

Post-Cold War deterrence: theory, policy, practise

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- Theoretical frameworks for contemporary deterrence
 - C.20th shifts from modern war to total war
 - Varieties of strategic coercion
 - Enduring issues with nuclear deterrence
 - Philip Bobbit on the nature of deterrence
 - Contemporary forms of nuclear deterrence:
 - bilateral direct deterrence 1
 - Extended nuclear deterrence; *defenders, antagonists and protégés*
 - Dimensions of the organization of the US contemporary nuclear umbrella
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 - The post-Cold War “deterrence reformers”
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Theoretical frameworks for contemporary deterrence

- Structural realist theory
- Liberal institutionalist theory
- Gramscian hegemonic theory
- State terror theory

- No one theoretical framework adequate

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C.20th shifts from modern war to total war

- shift from the potential within Clausewitzian war
- C20 mobilization of national energies
 - mass production, mass politics, mass communications
 - weaponry and social organization bring C20 war close to Clausewitz’s “absolute war”
- necessarily genocidal character of total war
- erosion of rationality of war for states
- bloc formation - erosion of the “external”
- 50 years of the Cold War as **“the imaginary war”**

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Core contemporary forms of security threat from organized violence

- Consequences of break-down of law, organised crime, and terror
- Transnational non-state networks aiming at destabilization of governments
- Wars of always incipient genocide aimed at the reconstitution of the nation-state (internal make-up and borders)
- Wars of imperial intervention
- The re-constituted *imaginary total war* of global scale involving potential nuclear *exterminist* means and uncontrollable consequences.
 - *Immediate* and *general/background* versions

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Varieties of strategic coercion

- Strategic policies using military force to ...
 - Deterrence
 - ... to coerce another state to not act in a way it would otherwise do
 - Compellence
 - ... to coerce another state to stop doing what it is doing
 - Reassurance
 - ... re-assure an ally or an enemy of intention

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Two modes of deterrence: Patrick Morgan

- *general vs immediate* deterrence
- general deterrence
 - when neither side is about to mount an attack on the other
- immediate deterrence:
 - When at least one state is considering using military force against another which may be itself considering the immediate use of force.

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US military definitions of deterrence

- Deterrence is “the prevention from action by fear of the consequences. Deterrence is a state of mind brought about by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction.”
 - *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 08 November 2010
<http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>
- “The objective of strategic deterrence is to convince potential adversaries that courses of action that threaten U.S. vital interests will result in outcomes that are decisively worse than they could achieve through alternative courses of action available to them. Strategic deterrence achieves this objective by decisively influencing an adversary’s decision calculus.”
 - Department of Defense, “Strategic Deterrence Joint Operating Concept,” February 2004.

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Table 1
Nuclear Policies, Goals, and Practices

Practice	Strategic Goals		
	C Compellence	D Deterrence	R Reassurance
1. Warning/ing	C1 (HL1)	D1	R1
2. Threats	C2 (HL2)	D2 (HL3)	R2 (HL3)
3. Cooperation	C3	D3	R3 (HL4)

Note: HL = historical lesson
 HL1: policy: C1
 historical correlate: Hiroshima/Nagasaki
 strategic context: use nuclear weapons to compel enemy to capitulate
 HL2: policy: C2
 historical correlate: Korean War, crisis behaviour
 strategic context: use nuclear threats to compel enemy to settle without outright defeat
 HL3: Policy: D2, R2
 historical correlate: Cuban missile crisis, Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine
 strategic context: use nuclear threats to deter enemy aggression and to reassure allies
 HL4: policy: R3
 historical correlate: SALT, INF nuclear arms control agreements
 strategic context: adjust nuclear threats to reassure enemy and/or ally

• Source: Peter Hayes, *Pacific Powderkeg, American Nuclear Dilemmas in Korea*, Lexington Books, Lexington Massachusetts, 1990, p. xxxi
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Enduring issues with nuclear deterrence

- Credibility of intention
 - to antagonist
 - to allies
 - to domestic audience
- Reliability of capacity for expressed intention
 - Force structure and disposition
 - Political resolve
- Risks and consequences of error
- Moral and political standing of planning
 - “a smoking ruin at the end of two hours (David Rosenberg)”

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Philip Bobbit on the nature of deterrence

“Deterrence is an extraordinarily limited theory that relies on a reasonable but extraordinarily broad assumption. That assumption is that the State will make decisions as a result of balancing the benefits to be achieved by a course of action against the costs incurred in pursuing those benefits by the particular means proposed...”

“Military deterrence is a concept that is useful *within* war or the approach to war, once political relations have become so strained that hostilities only await opportunity. It is only because we have lived so long at war [i.e. cold war] that we are inclined to miss this point, and that we have come to think of deterrence as a prominent feature of the international relations of a peacetime regime.”

The Shield of Achilles, (2002), p.12

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Contemporary forms of nuclear deterrence: bilateral direct deterrence

- US-Russia
- US-China
- US-North Korea
- North Korea - South Korea, Japan, China
- US-Iran
- China-Russia
- India-Pakistan
- Israel-Iran,

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Extended nuclear deterrence; *defenders*, *antagonists* and *protégés*

- US-Russia
 - protégés: NATO countries (historically China re SU?)
- US-China
 - protégés: Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Australia
- US-North Korea
 - protégés: Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Australia
- US-Iran
 - Middle Eastern allies - Israel; selected others?

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Dimensions of the organization of the US contemporary nuclear umbrella

- the range of threats against which nuclear protection is offered
- the location and type of forces involved in substantiating the threat
- the physical location of the nominal antagonist nuclear weapons state in relation to the allied recipient country
- the level and type of engagement of the allied recipient country in the provision of the deterrent
- the involvement of the allied recipient country with other allied nuclear weapons states besides the nuclear guarantor

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Models of US extended nuclear deterrence (Tanter, 2011)

- How many countries under the US “nuclear umbrella”?
 - 30?, 31? , “30 plus”?
- Four regional models
 - NATO - nuclear sharing
 - East Asia - Japan, South Korea, (Taiwan)
 - Australia
 - Emerging Middle East

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Nuclear Elements of NATO Strategy (1)

Key elements:

- NATO's conventional forces alone cannot credibly deter
- Maintain - for the foreseeable future - mix of nuclear and conventional forces, **at minimum sufficient level**
- NW ensure uncertainty in mind of any aggressor
- They deter the use of NBC weapons
- NW make unique contribution in rendering the risks of aggression incalculable and unacceptable
- **NW remain essential to preserve peace**

Source: NATO's Nuclear Strategy: A View from NATO HQ, 2006, Guy B. Roberts, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for WMD Policy, International Staff, NATO HQ, April 2006
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New and emerging forms of deterrence (Tanter and Hayes, 2011)

- existential deterrence (not new: Bundy, 1963)
- collective actor deterrence
- tailored deterrence
- pivotal deterrence
- recessed deterrence
- retired deterrence
- dependent/extortionate deterrence

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The post-Cold War “deterrence reformers”

- 1. Perception of “Golden Age of Stable Deterrence”
 - Mutual assured destruction and later variants
 - Understood rules of the road
 - Dependent on comparable technologies
 - Roughly symmetrical stakes
 - Technical capacity to communicate
 - Cultural capacity for mutual understanding
 - Number of players = 2, or at times, = 3.

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Security Challenges

	Lower Likelihood	Higher Likelihood
Higher Vulnerability	<p>Irregular</p> <p>Non-state and state actors employing “unconventional” methods to counter stronger state opponents—terrorism, insurgency, etc. (erode our power)</p> <p>(e.g., terrorism, insurgency, civil war, and emerging concepts like “restricted warfare”)</p> <p>Likelihood: very high; strategy of the weak Vulnerability: moderate, if not effectively checked.</p>	<p>Catastrophic</p> <p>Terrorist or rogue state employment of WMD or methods producing WMD-like effects against American interests. (paralyze our power)</p> <p>(e.g., attack on homeland, global markets, or key ally that would generate a state of shock and preclude normal behavior)</p> <p>Likelihood: moderate and increasing Vulnerability: unacceptable, single event can alter our way of life</p>
Lower Vulnerability	<p>Traditional</p> <p>States employing military forces in well-known forms of military competition and conflict. (challenge our power)</p> <p>(e.g., conventional air, sea, and land forces, and nuclear forces of established nuclear powers)</p> <p>Likelihood: currently decreasing due to historic capability-overmatch and expanding qualitative lead Vulnerability: low, but only if transformation is balanced</p>	<p>Disruptive</p> <p>Competitors employing technology or methods that might counter or cancel our current military advantages. (capitalize our power)</p> <p>(e.g., technological – bio, cyber, or space war, ultra miniaturization, directed-energy, other – diplomatic blackmail, cultural or economic war)</p> <p>Likelihood: low, but time works against U.S. Vulnerability: strategic surprise puts American security at risk</p>

Our approach should be tailored to deter and dissuade across the challenges

Source: Ryan Henry *Deterrence and Dissuasion for the 21st Century*, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (2005)

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Deterrence: What's New


Cold War Deterrence	21 st Century Deterrence
Relatively well-understood opponent - Mature strategic relationship	Poorly understood opponents - Nascent strategic relationship
Single opponent (i.e., Soviet Empire)	Multiple state and non-state opponents
Deterrence is the cornerstone of national strategy	Deterrence is only one component of our national strategy
Targets to hold at risk were easily identifiable	Targets to hold at risk are difficult to identify
Deterrence policy relied primarily on retaliation and less so on denial	Deterrence policy emphasizes denial as well as retaliation
Primarily nuclear	Nuclear and non-nuclear
Reliable channels of communication	Uncertain channels of communication

Source: Ryan Henry *Deterrence and Dissuasion for the 21st Century*, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (2005)

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Deterrence: Why and What

- **Deterrence is generally preferable to going to war because it:**
 - Forestalls behavior contrary to US interests
 - Can be less expensive in terms of human, economic, and political costs
 - Conserves national power – but requires a focus of will
- **Strategic interaction(s) in which a party uses threats to forestall adversaries from taking an action(s) that they otherwise would have taken had the threat not been present. The party does so by threatening to:**
 - Impose unacceptable costs upon the adversary in response to their action(s)
 - Deny the opponent any prospect of attaining its perceived goals
- **Deterrence requires:**
 - The ability to identify and understand that which the adversary holds dear, how it assesses its security situation, and its decision-making processes
 - Having or developing the perceived capabilities and credibility to impose unacceptable costs and/or to deny gains to the adversary
 - The ability to communicate effectively with the adversary

Source: Ryan Henry **Deterrence and Dissuasion for the 21st Century**, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (2005)
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An n-player game (Paul Bracken)

- Cold War was a bilateral contest
 - Much thinking about the dynamics of that competition assumed two player game
 - Pathological strategic dynamics of n–player games
 - E.g. Martin Shubik’s *true!*: a duel between three players:
 - Who shoots first? What is the cost of waiting?
 - No rational solution without an account of communication, trust and commitment

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- In case of international nuclear security, also no “rational” solution in extremely complex situations
 - Strategic stability, deterrence, bluffing and war avoidance all become problematic
- Result is extreme uncertainty

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Some further differences (Paul Bracken)

- Centrality of bomb-making to state-making and national identity
 - Problem of dismantling supportive institutions
- As late-comers they face resistance from the established nuclear powers
- Distance from the rational strategic cultures of the US and Europe that generated the first nuclear age.
 - Asymmetries and hierarchy of globalization

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Persistence of the state of nuclear terror

- classic state in Cold War, never totally gone:
 - Terrorized misrecognition/*meconnaissance* of the nuclear facts of life
 - Simultaneously knowing dread coupled with an averting of the eyes that amounts to various forms of denial
 - Supported by social structures of media and education
 - Crucial to the maintenance of national security postures in democratic states.
- now *background* for reduced US/Russia/ China tension;
- *foreground* for US/North Korea/Iran/Israel/ Pakistan/India

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Putative roles of US deterrence today

- Deterrence
- Compellence - defeat in war
- Assurance of allies
- Disarmament / non-proliferation

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Functions of US END in Northeast Asia - Patrick Morgan

- Protecting ROK from war, via deterrence
- Compensating ROK for not developing nuclear weapons and huge conventional offensive capability
- Offsetting DPRK's (past) superiority in conventional forces
- Offsetting the DPRK nuclear weapons program
- Helping to reassure Japan US will not "lose" South Korea and threaten its security
- Re-assuring Japan that US would not retreat from NE Asia
- Adding to deterrence of attacks on Japan
 - Partly compensating Japan for not developing nuclear weapons - and hence avoid domestic conflict
- Discouraging development of nuclear weapons by Japan, supplementing US umbrella over Japan
- Adding to American power projection capability in the region; helping secure US access to bases in Korea

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Nuclear reliance or nuclear marginalization? The actual place of nuclear weapons in US strategic practise

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Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management” (Schlesinger report), 2008

- “ ... a distressing degree of inattention to the role of nuclear weapons among many senior Defense Department military and civilian leaders...[who] may lack the foundation of experience for understanding nuclear deterrence, its psychological content, its political nature, and its military role - which is to avoid the use of nuclear weapons.” (Report)
- “We emphasize that deterrence must start at the top, that the services indeed have picked up clues since the end of the Cold War that interest in deterrence at the highest levels of the Defense Department has diminished.” (James Schlesinger)

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Theoretical frameworks for contemporary deterrence

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- State terror theory

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