-genocide period. We can see this illustrated in the graph where cockroach is used an average of 30 times per broadcast in the early-genocide period, up from an average high of 10 times during the pre-genocide period. However, it is not until the late-genocide period that the use of cockroach dramatically increases to an approximate average of 60 uses per broadcast. To test the association between frequency of word use for each time period, chi-square was used. The result was significant, χ² (2, n = 803) = 312.758, p < .01, concluding that the word use did increase over time and was not arbitrarily assigned within the broadcasts. It is also within this time period that the RTLM ceases with distinguishing between RPF and non-RPF affiliated Tutsi, and begin referring to the group as cockroaches as a whole. This is the most dramatic shift as it shows that the term cockroach is no longer used as a derogatory term for an enemy combatant, but is now used as a racially charged and largely dehumanizing term for any member of the Tutsi race regardless of political affiliations. By no longer distinguishing between the RPF and the non-RPF affiliated Tutsi, the RTLM infers that all Tutsi are members of or supporters of the RPF, and are therefore a threat to the Rwandan government and the lifestyle of Rwandan Hutu people.
**Contextual Analysis**

**Pre-Genocide Period**

Although as a whole the pre-genocide period had lower usage of the term cockroach, it is interesting to note several discrepancies, specifically during on November 29, 1993, some three months before the genocide began on April 6, 1994. In this broadcast, the radio personality spends a great deal of time referencing the efforts of the ordinary citizens in northern Rwandan towns and provinces protecting themselves from armed advancements of the RPF militant group. In this case *inyenzi* is used simultaneously with *inkotanyi* as a single, distinct term referencing Tutsi members of the RPF. That is to say, the broadcaster is using the derogatory term cockroach in direct conjunction with soldier, the connotation being that only those soldiers are viewed as less than human. At this point, the term is not used with non-RPF affiliated Tutsi, and in later broadcasts during this time period radio personalities are clear on the difference between “cockroaches” and Tutsi.
This is especially important when considering that the broadcasts referencing the RPF in this manner did so while commenting on alleged attacks by the RPF against the Rwandan army and innocent Rwandan civilians. The following passage is an excerpt from the November 24th broadcast in which the newsreader accuses RPF soldiers in committing crimes against civilian populations.

We continue to receive reports regarding the attack launched by the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi… in Gisenyi, Mutara commune\(^9\). Last night, using the volcano forest as their cover, they came down and killed part of the innocent population. So far, thirteen bodies have been found and they continue to search the forest as other bodies were dragged in there. They are the bodies of the people from Mutura commune. Up until now no bodies of Inkotanyi or Rwandan soldiers' have been discovered …On the 17th, when the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi massacred the people of Kidaho, Nkumba, Cyeru and Nyamugali\(^10\), slaughtering over forty people like cattle, Minister GASANA\(^11\) stated: "That is how the MRND\(^12\) sabotage the elections." Is that what happened in Mutura, Gisenyi? (RTLM, #142)

The entire 19-page broadcast from November 24th is similar in tone and content, presenting multiple unsolicited manifestations of RPF violence against Hutu civilians and reminding listeners that these attacks come after the RPF signed the Arusha Peace Accords promising to end violence. An especially interesting passage comes later where the broadcaster directly connects the RPF with civilian Tutsi citizens living peacefully within Rwanda.

Inyenzi-Inkotanyi attacked Mutura commune from the volcano forest. They went one kilometre deep into the inhabited areas and killed eighteen innocent peasants. They abducted seven persons and injured one other. We have received information from Ruhengeri about an Inyenzi attack on Kinigi commune but we

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\(^9\) Gisenyi is a northeastern Rwandan city on the DRC border, well known for access to lake Kivu, dense rainforest, and a series of volcanoes cutting through Rwanda, the DRC, and Uganda.

\(^10\) Kidaho, Nkumba, Cyeru, and Nyamugali are all towns in the northern part of Rwanda.

\(^11\) Anastase Gasana was Rwanda’s Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1993 and signed the Arusha accords on behalf of the Rwandan government.

\(^12\) MRND is the abbreviation for the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development, the ruling Hutu Rwandan political party.
do not yet know the number of casualties. This information is shocking at a time when the Rwandan government and the Inkotanyi have just signed a peace agreement and international interposition forces have arrived. It is becoming clearer every day that it will be difficult for Rwandans and Inkotanyi to live together. Earlier you heard an Inkotanyi woman who telephoned to insult me. You heard how she warned me, but I cannot stand the atrocities committed by the Inkotanyi. They are people like everyone else. We know that most of them are Tutsi and that not all Tutsis are bad. And yet, the latter rather than help us condemn them, support them. But I believe that in the end they will be discovered and they will be punished accordingly. (RTLM, #142)

One of the last lines specifically illustrates how the RTLM addressed the issue of Tutsi people living in Rwanda who were not directly supporting the efforts of the RPF. “We know that most of them are Tutsi and not all Tutsis are bad” (RTLM, #142). This clearly illustrates a cognitive separation between Tutsi and RPF, and a public understanding that simply being Tutsi did not make one a supporter of the rebel militant group.

Outside of this one November broadcast, the term cockroach was used sparingly during the pre-genocide period and those times it was used was in conjunction with the Inkotanyi. This shows that cockroach was not used in a derogatory fashion towards Tutsi civilians living within Rwanda at this time, but was rather a belittling term for a group of rebel militants looking to overthrow the Rwandan government. A second broadcast reinforces this conception, explicitly saying “those Hutus who joined the extremist group of Tutsis, who call themselves Inkotanyi whereas they are cockroaches, have brought about misfortunes to this country” (RTLM, #188). This passage reinforces the notion that while the RPF was largely a Tutsi organization, Hutus were able to join, which separates the members and supporters of the RPF from the Rwandan civilian population as a whole.
Early-Genocide Period

It is the second time period, the early-genocide period, where the use and frequency of cockroach starts to change significantly. The first transcript available after President Habyarimana’s plane was shot down on April 6\textsuperscript{th} was recorded on April 9\textsuperscript{th}. Here we see the beginnings of a transition where the Tutsi who supported the historical Tutsi-monarchical system are also considered cockroaches, in addition to the RPF and their supporters. Additionally, these broadcasts reinforced long-standing perceptions that Hutu and Tutsi were divided and Hutu people were subjected to the illegitimate superiority of the Tutsi people.

It is not only today that the PRF’s Inyenzi Batutsis\textsuperscript{13} want to take and monopolize power in order to oppress the Hutus and cast democracy out of the window, the Batutsi's superiority complex has been around for a very long time. Thus, they established schools like the famous Astrida Secondary School in Butare and the Ishuri ry'Indatwa, the elite Nyanza School in Nyabisindu, opened in 1907. The schools were not for everybody, much less for the Hutus, who had been enslaved for centuries and had no access to these schools. According to the feudal colonial legend, the schools were meant for only those born to govern, in other words, Tutsi children considered as the most intelligent. It is this superiority complex which set the Tutsis apart because, even today, many of them are still convinced of their intellectual superiority to the rest of the Rwandans. (RTLM, #004)

During these beginning days of the genocide, the RTLM continued with this type of broadcast, using messages specifically to incite hostility towards the RPF and those Tutsi who either directly supported the RPF or supported a political system that better represented the Tutsi minority. It is at this point that there is a significant break in broadcast transcripts for unknown reasons, from April 15\textsuperscript{th} until May 16\textsuperscript{th}. Regardless of the break, the rhetoric only continues to increase in tone and use of cockroach. The usage of cockroach increased from the pre-genocide period count of 40 times over 

\textsuperscript{13} Batutsi is synonymous with Tutsi, as Bahutu is synonymous with Hutu.
transcripts, to the early-genocide period of 123 times over 12 transcripts, shaping an environment where the Rwandan people and military are increasingly reactionary victims of the RPF’s illegitimate and devious advancements.

“Be patient to suffer is not to die. Be patient in this war launched by the cockroaches Inkotanyi who came killing us and eating our things saying that they will take the power. They can never take it” (RTLM, #002). This type of powerful rhetoric works to frame the conflict as one of continued suffering of the Hutus at the hands of the Tutsis. Moreover, it reinforces the point that there was legitimacy in the Rwandan government’s continued clashes with the RPF forces. By May 18th, we see increases instances in which the broadcasters use cockroach using it to address RPF supporters separate from actual RPF forces. This singular use is still rather limited, and the term “cockroach” is still specifically referring to the RPF forces. This is exemplified in the following passage, where broadcasters illustrate a distinction between civilians fleeing the conflict areas and the Inyenzi RPF carrying out the violence. “About a thousand persons cross the border daily, fleeing from the Inyenzi, those Inyenzi who continue to target intellectuals, as well as those they accuse of being Interhamwe. They actually check identity cards and do not spare any Hutu” (RTLM, #009).

**Late-Genocide Period**

With this time period came more ethnically biased messages meant to further deepen the divide between the Hutu and Tutsi people and desensitize and justify violence against Tutsis. For instance, the following quote illustrates the blurring of the line between the RPF and normal Tutsi.
The fathers of Inyenzi fled away in the 59's. However, the fathers told their children: "It's high time to take weapons and fight for the recovery of the power encroached upon us by Hutus. So, stand up! (RTLM, #131)

The frequency of use would take one more significant jump during the late-genocide period, when cockroach was used a total of 640 times over 24 transcripts. The highest number of use in a single broadcast was 109 times on May 28th, the first broadcast after RPF forces had taken control of Kigali’s airport and large swatches of territory in the north and eastern areas of Rwanda. This period is also significant in that it is the final evolution of cockroach from a belittling term for RPF forces to a derogatory term for any Tutsi, military or civilian. The RTLM shifted much of its message from simple condemnation into an active participant in the conflict, tirelessly assuring Hutus that the RPF was not winning, despite clear evidence to the contrary. Their use of cockroach reflects this mentality, as they encourage the elimination of all cockroaches that would continue to cause problems for the Rwandan government and Hutu people.

When you hear it launch the bombs on the Inkotanyi, do not think that it is the latter launching bombs. Rather, it is the Rwandan Armed Forces shelling these cursed Inyenzi in order to exterminate them so that we get rid of them once and for all. When this was announced, the people of Muhima14 became scared and said: Oh la la, what is going on? To those in Muhima, take courage. Nothing terrible has happened. You see that it is day time. Help the Rwandan Armed Forces. Show them where the Inyenzi are hiding, be it in a wc15 or elsewhere and then give them what they deserve. (RTLM, #016)

It is also during this time that the RTLM begins to call for extermination of the cockroaches, a terminology that differs greatly from the earlier calls to defeat the cockroach soldiers. The mere use of the term extermination begets a mindset where one no longer sees death as significant but rather a necessary chore to be carried out. When

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14 Muhima is a hospital in Kigali, Rwanda.
15 WC is an abbreviation for water closet, or bathroom.
coupled with the term cockroach, the evolution of the RTLM terminology becomes clear. The rhetoric used to describe Tutsi has transitioned from: “They are people like everyone else. We know that most of them are Tutsi and that not all Tutsis are bad” (RTLM, #142) to “[a shell fired] which will exterminate the Inyenzi…these people have been cursed by their soothsayer. He has cursed them so that they may all commit suicide. And leave no one behind.” (RTLM, #016).

The final days of the RTLM broadcasts continued using cockroach in this way, almost entirely eliminating its earlier use in conjunction with inkotanyi. Cockroach slowly replaced Tutsi when speaking of the Tutsi people, a move that effectively dehumanized them and desensitized Hutu people enough to encourage mass participation, even celebration, of the systematic eradication of 800,000 human beings. Two days before broadcasters of the RTLM were forced to flee as the RPF took control of Kigali, one personality made an especially haunting transmission that nicely summarizes the perspective of these newscasters in the final days of power. “So, where did all the Inkotanyi who used to telephone me go, eh? They must have been exterminated[.] Let us sing: "Come, let us rejoice: the Inkotanyi have been exterminated! Come dear friends, let us rejoice, the Good Lord is just" (RTLM, #040).

II. RPF/Inkotanyi-Overview/Summary
As mentioned earlier, the RPF was a term coined by the group’s original organizers, Tutsi Rwandans living in Ugandan refugee camps since the sixties when control of the Rwandan government was given to the Hutus. Because it is a self-originated term, one can expect only a minor transition in use of the term from before the genocide until the RTLM was no longer able to broadcast. A more interesting term is the
one used with it, *inkotanyi*, a Kinyarwandan word literally meaning tough fighters. Whether the RPF was aware of the historical connection is unknown, but *inkotanyi* was the name of the elite fighting force of the ancient Rwandan monarchy, the rulers of which were almost entirely Tutsi (Reed 2006, 488). Because of the word’s self-appointed meaning, the evolution of the RTLM’s references for the RPF is different in nature than cockroach. The steady increase of dialogue regarding the RPF during the pre-genocide period pertains largely to the group’s open political actions and their participation in the Arusha Accords process. While the RPF are not trusted or respected as a legitimate political group, nor are they seen as an active threat to the health of the nation. The greatest threat of the RPF was their supposed relationship with Western and highly militarized nations, like Belgium and the United States.

The early-genocide period experiences a more interesting transformation as the RPF become a topic for discussion during almost every broadcast, and blamed for the death of President Habyarimana and the subsequent domestic violence experienced in Rwanda. Because of their alleged involvement in the assassination of the president, any legitimacy held by the RPF was now replaced with loathing and contempt for a seemingly illegitimate political group who manipulated the international community to use the Arusha Accords process as a cover for increasing military strength. As the RPF continued taking territory from the Rwandan forces, rhetoric condemning them as dogs and cockroaches increased, eventually leading to accusations of RPF dealings in witchcraft and association with demons. Their purported partnership with international forces was also increasingly condemned as the RTLM reported that the RPF was manipulating the events happening within Rwanda to wrest control of the state from the
legitimate and sovereign government. A sense of paranoia can be taken from the latest broadcasts as the RTLM warns listeners that the RPF is hiding behind every rock and in every doorway, while simultaneously supporting the idea that the RPF was much weaker than it seemed and would never be able to take Kigali from the Rwandan armed forces. While reading the following findings, it is important to note that RPF and *inkotanyi* are used often in conjunction or interchangeably by the broadcasters, and frequency of use has been changed to represent that\(^\text{16}\). To test the association between broadcaster use of RPF/*inkotanyi*, chi-squared was used. The result was significant, \(\chi^2 (2, n = 2,196) = 101.559, p < .01.\)

![Figure 2: RPF/inkotanyi](image)

**Figure 2: RPF/inkotanyi**

**Pre-Genocide Period**

The earliest transcripts available of RTLM broadcasts are in late November of 1993, some five months after the radio station was founded, arguably for the sole reason of criticizing negotiation attempts between the RPF and the Rwandan government in

\(^{16}\) For the purpose of succinctness, unless specifically stated, RPF will be used interchangeably with *inkotanyi* from this point.
Arusha, Tanzania. This theme of criticism and distrust of the RPF’s attempts to negotiate for a peace settlement is clear in these early broadcasts, during which radio personalities would spend a great deal of time instilling distrust in the actions of those representatives of the RPF. Below is an excerpt from the earliest available transcript in which the RTLM broadcaster is shrewdly accusing the RPF of using intimidation tactics to secure more favorable treaty terms, thereby disrespecting the Rwandan government and the entire peace negotiation process.

To see a Prime Minister who has a visit from that Inkotanyi who deals with UN matters and Inkotanyi matters... And who afterwards makes declarations that are in favour of Inkotanyi... That also is not explicit. However, what has been found out, what is very known is that this present government which spent much time in an impasse is a powerless one. Because its members are trying to work with Inkotanyi if they were ever to join that government. Because they are trying to get posts in that government. So, they can never say anything that should oppose them to the Inkotanyi. That is the reason people are being killed and they can never talk of "Inkotanyi." (RTLM, #139)

RTLM broadcasters continued casting the RPF in an untrustworthy light, constantly referencing atrocities and devious plans allegedly set in motion by the Tutsi rebel group. This anti-RPF propaganda came at a time when most Rwandans, Hutu and Tutsi, had faced the devastation of a three-year civil war in which the RPF played the unlawfully invading force. It is not unreasonable then to understand how easily the RTLM was able to make unfettered criticism without acknowledging the legitimacy of the RPF’s political claims. Perhaps, in an effort to eliminate genuine acknowledgement and understanding of this separate position, the RTLM made early efforts to point out the RPF as an enemy of the government and of all Rwandans. “How strange it is for the military authorities to have kept silent over such things? This means that the situation must be combated, or else the Inkotanyi, who are now described as mere criminals, would assail Rwanda, whereas
the situation is serious” (RTLM, #146).

This early genocide period was ripe with creating a sensationalized atmosphere of distrust of the RPF’s movements and involvements with any negotiation processes. However, the RTLM’s views of the RPF were nearly always reactionary rather than actionable movements against the rebel group’s participation in governmental affairs.

Most talk was concerned with what legitimate ways the RPF would be able to influence laws and treaties to their benefit, with a smattering of rhetoric based on illegal or immoral deeds done by the RPF forces. Similarly, the RTLM at this time are treating the RPF with distrust and hostility, but are unwilling to openly condemn ever political or military action. This is reflected well in the following passage, where the RTLM radio applauds one of Rwanda’s opposition parties for upholding democracy by not conceding to the demands of the RPF in Arusha.

If the balance of the political forces means that the individuals in the Inkotanyi movement must have 45 deputies so that the day they would want to amend the Arusha Accords they would have 42 deputies, the number of votes required to pass an amendment, PL\textsuperscript{17} will not append its signature to such a document (applause). PL is, therefore, concerned about the sovereignty of the democratic power born out of the 1959 revolution. Let it be understood one more time; it is written in the bible "Woe to them, woe to them, woe to them"; to those who do what? (Applause). Woe to those who neglect the interests of the people, the interests for which Rwandans have fought so hard, reducing them to nothing to please the Inkotanyi. Woe to them (applause). (RTLM, #155)

As the timeline moves closer towards the beginning of the genocide, we see a marked increase of dialogue regarding the RPF’s military movements, specifically on March 31, 1994 when the RPF was referenced over 180 times throughout a 28-page

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\textsuperscript{17} PL is the abbreviation for Parti Libéral, a Rwandan opposition party present at the Arusha Negotiations noted for its lack of a specific geographical base and its attractiveness to Rwandans with no appreciation for ethnic politics, including Tutsi and mixed-parentage Rwandans.
transcript. By this time much of the discussion is consumed with actively disengaging negotiations and progress with the RPF. This acted to reinforce a perception of the RPF as an illegitimate group forcing violence on to the people of Rwanda.

They [negotiations] will start after RPF has explained to Rwanda and its population the reason why every time it wants to take power by force whereas it pretexts the process of democracy …Inkotanyi should ask pardon in the same way as a sinful Christian repents. They should swear that they will not resume the war anymore. Then negotiations can start. It is tricky to say that we will start from Arusha Accords, called Peace Accords whereas these Accords have helped RPF to prepare the war.” (RTLM, #188)

**Early-Genocide Period**

It is during the early genocide period that discussion about the RPF really begins to evolve, especially within days of President Habyarimana’s death on April 6th. In the days that followed, the RTLM no longer referred to the RPF as a political group engaged in legitimate negotiations with the Rwandan government. Whereas before April 6th the RTLM had almost no trust, but at least a grudging respect for the power of the RPF, the broadcast immediately after that completely dismissed the RPF as a valid threat to the security of the Rwandan government. Most notably is that in the confusing aftermath of President Habyarimana’s assassination, the RTLM broadcasters clearly attributed the plane explosion to RPF forces.

Everyone listening to the RTLM broadcast and all our regular listeners should realize there is no point boasting about cooperating with the Inkotanyi and putting your trust in them because they end up disappointing you… They dismissed him and went on to take his life as they did to His Excellency President of the Republic when they shot down the plane bringing him back to the country. (RTLM, #58)

It is important to remember that the force responsible for the death of President Habyarimana has never been officially found, but it is commonly acknowledged that Hutu-power government forces were the most likely suspects of firing a surface-to-air
missile near the Kigali airport. However, the RTLM immediately began informing
listeners that the RPF was responsible and was not only untrustworthy, but now also
threatening the lives of all Hutu Rwandan civilians. This rhetoric continued in the weeks
following the death of the president, as the genocide began in earnest. Much of the
RTLM broadcasts reinforced the idea that the RPF was a devious group that used the
proceedings at Arusha as a cover and the death of the president as a foray into warfare
with the Rwandan government and people. Fighting the RPF was not only a legitimate
cause, but also a necessary and righteous battle against an illegitimately invading force.

Much of the fear mongering at this point came not only from government policy
and media rhetoric, but from historical precedence in the neighboring state of Burundi,
where the first genocide of the Great Lakes region of Africa took place in 1972. During
that time, the elite ruling Tutsi class allowed for the mass slaughter of Hutu
schoolchildren and intellectuals (Mamdani 2001, 215). Later in October of 1993, the
majority Tutsi army killed the Hutu president of Burundi, and sent a wave of Hutu
refugees into Rwanda. It is largely because of this regional history that the Hutu of
Rwanda were especially susceptible to rhetoric claiming that the RPF caused the death of
President Habyarimana and would systemically oppress and kill the Hutu population if
they managed to claim power. In addition to speaking of the RPF in a way that elicited
fear from listeners, the RTLM would report of diplomatic dealings between the RPF and
other outside states or organizations.

We have learnt that Patrick Mazimpaka, 1st Vice-President of RPF-Inkotanyi, was
in Ugandan yesterday where he had a meeting with the Tanzanian Ambassador
based in Uganda. He told the Ambassador that the Inkotanyi were now ready to
form a government after takng over power here in Kigali, but that they wanted to
include parties representated in the current government. Let me say that this is
quite extraordinary in politics. After signing the Arusha Peace Accords which
stipulate that ‘no one should resort to force, or the use of weapons to take over power. (RTLM, #70)

While these statements were not backed up with evidence and the sources of information were never received, one can imagine that to those listening to the RTLM as a legitimate news source, it would be especially frightening to learn that the invading army is already planning on the establishment of a new, Tutsi-majority government. As time progresses, the RTLM encourages continually guerilla-like tactics against the RPF as the Rwandan government loses ground in the northern area of the country. May 15th stands out specifically as the day broadcasters brought a captured child, the alleged younger brother of an RPF soldier, on the air to be interviewed about what tasks he was asked to do by the RPF. The boy was questioned on his mission, weaponry possessed by the RPF, what caused him to join the RPF, his commanding officer, etc. This interview took place over nine pages, during which time names of RPF sympathizers were revealed, as were approximate numbers of troops and information that the RPF was working with “white men and sorcerers.” “It is sad. It is sad to hear the cockroaches take 12 year children, young children, to the battlefield and give them difficult tasks because there are children, still ignorant, and not intelligent enough” (RTLM, #02). Whether this child was actually a captured RPF soldier remains unknown, but concluding remarks by the RTLM condemn the RPF for engaging children in warfare and remind listeners that any child could be a spy.

Those who are at the market you will be told things about those children you call street children. You will hear that many of them are Inkotanyi. Look at all of them and then touch on their heads, you will see a sign showing you that there are Inkotanyi. There is a zero sign shaved at the back side of their heads; touch and see. You will see RPF children who, in daytime, make themselves street children but who, in the night, disguise themselves and go to inform RPF on the situation. (RTLM, #02)
This story of the child spy is reused over the following several days, which each occurrence becoming more detailed on the movements of RPF soldiers within the cities, potentially down the street or next door to RTLM listeners. Broadcasters reminded listeners to remain vigilant, constantly elaborating on areas reputed to house undercover RPF soldiers. One such instance called out to those living in Rugunga\textsuperscript{18} to “come out of your houses” and see that RPF were the ones tending the horses, and the broadcaster recommended that RTLM listeners should surround them and kill them before they became suspicious of the Hutu townsfolk. Additionally, it is during this time that the RTLM steadily increases rhetoric that seemingly debases the RPF by illustrating them as a dishonorable and weakening force without the competency to hold ground against the Rwandan forces, although at this time the RPF have managed to push through and hold most of northern Rwanda. RTLM broadcasters advertise that the RPF have become discouraged and could be eliminated without negotiations or peace agreements, as the 1990-1993 civil war had eventually required. For example, the following quotes expresses the belief that defeat of the RPF is at hand. “Let us be given weapons and sufficient ammunition so that we can fight the Inkotanyi. We shall defeat them, come what may, for they have lost courage” (RTLM, 207).

Late-Genocide Period

As time passes and the Rwandan forces are continually beaten back, anti-RPF rhetoric increases and becomes much more violent and accusatory in nature. Beyond being suspected of making deals with foreign nations and groups, by the late genocide

\textsuperscript{18} A town in the Southeast of Rwanda, South of Akagera National Park and near the border with Tanzania.
period the RTLM begins exploring assassinations allegedly committed by the RPF. The death of the president is still often mentioned, but increasingly high political and military officials’ deaths were also attributed to the RPF. Additionally, the RPF are accused of massacring Rwandan refugees fleeing to Kigali from other regions. “They congratulate the Rwandan army to have intervened when RPF had started surrounding them to kill them… The Rwandan army tried to trace a way through those wicked savages and people were able to pass through” (RTLM, #131). Heroic stories of the Rwandan army are frequently repeated, while simultaneously disregarding civilian eyewitness testimony of RPF numbers as the ramblings of confused and frightened Rwandans mistaking the vast number of Rwandan military forces for the few and cowardly RPF fighters.

As the RPF continues moving through Rwanda and capturing territory from Rwandan fighters, actionable statements from the RTLM increase in number and intensity, constantly urging listeners to pick up arms and fight off the encroaching soldiers. “the officers and troops, the youths and the population, everybody must be vigilant and seek means of expelling the Inkotanyi RPF as soon as possible, because their plan is to encircle us very speedily before those troops arrive to find us already exterminated” (RTLM, 31). It would seem that by this point, mid-to late-June, the RTLM were no longer trying to cover up the RPF’s territorial gains and instead advised citizens to keep on high alert, reminding listeners that the RPF has infiltrated every city and every neighborhood.

All area where it could find accomplices, persons who could accommodate them, who could provide a retreat base, who could offer them places where they could hide their equipment, where they themselves could hide. Fifty persons out of 600, that is about the number of persons who reportedly helped RPF, and true enough, that is also just about the proportion of Tutsis in a commune. But to say thereupon that all the Tutsi had been killed, that was not said. Nor was it said that all RPF
members had been killed; that is also not true. (RTLM, 137a)

In the final days of the RTLM broadcasts, an environment of suspicion was created of one’s neighbors, and listeners were constantly encouraged to arm against the RPF, who were more or less accused of using underhanded tactics to wrest control of the country from the legitimate Rwandan army. The RPF were accused of working with the Belgians in bombing and shooting innocent civilians as they slowly took territory closer and closer to Kigali. As if to remind listeners of having a European ally, the RTLM frequently referenced the longstanding Rwandan relationship with the French, and encouraged support of the French army. These appeals were made to both Rwandan citizens and, seemingly, the French, of whom the RTLM claimed the Rwandan army could gain military support if only the international community was made aware of the immoral exploits of the RPF. “Let’s try our best to collaborate with French soldiers. We have to unveil not only people who set obstacles against them but also criminals. The International Community must make efforts to know what Inkotanyi are doing” (RTLM, 42).

Thus, the evolution of RPF references from before the genocide until which point the RPF overtook Kigali is clearly reflective of the external military environment. In late 1993 and early 1994, references to the RPF were largely derogatory, but in no more extremist fashion than one could imagine in the rhetoric of opposing political groups. There was clear suspicion of the RPF’s intentions signing the Arusha Accords, but this suspicion was largely alluded to, and the RTLM seemed cautious as to what information they openly provided. This changed almost immediately as President Habyarimana’s plane was shot down and credit for the act was given to the RPF, a theory
currently unsupported by government officials and historians. These early days in the genocide when the outcome was still unclear, the RTLM spoke of the RPF as a disparate force without the leadership and organization to pose an actual threat to the Rwandan army. Their territory gains were made using scrupulous methods that often involved the unnecessary slaughter of civilians as they moved from town to town. As the tide of the fighting changed and the RPF aggressively took territory throughout Rwanda, increasingly threatening the capitol, the RPF was painted as an overly vicious group who indiscriminately used child soldiers and slaughtered innocent Hutu Rwandans. The RTLM claimed the RPF had the illegitimate support of the Belgian government and other international forces, and used witches and sorcery as weapons against the Rwandan army. The following quote exemplifies the tone in which the RTLM denotes the RPF’s advancements, and warns listeners of RPF tactics.

New attacks and massacres are taking place everywhere in the outskirts of Kigali. Also today, the cockroaches Inkotanyi are still shelling on civilians. They don’t target at soldiers. They have the objective of killing people if they don’t succeed in taking Kigali. It seems that they don’t hesitate to put this objective into action.” (RTLM, #42)

III. International Organizations-Overview/Summary
At different points during the coding, there were various examples of what should be included in this section. Ultimately, I decided not to include references to states in this section, instead limiting this to international organizations (IOs). This was done because simple historical references to France and Belgium skewed numerical results when the content of the discussion did not directly relate to the actions of these nations. Additionally, it would not be beneficial to include Western European nations while simultaneously disregarding Central and Eastern African nations that were also involved
in some small part with Rwanda during this period. My goal was not to count any reference to international powers, but rather to examine the change of perception of the RTLM of the various international organizations that participated in humanitarian or military efforts within Rwanda before and during the genocide. Because of this, the specific IOs included in this examination are the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). While ultimately compiled, the numbers were collected from any conversational reference to these IOs by RTLM broadcasters, with the goal of comparing references to real-world actions made by these IOs within Rwanda. To test the significance of references to international organizations, a chi squared test was performed, and the results showed that the numbers are statistically insignificant. However, this is not unexpected, as the below section will explain, the RTLM only referred to IOs in a reactionary fashion. If there was no interference from IOs, they were not a subject of the day’s conversation. Therefore, for this category, it was not the increased references to IOs, but the evolution in consideration of IOs’ involvement in Rwanda that was significant.

While the evolution in the term cockroach is arguably the most changed finding, the shift in judgment of international organizations was far more intense. In the pre-genocide period, there is a clear annoyance with the international community for forcing the Rwandan government to the negotiating table with the RPF at the Arusha Accords. However, this annoyance is largely attributed to the Belgians and the United States and their perceived manipulation of the United Nations that caused an increased interest in the Rwandan civil war. This contempt is understandable, as history has shown
most states react poorly to international interference in domestic, sovereign issues.

However, this contempt grows stronger after the beginning of the genocide, as the RTLM actively attributes the RPF’s early advancements to interference on the part of international organizations. Despite this, the RTLM are not ready to completely condemn the international community and frequently advise listeners to be courteous to UNAMIR peacekeepers and foreign journalists that visit Rwanda. The underlying goal seems to be pandering for international sympathy and eventually raising enough support to gain assistance in rooting out the RPF. However, as time continues into the late-genocide period, it becomes clear that the international community would not be intervening for either party’s sake, and the Rwandan government is alone in its fight against the RPF. It is at this point that rhetoric condemning international organizations really begins and active threats and accusations are made towards the UNAMIR director, Canadian General Romeo Dallaire.

![Graph of INTL ORG]

**Pre-Genocide Period**

The first RTLM broadcast available, that from November of 1993, briefly
mentioned the UN, UN forces, and UNAMIR, as well as head officer of UNAMIR, Romeo Dallaire, a Canadian national on his first mission as a military representative of the UN. These first mentions of the UN are questioning of their supposed neutrality in Rwanda, “They come saying ‘we are fleeing from the Inkotanyi.’ So UNAMIR…, partial as it may be… in any case, tomorrow UNAMIR will sit for a test. We will see if it is biased or if it has really come to keep peace in this country” (RTLM, #139). Suspicion of the UN is to be expected, considering that the Rwandan government was largely forced to the table by the United States, France, and a number of African nations, at the first two at least hold major power within the international community. In addition to serving as guarded commentators of the UN’s early intervention, the RTLM also served to educate listeners on the role of the UN and what UN-controlled demilitarized zones meant for RPF and Rwandan forces alike.

As time came closer to the beginning of the genocide, it becomes clear that the RTLM holds a certain feeling of contempt for the UNAMIR mission, likely a carry-over from their previous attitude towards the international community’s unwarranted intervention in Rwandan domestic affairs. This contempt is manifested in questioning the competency of the UNAMIR mission and eluding that “UNAMIR will get a shock” (RTLM, #155) with how efficiently the Rwandan government would execute their plans. By mid-March of 1994, the RTLM was actively calling the UNAMIR into question over their intentions and their rights intervening in a sovereign country, like in the below excerpt:

The UNAMIR mission was to help with the implementation of the Arusha Accords. This is a sovereign country. What gives UNAMIR the right to impose a government and ministers that neither the people nor the political parties want? UNAMIR might therefore be an accomplice in a coup d’état. (RTLM, #177)
The UN’s relationship with Belgium is called into question, and the RTLM accuses the UN as working as an arm of the Belgians who wish to continue a state of colonialism within Rwanda. It is at this point that the RTLM identifies Belgium and maybe even UNAMIR as an enemy of the Rwandan government’s agenda.

**Early-Genocide Period**

Immediately after the death of President Habyarimana on April 6th, and the subsequent assassination of Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and the 10 UN Belgian peacekeepers guarding her on April 7th, there is no mention made of IOs within the RTLM broadcasts. It is not until April 12th that mention is made of IOs, and already references to them are derogatory in nature. After the death of the Belgian soldiers, on April 11th, UN soldiers stationed protecting Tutsi civilians at a school are ordered to withdraw to the Kigali airport, and after their departure those seeking sanctuary at the school are slaughtered. The ICRC also released opening estimates that tens of thousands of Tutsi civilians had already been killed by Rwandan forces by this time. The RTLM broadcast does not report on any of these events, but rather criticizes the UN for the reduction in troops in Rwanda while increasing troops in Bosnia Herzegovina. While the RTLM does take some time to applaud the African troops donated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the broadcaster disparages troop donations by non-African states and considers the participation of non-African states unwelcome. This is consistent with the overall consideration of Western powers interfering in domestic Rwandan issues as a means to recolonize the country and allow the Belgians to resume their historical relationship with the Tutsi. This relationship between the RPF and foreign forces specifically was called in to play, and the strength and legitimacy of the RPF as an
independent group was called into question in the below excerpt:

So the Americans with their Tutsi and Belgian friends started threatening to put their dollars elsewhere if Rwanda refused to give power to the Tutsi. Leave them alone and we will see what happens. Let the Tutsi go in peace and we will solve our problems ourselves. Anyways, the problems of a country are solved by its own citizens and not by foreigners. The whites have just abandoned us and that is no surprise! What relationship is there anyway between us and them? If you depend so much on them, you will eat trash (RTLM, #04).

On April 15th, the day after Belgium withdrew troops from the UN peacekeeping force, the RTLM did not address the situation, but instead challenged listeners to file complaints with the United Nations about the movements of RPF soldiers in specific towns and actions taken by RPF soldiers against specific generals. Because of the general inaction and the forward momentum of the RPF, the RTLM continued to attribute the RPF’s success with a secret partnership with the Belgians, while condemning the UN as being essentially useless in defending civilians against the RPF attack. This dichotomy in consideration for Western forces illustrates that although the RTLM holds the Belgians in a negative light, broadcasters still considered the UN capable of coming to their aid. Of course, the opposite would have been true at this time, with the UNAMIR forces prohibited from active peacemaking and the French continuing to supply and fund the Rwandan army.

Unfortunately, because there are no broadcasts available between April 15th and May 16th, it is unknown whether the RTLM commented on the official UN reduction of troops on April 21st, or on the ICRC estimation of 500,000 Rwandans killed mid-May. Conversation about IOs did not begin again until May 17th, at which time the broadcasters warn listeners to be wary of white foreigners accompanied by UNAMIR troops. It is advised that these foreigners and journalists should be treated with
courteousness but listeners should not openly answer questions about the Rwandan government’s agenda. For example, the broadcasters warned, “Do not get embroiled in situations that might turn against you. Avoid making statements that might later be used against us or against you. Therefore, be careful with what you say” (RTLM, #207). This statement communicates the RTLM realizes speaking clearly to foreigners could result in increased international interest in the events taking place within Rwanda, and the international community would react poorly to statements encouraging the death of the Tutsi RPF. On that same day, the RTLM also speaks of the ICRC, although not to mention the increased death toll reports, but rather to ask for the return of government ministers to help with the task of organizing internal relief, so as not to be reliant on the assistance of the ICRC. This distancing from the ICRC is likely due to government disapproval of the ICRC’s public statements regarding the growing death count within Rwanda. Were the government able to control the ICRC’s actions, they would likely have prohibited treatment to Tutsi refugees, instead only serving Hutu refugees. Were the Rwanda government capable of handling all emergency aid and healthcare without assistance, they would have the capability of selecting which civilians had access to treatments.

The very next day, discussion of the UN’s actions dominated much of the broadcast discussion. The creation of a United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) for Rwanda in Canada sparks a great deal of contempt from the RTLM broadcaster:

We shall no longer be conciliatory regarding what is happening in Rwanda; we shall fight relentlessly. Today, certain white people… believe that the villain in this country is the machete and cudgel-wielding Hutu, whereas the Hutu is only
trying to ensure the Hutus are not annihilated by the descendants of Gatutsi\textsuperscript{19}. (RTLM, #009)

The discussion continues by reviewing the long-standing history of racial prejudice of the Rwandan people by Belgian colonists, and the broadcaster challenges that the current intervention is simply another manifestation of Western colonialist power trying to manipulate the political situation in Africa. In this rallying discussion of foreign intervention, the broadcaster even references the defeat the American military suffered in Somalia, alluding that a similar intervention would yield the same violent response. Surprisingly, the news that the UNSC had decided upon sending additional troops into Rwanda was greeted with appreciation, although that may have been due to the troops having been assigned from African and French troops. A word of caution though to listeners, requested “no corpses be seen by the roadside and that no one is killed while onlookers laugh” (RTLM, #009).

Late-Genocide Period

The next major reference to IOs took place on May 23\textsuperscript{rd}, the day after the RPF took control of the Kigali airport and officially extended their territory through northern and eastern Rwanda. This was a major loss by the Rwandan army; however, the RTLM reports of losing the Kigali airport were done in such a fashion that it seemed as though the Rwandan army generously granted the territory. RTLM broadcasters assured listeners that the UN had decided that the airport be controlled by the UN forces, and the Rwandan government willingly granted that request in an effort to reopen relations with the international community and accept aid into areas wrought with conflict.

\textsuperscript{19} Different translators will write either Batutsi or Gatutsi, but the both refer to those of the Tutsi ancestry.
So, when the Rwandan soldiers were getting ready to hand over the airport to 200 UN soldiers, RPF came in its boastfulness self-esteem and took the airport. Since RPF came shooting and shouting, Rwandan soldiers preferred to give the way saying: “Nobody won’t risk his life because of these fools!” They started running at the airport, dancing and claiming to have caught the airport. (RTLM, #131)

With this loss, worldwide media began reporting on fallback of the Rwandan army. A French media outlet that claimed the RPF had overtaken as much as ¾ of the country, and the RTLM quickly accused them of accepting bribes from the RPF to exaggerate the success of the RPF’s campaign.

In the coming weeks, the forced bravado and acceptance of the UN’s mission within Rwanda deteriorates as broadcasters begin attacking UNAMIR and its head officer Dallaire for not intervening against the RPF, instead accusing them of backing the RPF by both training and outfitting RPF soldiers to fight in the offensive.

We remember many of his [Dallaire] actions aiming at favouring RPF’s victory or well-being. And when UNAMIR did something wrong, he would pretend the opposite… We said that we noticed that the Inyenzi Inkotanyi were working with UNAMIR Belgian soldiers, settling their positions in order to attack the city and that we suspected a war would soon be launched in this city. (RTLM, #027)

This framing of UNAMIR as a deceitful organization continued for several pages, where the history and goals of the mission were called into question. While UNAMIR is not a consistently hot topic throughout June, a few weeks later on June 21st it once again was at the forefront of discussion by the RTLM. It should be known that June 22nd the UNSC issued S/RES/929, which reaffirmed previous UNSC resolutions and authorizes a humanitarian mission to Rwanda headed by France lasting two months or until which point UNAMIR was once again capable of handling the situation in Rwanda.

RTLM broadcasters seemed aware of deliberations by the UNSC, and perhaps as a result increased derogatory rhetoric denouncing the UNAMIR mission as corrupted and
untrustworthy. Dallaire was specifically called out as being “an RPF member in disguise” (RTLM, #036), and was accused of attacking civil defense groups who were simply defending themselves. It was made especially clear how necessary the RTLM was to the cause, as the broadcaster claimed that all other radio stations within the country were under UN protection and were being subsidized by UNAMIR. The RTLM reassured listeners that it was because of this relationship with IOs that other radio stations were saying the RPF had already overtaken much of Rwanda and were close to taking Kigali.

The last available broadcast mentioning IOs was on June 30th, four days before the RPF overran Kigali and the RTLM was forced to quit broadcasting and flee. It is within this last broadcast that the RTLM viciously attacks Dallaire and asks listeners to question the motives of the entire UNAMIR mission.

Another hot news is that that guy Dallaire declared not to have been chased by Rwandans but by Radio RTLM. He does not have where to go. He is confused now. He tried to go to Goma to see the French Army commanders to ask them to cooperate with him. However, do not forget that Dallaire is a real Inyenzi. He is on the top of other Inyenzi. He is the one who advise them on how to operate. If he went to see the French army commanders, his purpose is nothing than to speak on behalf of the Inyenzi. Besides, he himself said that the French army must operate in the area under the control of the Government and he, together with his UNAMIR would take are of the area controlled by the RPF (RTLM, #137).

The attacks on Dallaire continue throughout the day’s broadcast, becoming increasingly violent and accusatory. At one point, the broadcaster claimed that “Canada will learn the news of Dallaire’s death… In fact, Dallaire is the basis of this war. This is known” (RTLM, #137). The entire UNAMIR mission is condemned as having been controlled and damaged by Dallaire’s actions, with broadcasters claiming that he misled the mission and misinformed IOs and foreign governments about the actual cause and nature of the fighting within Rwanda. The use of Belgian troops is also attributed to the losses faced by
the Rwandan army, as broadcasters claimed that any time you would find Belgians in Rwanda, you would also find cockroaches working with them.

The transition of how IOs were discussed before and during the genocide is rather exceptional; from the beginning the sense of distrust over motives is clear, but it is not until the RPF is aggressively winning their battle with the Rwandan army that UNAMIR was unilaterally condemned for actively assisting the RPF over the legitimate, sovereign Rwandan government. What is most interesting is the transition from talking of UNAMIR as a whole unit to later regarding them a puppet of General Dallaire who goes from being a RPF sympathizer to a full-fledged member of the RPF in a little over two weeks time. The amount of control and blame they place on Dallaire borders on comical, considering today’s knowledge that through much of the genocide Dallaire was largely unable to manage UNAMIR’s limited peacekeeping forces over the vast territory of Rwanda. One of the most interesting points in reference to IOs, however, was before the RTLM deemed UNAMIR entirely untrustworthy. It was in mid-May, before the RPF overtook the Kigali airport, that the RTLM cautiously warned listeners that when seen by foreign journalists escorted by UNAMIR peacekeepers, to not laugh while killing civilians and be mindful of leaving bodies out in the road where they could easily be seen. This dialogue makes it clear how the RTLM still believed that the Rwandan government could court international political favor by painting an unrealistic picture of events to foreign journalists. As soon as it became clear that attracting international support was no longer an option, broadcasters were quick to condemn UNAMIR and the UNSC for meddling in a sovereign state, and eventually moved towards outright accusation of the political goals of Dallaire and his mission.
As you see, Dallaire keeps on betraying us as he has always been doing… He stays in the area controlled by the Inyenzi whereas his troops should be unbiased. We think he is useless to our country. He has chosen his camp. Therefore, we must openly fight him as an Inkotanyi. Our army must stand up and chase him away as they would do for any other Inyenzi. Let us overwhelm him with intense shelling; he openly turned into an Inyenzi-Nkotanyi (RTLM #137).

IV. Kill/Dead

The category of kill/dead came about in a response to coding actionable statements made by the RTLM either in congratulating groups on their participation in the genocide or giving orders as to what area or which specific people should be attacked by listeners. Unlike the other three words and phrases explored, collected data shows that the frequency of use was initially rather high, then fell dramatically for several months, before becoming increasingly used later in the broadcast. It is important to note that the final count of the words kill and dead was conducted selectively, so as not to include common sayings like “deadfall” or “dead quiet” that may have misrepresented the actual content of the broadcasts.

As for the transition of this category, it differs from the other two in having only two time periods, rather than three. In order to test the legitimacy of the change between the two categories, a chi-squared test was performed, $\chi^2 (a, n = 831) = 42.986, p < .01$, the result showing the increase in use was statistically significant. The two categories can be understood as a period of “victims” and a period of ”avengers.” The period of victims is categorized largely because the deaths and killings referenced during this time are exclusively that of Hutu victims to Tutsi violence. This begins very early in the transcripts as instances of RPF guerilla warfare in northern Rwanda result in Hutu civilian causalities, the topic of which remains hotly debated throughout several broadcast periods. This victim period continues even through the beginning of the
genocide, as the RTLM reports hundreds of Hutu civilians being mercilessly slaughtered by advancing Tutsi troops while in actuality the slaughter of Tutsi civilians had already begun. The central focus of this period is that Hutu civilians are increasingly threatened by Tutsi forces, and despite the valiant protective efforts of the Rwandan armed forces, Hutus of all ages fall victims to the ruthless RPF.

It is only around May 15th that the references to violent death and killings begin referring to Tutsi victims rather than Hutu victims. This avengers period is marked by an increase in commendation for those Rwandan soldiers and citizens who actively protect their nation by killing the RPF soldiers. Not only are those who kill the Tutsi RPF praised, they are pressured to join in the slaughter as a means of protecting their families and their homeland. The RTLM begins making actionable statements, instructing listeners to go to specific areas and carry out attacks were alleged RPF loyalists were hiding, insisting that doing such was the responsibility of every Hutu. Fear mongering became increasingly present, as Tutsi RPF were accused of witchcraft, cannibalism, and torturing Hutu civilians for enjoyment. While these actionable statements became increasingly popular, the RTLM never ceased simultaneously reporting on Hutu victims of RPF violence, communicating the fear that if you do not kill them, eventually, they will kill you.
Victims

As one can see from the above graph, the first several transcripts from November and December of 1993 frequently referenced death, although in reports from alleged victims of RPF violence, and mostly in the northern region of Rwanda. On November 24th, RTLM broadcasters spend a great deal of time reviewing the deaths of civilian Rwandans, and assuring listeners that people in all areas of power are susceptible to the violence of the RPF.

That is the reason people are being killed and they can never talk of ‘Inkotanyi’. They are really afraid of that word so that they (Inkotanyi) will not hear them and get angry with them and scold them... now that people have been killed and there is no doubt that it is RPF who killed them. (RTLM, #139)

It would be interesting to see the language of broadcasts from earlier in the year, and whether such fear mongering had been common since the RTLM’s inception. Doubtless, it would not be difficult to elicit a reaction from listeners if they were constantly being bombarded with reports of RPF soldiers indiscriminately murdering their fellow citizens for the goal of further political gains.
Last night, using the volcano forest as their cover, they came down and killed part of the innocent population. So far, thirteen bodies have been found and they continue to search the forest as other bodies were dragged in there. They are the bodies of the people from Mutura commune. Up until now no bodies of Inkotanyi or Rwandan soldiers’ have been discovered. (RTLM, 142)

In the month following the new year, talk of death and murder by RPF soldiers suddenly dropped off, as the language of broadcasts became increasingly political and refined in nature, and a great deal of time is spent praising the RTLM itself for its contributions to media diversity within Rwanda. There are several days where the only time the words are used is in poetry, traditional phrases, or in reference to the fall of various political factions within the Rwandan government. It is not until March that references to violent death increases, and once again these are reports of alleged RPF violence against civilian populations.

Yesterday Inkotanyi committed again atrocities in Kinihira sous-prefecture. They killed there without any reason five innocent persons. They say then that nobody investigated. But in reality in that no man’s land, we kept on lying many times that Inkotanyi made it their land. “Once again RPF proves that Arusha peace doesn’t exist. Arusha accords really exist but not peace accords since RPF goes on killing and slaughtering Rwandan and even foreigners here in Rwanda. (RTLM, 168)

In this pre-genocide time, rhetoric about the ruthless nature of the RPF would have served a useful purpose in creating an atmosphere of fear for the individual Rwandan listener. An individual tuning in to the RTLM would have already been distrustful of the RPF’s intentions in signing the Arusha accords, and so broadcasts that specifically state how the RPF used the Arusha accords as a guise while slaughtering Rwandans and pursuing their own political agenda could easily incite a citizen into participation in a crusade against the RPF.
Interestingly, the first broadcast available after the death of President Habyarimana is April 9th, and made not a single mention of his death or the slaughter that had already begun against the Tutsi within Rwanda. It is not until April 12th that broadcasts included death, and the deaths covered were civilian victims of the RPF.

Here in Kigali, you can hear the noise of bullet falling on the SGP throughout Remera area. The bullets are meant to dislodge the Inkotanyi hiding in houses where they have surrounded and killed people savagely… They surround them and turn them into human shield. They hide behind an old woman so if someone shots them, the bullet will hit the old woman and the Rwandan Armed Forces dare not do that. (RTLM, #004)

The irony is that by this point, the Rwandan military forces were already systemically working through neighborhoods and killing those civilian Tutsi most threatening to their genocidal campaign. It is not until over a week after the genocide began that the RTLM reported on the first killings by Rwandan forces, and those deaths mentioned were of white soldiers fighting with the RPF. No mention was made of the nationality or whether the soldiers were actually UN peacekeepers. Rather, the news was read as though there are active battalions of foreign fighters working with the RPF, and the broadcaster invited foreign journalists to come and film the bodies as proof the RPF were fighting an unfair battle.

Avengers

It is not until May 15th, over a month after the genocide began, that the RTLM makes its first direct, actionable statement ordering listeners to participate in the killing a selected target. “I think that those who have guns should immediately go to these Inkotanyi before they listen to Radio RTLM and flee. Stand near this place and encircle them and kill them because they are there” (RTLM, #002). This was in reference to an area suspected as a hideout for RPF soldiers, but without any true confirmation of
whether those in hiding were soldiers or innocent civilians, the RTLM asks listeners to
slaughter them on suspicion of guilt. Later that same day, the broadcast receives a
message from a listener who condemns Uganda and Belgium for their support of the
“cockroaches” and urges the “remaining cockroaches” to negotiate before they are
completely wiped out. “Our soldiers are hunting them in order to kill them all” (RTLM
#002). The RPF are advised to come to negotiations with the Rwandan government
before it is too late, to see if ceasefire agreements could be swiftly implemented. “If they
do not listen to this, especially if they do not listen to this advice that came from the
residents all over Rwanda, they will have many people exterminated and will be seeking
peace for dead people. So, this would be pointless” (RTLM, #008). It has become clear at
this time in the broadcasts that much of the attention has shifted from Hutu victims of
RPF violence to those RPF soldiers and sympathizers that are valiantly killed by the
righteous Rwandan army.

All the people who were killed in the country are the victims of the RPF. It is the
Iyenzi Inkotanyi who killed them and nobody else… That is why the
government should not be dissolved. It was legally set up and did not carryout any
killings. It was rather set up to reestablish the security that the RPF had troubled.
(RTLM, #008)

The losses suffered by Hutus at the hand of the RPF continue to be a popular topic
with broadcasts, but as time moves into the late-genocide period, discussion increasingly
turns to the killing of Tutsi, often announced with a sense of relish and satisfaction.
During an interview with a Hutu from outside the Kigali area, one broadcaster asked if
the young man had ever seen a cockroach, and the flippant response was “I once say one
and we threw him stones and we killed him” (RTLM, #012). Even the topic of Hutu
deaths no longer held the same gravity as before, as one broadcaster commentated “They
said they will kill all Hutus, what can they use to decimate Hutus? One Tutsi may kill one Hutu but in the end six million Hutus can survive, then what ethnic group would be injured most?” (RTLM, #012). It is also interesting to note that the term exterminated is used with increasing frequency in reference to the RPF, as one can see from the May 30th report of 100 RPF soldiers being killed from Rwandan army shells. “The situation is such that one attack on the Inkotanyi can kill about 100 of them. Therefore, they will be exterminated” (RTLM, #016).

During the last month of the genocide, this type of terminology increased at a steady rate and was present in every broadcast available. A transition has been made so that the vast majority of discussion of death is focused on the slaughter of Hutu innocents by RPF soldiers and sympathizers. As if to justify the killing of RPF, broadcasters would review the purported slaughter of Hutu civilians by RPF soldiers, and would encourage listeners to protect themselves and their villages from this threat. In an interview with a Hutu who allegedly survived a RPF attack on his village, he said, “My wish is that if it was possible they might provide us with guns this evening and then we fight, we fight for our country so that we may kill those small Inyenzi who come to kill us with small hoes” (RTLM, #134).

Once again, we see the broadcasters more commonly using the word exterminate in reference to killing RPF soldiers and sympathizers during this last month, either in actionable ways or in reports of the actions of the Rwandan army. “They should stop with negotiations and let us catch those Inyenzi, exterminate them… Then, we will drove those who would survive away from the boarder, not only at 2 or 3 km, but at least at 10 km from the boarder” (RTLM, #027). Despite the dramatic increase of rhetoric
condemning the RPF for their killings and encouraging support for the extermination of RPF soldiers and sympathizers within Rwanda, on June 13th, the RTLM openly criticizes the looting and killing enacted by the Rwandan army and citizenry, and vocalizes support for a high-level member of the Rwandan military in charge of suppressing looting and other illegal behaviors.

We are telling him that the RTLM is congratulating him because RTLM is a Radio that neither supports thieves nor killers. It is a radio that supports only persons who are fighting in this war in order to win and for our country not to be conquered through the barrel of the gun… The RTLM does not support killers and thieves. (RTLM, #109)

It is also around this time that the RTLM steps up in the nature of rhetoric regarding those civilian Hutu victims of the RPF.

The methods of execution used by inyenzi-inkotanyi… they kill in a cruel manner… they mutilate the body… and remove certain organs such as the heart, the liver and the stomach. This is what I was telling you yesterday, that the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi could be eating human flesh… no, there is no doubt about that anyway, since… what do they do with all the organs they remove from the bodies? They do eat human flesh… the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi eat human beings… so much so that we have little hope of finding any remains. (RTLM, #111a)

There have been no reported accounts of any group participating in cannibalism during the Rwandan genocide, and no source for this information was given. However, this type of propaganda regarding the actions of RPF soldiers could easily instill a sense of fear and warrant retribution against those allegedly participating in the horrifying slaughter of Hutu civilians.

As such, a call to arms is made in every broadcast available after this, going from mid-June until the RTLM is effectively forced to flee as the RPF overtook Kigali. “So we must take our revenge on the Inyenzi Inkotanyi and exterminate them as the whole youth is ready to do and has proved to us” (RTLM, #035). Names of targets are frequently
provided, usually of government officials who were not entirely supportive of the Rwandan army’s campaign. “It the war were to avenge His Excellency Habyarimana Juvenal, there are people who should not have been spared; the ones who we should have killed first” (RTLM, 137). This last message of regret for those not killed immediately after the genocide began took place on June 30th, four days before the RPF overtook Kigali and the RTLM were forced off the air. As the conflict reaches a point of desperation, broadcasters continue to propagate that the war is going well and the Rwandan army are pushing back RPF forces. “The good news is only yesterday we have killed more than 50 cockroaches on all fronts” (RTLM, 42).

Collectively, the use of the terminology referring to death did not change from before and during the genocide to the same degree that other language evolved over the seven-month period. More of the change was gradual and contextual, spiking more in the early days when reports of violence had previously taken place, but not conversed about universally. The biggest change was the shift and intensifying of rhetoric criminalizing RPF soldiers for the deaths of civilian Hutu villagers, from early allegations and reports of violence to later news of extreme behavior, such as cannibalism by RPF troops. These claims, of course, were grossly over exaggerated or entirely falsified; however, given the violent environment within the country it is not surprising that slow introduction to increasingly violent accusations would result in a majority of the population taking these reports as absolute fact and fearing for their lives and the lives of their families. Those individuals who fear for their safety were then more susceptible to influential dialogue regarding actively participating in the conflict, which became another trend in RTLM broadcasts as the genocide progressed. “No Rwandan, among those who have faith in the
Republic, should expect any assistance from them. Instead, those of you who have faith in the Republic, stand up so that we may continue to kill the Inyenzi” (RTLM, #022).

**Conclusion**

April 6th, 1994 was a day that marked the beginning of the 100 day genocide, one of the shortest yet most brutal genocides in modern history. The RTLM, a radio station created for the sole purpose of questioning the motives and legitimacy of the RPF’s involvement in the Arusha Accords process, arguably used the death of President Habyarimana as a launching point to begin a ruthlessly violent propaganda campaign that resulted in mass public participation in the killings of Tutsi people. However, my findings show that despite the common perception that the RTLM’s message was consistently violent and provocative, the language used within the broadcast and the nature of conversation evolved dramatically over the seven-month duration from before and during the genocide. The goal of this paper was to examine the nature of this change through the four key words and phrases that experienced the most dramatic increase of use and contextual shift over the duration of the radio’s broadcasts. The slang derogatory word cockroach went from being an intermittently used word referring to the RPF’s forces within Rwanda to a word used prolifically to denote any individual of the Tutsi ethnic minority. The context of discussion for the RPF changed from an early distrust and loathing to later propaganda claiming RPF soldiers wantonly killed innocent Hutu civilians and frequently participated in witchcraft, cannibalism, and torture.

International organizations faced a similar, if more radical shift, where they were initially viewed with annoyance for their interference in a domestic issue, to a point where the RTLM encouraged the courting of international powers for assistance against
the RPF, to the final position viewing international organizations as illicitly assisting the
RPF in their military movements within Rwanda. Finally, references of death began as
the RTLM initially condemned the RPF for their merciless slaughter of Hutu citizens,
while simultaneously ignoring Tutsi victims of armed violence. It is only at a point
halfway into the genocide when the RPF begins referring to the killings of Tutsi civilians,
and this is done with great fervor, reminding listeners that if they do not kill the Tutsi, the
Tutsi will eventually kill them.

Within the current literature on the Rwandan genocide and political propaganda in
general, this evolution is frequently misrepresented or overlooked by scholars who
simply view hate media as emerging wholly developed. My goal is to promote an
understanding that hate media evolves over time in reaction to the political and social
environment in which it exists. For the RTLM, that means accepting that despite their
final incendiary broadcasts, the station began largely as a dissenting opinion on the
negotiation process of the Rwandan government and the RPF. I would challenge that
without the government’s plotting for the mass eradication of the Tutsi minority, the
broadcasts of the RTLM would have never escalated beyond frustration and simple
denunciation of the RPF as a political force. Now that numerical evidence exists that
clearly shows a trend in the evolution of violent rhetoric within the RTLM, the next step
within the literature needs to study why that evolution took place and what forces
specifically influenced a graduate change in propaganda. This change could be based on
obscured encouragement from the Rwandan government or a sinister internal conspiracy
to gradually force exposure to the concept of mass participation in genocide. The change
could also be a direct reflection of the social and political environment, showing that broadcasts of the RTLM were victim to changes within the external environment.

Regardless of the actual circumstances behind the changes of the RTLM, it is clear that broadcasters had responsibility for the exact nature of their propaganda, and are deserving of their sentence for incitement of genocide by the ICTR. As the literature on hate media and political propaganda expands, I would challenge scholars to study what forces influence privately-owned broadcasting, rather than simply accept the existence of these stations. The experience in Rwanda indicates that human rights can be affected by the free use of media, and in the future we must determine to what extent free speech is protected, and what responsibility the international community has in eliminating the threat to peace that media like the RTLM poses.

“What we know at RTLM, the radio loved by the Interahamwe, the radio that supports the Interahamwe, the radio that supports the youths of all republican parties ... These youths are united under the umbrella of a single group commonly referred to as the Interahamwe and, as General Bizimungu says, the youths are in the frontline.”

(RTLM. #036)
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All English RTLM files

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