IN THIS ISSUE

Successful Diplomacy in Southeast Asia
What Shapes Public Opinion on War and Defense Spending?
Motivations for Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States
Reasons for Leaving Terrorist Organizations
The Unintended Consequences of “Robust” UN Peace Operations
Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.

Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.

DIRECTORY

Patrick Hiller, Ph.D.
DIRECTOR

David Prater
PROGRAM MANAGER

Molly Wallace, Ph.D.
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Paloma Ayala
GRAPHIC DESIGN

221 NW Second Ave; Suite 204
Portland, Oregon 97209
United States

Phone: 503.505.5721
digest@warpreventioninitiative.org
www.warpreventioninitiative.org

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook.com/
PeaceScienceDigest

@PeaceSciDigest

youtube.com/user/
WarPreventionTV

flickr.com/photos/
warpreventioninitiative
Peace and Conflict Studies (henceforth: Peace Science) has emerged as an academic discipline with its own graduate programs, handbooks, research tools, theories, associations, journals and conferences. As with most scientific communities, the slow migration of academic knowledge into practical application becomes a limiting factor of a field’s growth, impact and overall effectiveness of its practitioners.

The expanding academic field of Peace Science continues to produce high volumes of significant research that often goes unnoticed by practitioners, the media, activists, public policy-makers, and other possible beneficiaries. This is unfortunate, because Peace Science ultimately should inform the practice on how to bring about peace.

The research and theory needed to guide peace workers to produce more enduring and positive peace, not only more peace studies, have come to stay. Bridging the gap between the peace movement moralism and foreign policy pragmatism is a major challenge facing everyone who seeks to achieve peace on Earth. (Johan Galtung and Charles Webel)

To address this issue, the War Prevention Initiative has created the Peace Science Digest as a way to disseminate top selections of research and findings from the field’s academic community to the many beneficiaries.

The Peace Science Digest is formulated to enhance awareness of literature addressing the key issues of our time by making available an organized, condensed and comprehensible summary of this important research as a resource for the practical application of the field’s current academic knowledge.

Disclaimer

Research featured in the Peace Science Digest is selected based on its contribution to the field of Peace Science, and authenticated by the scientific integrity derived from the peer-review process. Peer-reviewed journals evaluate the quality and validity of a scientific study, giving us the freedom to focus on the articles' relevance and potential contribution to the field and beyond. The editors of the Peace Science Digest do not claim their analysis is, or should be, the only way to approach any given issue. Our aim is to provide a responsible and ethical analysis of the research conducted by Peace and Conflict Studies academics through the operational lens of the War Prevention Initiative.
Dear Readers,

It is our pleasure to introduce Volume 2, Issue 2 of the Peace Science Digest.

At the War Prevention Initiative, we are part of a community of experts who rely on best practices and scientific insights into the numerous effective and viable nonviolent measures that can lead to common security – no one is safe until all are safe.

In times of political and social uncertainty, even instability, it is important to support those committed to identifying these alternatives to war and violence but also those committed to eradicating the social ills of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia and other forms of prejudice. The current administration, in particular, is not aware of—or not willing to seriously engage with—nonviolent and (cost) effective responses to current crises. It is time for the public and its servants – our elected officials – to get away from the pretense that there are no alternatives to projecting and using military force, when indeed there are many constructive responses. The Peace Science Digest works to amplify these ideas by making important findings from the academic community accessible, understandable, and useful. We thank you for taking the time to utilize this resource.

Inside, you will find analysis of research highlighting the use of preventive diplomacy in Southeast Asia and how regional and international organizations can contribute to conflict resolution. We provide insights on the factors that influence public opinion on war and defense spending. We discuss key motivations behind domestic right-wing terrorism as well as a fascinating study on reasons why people leave terrorist organizations. Finally, we look at the evolution of armed United Nations peacekeeping missions.

As always, we are excited to provide contemporary relevant and useful Peace Science analysis to our audience. Several of our readers have opted into the print subscription; this support is invaluable to the sustainability of our work and goes a long way to offset the costs of this publication. Thank you all for your confidence and support, and if you are interested in supporting us through a beautifully curated print edition, there is never a bad time to take that step! (Go to: www.communication.WarPreventionIniative.org)

Your Peace Science Digest Editorial Team

Patrick Hiller  
David Prater  
Molly Wallace
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Successful Diplomacy in Southeast Asia                        | 6 |
| What Shapes Public Opinion on War and Defense Spending?       | 10|
| Motivations for Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States | 14|
| Reasons for Leaving Terrorist Organizations                    | 18|
| The Unintended Consequences of "Robust" UN Peace Operations    | 22|
Inter-state Preventive Diplomacy is a tactic that has been used by international organizations since the mid-1970s to address disputes between countries. Preventive Diplomacy (PD) is typically conducted by the United Nations (UN) or regional organizations such as the European Union (EU) or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). These organizations exercise PD through fact-finding missions, the establishment of early warning systems, the preventive deployment of armed peacekeepers, and/or the creation of demilitarized zones between conflicting parties.

Although PD in Southeast Asia has failed to resolve some of the region’s long-standing conflicts and disputes, including those regarding the Korean peninsula and between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, overall it has been quite successful in preventing and containing many other disputes. Much of the success of PD in Southeast Asia has been credited to ASEAN and its ability to mitigate disputes between member states through dialogue, consultation, and peaceful dispute resolution, as well as by upholding national sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs. In this article, however, the authors argue that the success of PD in Southeast Asia is not due to the efforts of ASEAN alone and that other factors have had greater influence on the effectiveness of inter-state PD in the region.

The authors argue that the successful use of PD in Southeast Asia is balanced on three main variables: 1) the level of great power interest in a dispute (in this case, a great power refers to one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council); 2) the perceived legitimacy of the PD actor; and 3) the nature of the agreement in question. With the first variable, the assumption is that a higher level of interest and interference by “great powers” has a negative effect on the success of the PD—the more often great powers intervene in PD, the less successful PD is likely to be. With the second variable, the authors highlight the perceived legitimacy of the UN in its role as facilitator of PD between disputing Southeast Asian countries. Here, the authors argue the UN holds more legitimacy than ASEAN as an international actor due to its global reach and the power held by the Security Council—and therefore its involvement will have a positive effect on PD. The third variable relates to the intricacies of the agreement...
being pursued, as well as the general understanding of the agreement among the parties involved. When the terms of the agreement clearly address grievances and are well understood by all parties, there is a better chance of successful PD.

To assess the importance of the three variables, the authors analyze case studies of past disputes (the East Timor dispute, the Preah Vihear temple dispute, and the South China Sea disputes) to see how and why PD was successful in some disputes but, so far, has failed in others. As a reminder, the East Timor dispute concerns the vast oil and natural gas reserves in the sea spanning between Australia and East Timor. The Preah Vihear temple is the focus of an emotional century-long territorial dispute between Cambodia and Thailand. The South China Sea is home to heavily debated maritime and territorial claims over sovereignty, trade routes, and resource rights, and has been the site of much strategic defense posturing between various countries in the region.

The UN was very active in the East Timor dispute and Preah Vihear temple dispute, and ASEAN was the key organization facilitating disputes regarding the South China Sea. By comparing the levels of involvement and success rates of the UN and ASEAN, the authors find support for their second hypothesis. They also gain a deeper understanding of whether the success of PD in Southeast Asia is largely due to ASEAN or due at least in part to the three variables framing the study.

The case study analysis showed that the intervention of great powers in an inter-state dispute typically had negative effects on PD dispute resolution. However, in disputes and conflicts where the UN got involved, its legitimacy proved to be critical to the prevention or de-escalation of violence. The East Timor and Preah Vihear temple disputes were successful examples of PD, because they both had minimal interference from the great powers, high legitimacy of the PD actor (the UN in this case), and a clear understanding among parties of the agreement being pursued. The authors argue that disputes in the South China Sea have failed to find resolution through PD, because of the high great power interest, low legitimacy of the PD actor (ASEAN and China in this case), and the complex nature of the agreements being pursued.

Preventive Diplomacy:
Action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and limit the spread of conflicts when they do occur.

*Here, the distinction between conflict and dispute is that disputes are often more easily resolved and less complex than conflicts, and conflicts are sometimes violent whereas disputes have yet to escalate to violence. Also, multiple disputes can exist within one conflict.

---

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Although the authors prioritize the UN’s capabilities over ASEAN’s, since its creation, ASEAN has played an important role in conflict prevention and management in the Southeast Asia region. This is evident in one of the case studies analyzed by the authors, as well as in the low likelihood of ASEAN members using force against each other. However, the focus of ASEAN has been on preventing violence rather than on resolving conflict between its members, thereby opening a window for unaddressed grievances to escalate into violence in the future. Unresolved disputes over the South China Sea and Taiwan/China pose grave threats to regional peace. This research shows that the UN would be a more effective mediator in such cases than ASEAN, and interference from ‘great powers’ such as China (as a conflict party), the U.S., and Russia is detrimental to peaceful and sustainable dispute resolution.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this article, the authors consider PD to be successful when violence is reduced during a conflict or when PD prevents a dispute from escalating to violence. However, this definition of success does not address the resolution of any underlying causes of the conflict. Thus, dispute settlement or conflict management seems to be the underlying goal of PD, whereas conflict resolution or transformation is often beyond its purview, as the volatile conditions associated with conflict make it difficult to address the underlying conditions that caused the conflict in the first place. Unfortunately, if left unaddressed, these same conditions may reignite the conflict once the pressures or incentives of PD have worn off. By shifting attention away from regional organizations like ASEAN, international organizations such as the UN, which is often perceived as more legitimate, can lead PD efforts and discourage individual ‘great powers’ from intervening in inter-state conflicts, while also encouraging agreements that are clear and widely understood. According to the authors, this shift will increase the likelihood of successful PD action and potentially open the door to more sustainable conflict resolution.

Military force or the pre-deployment of military troops is a method in the PD ‘tool box.’ It should be noted that as long as a military option is part of a so-called solution, PD undermines its own claim to be a diplomatic initiative. In practice, it would be wiser to make clearer distinctions between the toolboxes of conflict transformation that rely on the many viable nonviolent alternatives to military options and those efforts where military options are part of the picture. Any military component integrated into PD needs to be carefully weighed with regard to its potential to undermine diplomatic efforts.
In Southeast Asia, intervention by great powers (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council) lowers the success rate of Preventive Diplomacy.

Compared to regional organizations, the legitimacy held by the UN makes it more successful at brokering peace agreements.

International organizations, not individual countries, should take the lead in Preventive Diplomacy action and peace negotiations.
What Shapes Public Opinion on War and Defense Spending?

Past research has recognized that a government’s defense policy priorities must respond to external threats as well as to the public opinion of its citizens. As this study indicates, public opinion on war and defense spending is itself shaped mainly by individual values and beliefs, and only to a minor extent by the existence of external threats.

Two research questions are proposed in this article: 1) What factors influence citizen support for war and military force (what the authors call “acceptability of war”)? And, 2) other than the acceptability of war, what other factors affect support for defense spending? To answer their research questions, the authors use survey data over the period of 2004–2013 from 14 different countries in Western and Eastern Europe, the United States, and Turkey. To answer their first question, they analyzed responses to the following survey question:

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following—Under some conditions war is necessary to obtain justice.

This question also serves to measure opinions on fundamental attitudes toward military force from a person’s toleration or rejection of war as an instrument of policy. To answer their second question, responses to the following survey question were analyzed:

Do you think the [country’s] government should increase defense spending, keep defense spending at the current level, or decrease defense spending?

Each question was asked annually in each country over the course of at least five years. The survey also included questions to determine how, if at all, people’s fundamental beliefs about war and military power, their ideological identification, gender, and occupational status, or the presence of short-term threats influenced their attitudes towards war or defense spending.

The most significant finding of the survey analysis was that a person’s basic beliefs, values, and life experiences, which are typically independent of current events and short-term threats, were the most important influences.


Continued Reading:
Costs of War
By the Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs at Brown University.
http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/

Cost of National Security
By the National Priorities Project.
https://www.nationalpriorities.org/cost-of/

Key Findings on How Americans View the U.S. Role in the World
By the Pew Research Center. 2016.
http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/05/05/key-findings-on-how-americans-view-the-u-s-role-in-the-world/

The Mental Limits of War
http://www.peacevoice.info/2017/04/13/the-mental-limits-of-war

Pentagon Spending
https://www.fcnl.org/about/policy-issues/wars-militarism/pentagon-spending
on attitudes towards war and defense spending. In survey responses from all countries, when paired against current events or short-term threats, people’s attitudes towards war were more strongly and consistently related to their fundamental values and life experience. As an example, although respondents considered the extent to which they viewed the Iran nuclear program or China, for instance, as military threats, these threat assessments did not play as important a role in the formation of their attitudes on war and defense spending as did their beliefs, values, and experiences.

Gender was also a strong factor. Women in all countries showed lower support for war—and indirectly for defense spending—than men. This analysis provided important international data on gendered perceptions of war, data which had previously been collected primarily in the United States. Another important finding of the survey was identified when survey responses were analyzed by country. The United States was found to be the most ideologically conservative society, whose citizens accepted war as an instrument of their foreign policy the most, while citizens of Eastern European countries accepted war the least. Also, the attitudes of survey respondents in the U.S. towards war and defense spending were influenced much more by threats compared to those of respondents in other countries.
These research findings educate us on the important influences behind attitudes towards war and defense spending. They also reveal that current events and perceived threats have a lesser effect on these than was previously assumed. Traditionally, political leaders, especially in the United States, experience an uptick in public support as soon as they order military action against a perceived threat. However, according to these findings, an uptick in public opinion polls may not necessarily translate into an increase in the public’s support for war or their permission to increase defense spending. Recent U.S. military action in Syria provides a relevant example. In the hours and days following the U.S. bombing of a Syrian airbase, Trump gained tremendous bipartisan support, even from many of his fiercest opponents. However, a temporary rise in popularity after military action must not be confused with support for an escalation of war in Syria or for Trump’s proposed 10% increase in defense spending. Public opinion is often inflated after political leaders order military attacks, causing a temporary distraction from actual (lower) levels of public support for war.

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

A person’s acceptance of war and support for defense spending is most consistently influenced by his/her beliefs, values, and life experience. Support for war and defense spending is much lower among women. Current events and short-term threats are only sometimes important to a person’s support for war and defense spending.

TALKING POINTS

- A person’s acceptance of war and support for defense spending is most consistently influenced by his/her beliefs, values, and life experience.
- Support for war and defense spending is much lower among women.
- Current events and short-term threats are only sometimes important to a person’s support for war and defense spending.
The authors found that both acceptance of war and support for defense spending are most consistently influenced by a person’s beliefs, values, and life experiences, and that these long-held beliefs are more influential to war support than current events or looming threats. Therefore, those who wish to change the public’s perception of war and its funding must focus on disrupting the narrative that glorifies war and militarism. If the true human, social, and economic costs of war are better known to the public, along with the better and more effective nonviolent alternatives to war, fewer people might adopt the narrative that glorifies war and the underlying beliefs that lead to the acceptance of war as a means to resolve conflict. This aim can be achieved by highlighting the accounts of veterans and civilians who have lived through war and can attest to its horrors, thus impacting the perceptions of those with whom they interact.

Gender was also a strong factor in attitudes towards war support, as survey responses from all countries showed lower support for war and defense spending among women. By assuming more prominent positions in government and civil society, women can use their leadership to help shift attitudes on war away from current norms. At the same time, however, society must transform the unequal ways in which so-called “feminine” and “masculine” characteristics, ideas, and approaches to political problems are valued.

This study also brings attention to the various complexities behind administering and analyzing survey data. People reveal their opinions based on the information that is most prominent in their minds at the time survey questions are asked. Therefore, opinions towards war and defense spending may fluctuate based on how those topics interact with how current events or threats influence their thinking at the time of the survey—even if, according to this research, these are much more likely to be influenced by a person’s values and beliefs. As an example, the 2016 terror attack in Nice, France, was met by 24/7 news coverage and strong rhetoric and action from governments all around the world. If the above survey was taken in the days after the Nice attack, the perceived threat from terrorism would be at the forefront of the survey respondent’s mind and therefore might result in increased public support for defense spending and military action against these threats. Because of the timing of the survey, the threat may cause an over-inflation of military support and not be representative of the whole truth. This importance with regard to timing the distribution of a survey should be noted and considered both by those gathering information in this manner and by those who analyze survey data.
Motivations for Domestic Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States

The word “terrorism” conjures particular images and assumptions these days in the U.S. With the focus on so-called “Islamic” extremism, similar acts of violence carried out domestically—by people with names that do not appear to originate in the Muslim world—often do not even register as “terrorism.” There were, however, 2,362 incidents of domestic terrorism in the U.S. between 1970 and 2011. The author is particularly interested in domestic right-wing terrorism, which is set apart from other forms of domestic terrorism by the “extremist right-wing political ideologies” that motivate it: “extreme nationalism, racism and white supremacy”; “Christian religious radicalism”; and/or “radical anti-government beliefs.” This article seeks to identify the factors most associated with the occurrence of this particular kind of terrorism in the U.S.

Drawing on past research, the author examines three categories of possible motivating factors for domestic right-wing terrorism: economic grievances, societal changes (notably, the perceived loss of white male privilege), and political/“big government” resentment. With the first, the thinking is that major structural changes in the economy, especially the loss of industrial and agricultural jobs, can create economic grievances that fuel support for extreme, right-wing ideologies and possibly terrorism. Second, scholars suggest that a shift towards greater recognition and power for women and ethnic/racial/religious minorities has challenged the more traditional dominance of white (Christian) males in U.S. society, leading to increased participation in extremist right-wing groups. Finally, there is a dominant strain in right-wing rhetoric about the tyranny of “big government” and a common sentiment of political alienation among right-wing extremists who believe that government must be “taken back,” in a sense. This political resentment could play out in two different ways: the presence of Democrats in office (as well as left-wing legislation like gun control or higher taxes) might correlate with increased right-wing terrorism out of anger or retaliation, or the presence of Republicans in office might increase right-wing terrorism due to perceived tolerance or unspoken encouragement. These reflections result in several hypotheses:

Continued Reading:

**Terrorism, American Style**

**Domestic Terrorism in Democratic States: The Important Role Played by Grievances**

**We Need a Better Understanding of What Drives Right-Wing Extremist Violence**
• **Economic grievances:** States in the U.S. with “high levels of poverty” (Hypothesis 1), “declining industrial employment” (Hypothesis 2), and/or “declining numbers of individual farms” (Hypothesis 3) are considered “more likely to experience right-wing terrorism.”

• **Societal changes/decline in white male privilege:** States in the U.S. with “larger non-white populations” (Hypothesis 4), “higher rates of abortion” (Hypothesis 5), and/or “higher rates of female participation in the labor force” (Hypothesis 6) are “more likely to experience right-wing terrorism.”

• **"Big government"/political resentment:** An increase in Federal Tax Rates (Hypothesis 7), Democratic control of a state’s legislature (Hypothesis 8a), Republican control of a state’s legislature (Hypothesis 8b), a Democratic president (Hypothesis 9a), and/or a Republican president (Hypothesis 9b) will correlate with “more right-wing terrorism.”

The author uses statistical analysis to determine what, if any, relationship there is between the proposed economic, societal, and political variables and the number of domestic right-wing terrorist attacks. Utilizing the University of Maryland’s Global Terrorism Database, the author found that, of the 2,362 domestic terrorist attacks perpetrated between 1970 and 2011, almost one quarter (578) can be designated as “right-wing.”

The research findings show some support for societal change (especially a perceived decline in white male privilege) and political resentment motivating domestic right-wing terrorism but do not show any support for economic grievances playing a role. In particular, higher rates of abortion, higher levels of female participation in the labor force, and Democratic control of the presidency were the most significant factors related to increased right-wing terrorism, providing support for Hypotheses 5, 6, and 9a. These findings suggest that domestic right-wing terrorism is motivated more by challenges to identity and power, and by easily identifiable, high-profile symbolic adversaries (like a Democratic president), than by economic restructuring, job loss, or resentment over left-leaning policies. Also, despite recent attention given to anti-immigrant/white-nationalist rhetoric, upsetting traditional gender power relations proved to be more central to the turn to right-wing terrorism than an increase in non-white/Anglo populations.

**Terrorism:** The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a nonstate actor to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation. (University of Maryland START Center Global Terrorism Database)

*Note that this is one of many definitions of terrorism, and there is substantial debate on the term’s definition. Points of contention include whether terrorism can only be enacted by non-state actors or can also be enacted by state actors and whether it only involves violence that intentionally targets civilians (as opposed to combatants). Wider definitions that do not include these limits could also inadvertently apply to state military violence that similarly aims to achieve political goals through coercion. The broader issue here is that the “terrorism” label has an overwhelmingly negative connotation and therefore is often adopted to describe violence with which one disagrees but not violence one sees as necessary, even if the means used in the two instances are strikingly similar (hence the saying, “one person’s terrorist is another person’s freedom fighter”).*
In the wake of Trump’s election, there has been genuine surprise and much debate in liberal circles about how so many people could have voted for him. One view that has gained prominence, against views that all Trump voters are simply racist or sexist, is that large segments of the U.S. population have been left behind by economic restructuring and globalization and that Democrats have not taken the concerns of these constituents seriously enough. This research downplays the role of such economic factors in motivating right-wing extremist violence—which of course is very different from simple support of a right-wing political agenda or candidate. It is worth keeping in mind that different factors may very well motivate the two: support for right-wing terrorism versus support for a right-wing agenda—and that we should not just care about people’s grievances when or because they may motivate violence.
There are no immediately clear policy implications of these research findings. On the one hand, the research suggests that policies to alleviate poverty, create jobs, and redistribute wealth—though good for other reasons—may not in fact prevent the adoption of violent right-wing strategies. On the other hand, returning to more ‘traditional’ gender roles or keeping Democrats out of the White House are not desirable or realistic courses of action. Instead, this research raises more fundamental questions about the grievances that motivate violence and to what extent “we” should validate and/or address all such grievances—or whether it is acceptable to make a judgment about which grievances are legitimate, and should be addressed, and which are/should not. While perhaps we can understand that losing certain forms of power or privilege is difficult for the individuals experiencing it, that loss may actually be in the service of justice if it means that those who have long been disempowered or marginalized—women, for instance—are now able to shape their own lives.

Perhaps the most important practical implication of the research is the need for education and long-term cultural change with regards to gender norms—but also for empathy for those of us who may be holding on to gender (or racial) privilege in the context of socioeconomic marginalization, while remaining firm with regards to the justice of gender, racial, and socioeconomic equality. One key way to do all of these things at once is for activists to highlight the commonalities between different forms of oppression to create understanding and alliances between seemingly adversarial groups. Creating the “beloved community” is a fraught and messy enterprise, but the bottom line is that inclusion and a sense of belonging for all of us, regardless of political persuasion, will ultimately make us all safer, as well as our communities more just.

**PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediately clear policy implications of these research findings. On the one hand, the research suggests that policies to alleviate poverty, create jobs, and redistribute wealth—though good for other reasons—may not in fact prevent the adoption of violent right-wing strategies. On the other hand, returning to more ‘traditional’ gender roles or keeping Democrats out of the White House are not desirable or realistic courses of action. Instead, this research raises more fundamental questions about the grievances that motivate violence and to what extent ‘we’ should validate and/or address all such grievances—or whether it is acceptable to make a judgment about which grievances are legitimate, and should be addressed, and which are/should not. While perhaps we can understand that losing certain forms of power or privilege is difficult for the individuals experiencing it, that loss may actually be in the service of justice if it means that those who have long been disempowered or marginalized—women, for instance—are now able to shape their own lives.

Perhaps the most important practical implication of the research is the need for education and long-term cultural change with regards to gender norms—but also for empathy for those of us who may be holding on to gender (or racial) privilege in the context of socioeconomic marginalization, while remaining firm with regards to the justice of gender, racial, and socioeconomic equality. One key way to do all of these things at once is for activists to highlight the commonalities between different forms of oppression to create understanding and alliances between seemingly adversarial groups. Creating the “beloved community” is a fraught and messy enterprise, but the bottom line is that inclusion and a sense of belonging for all of us, regardless of political persuasion, will ultimately make us all safer, as well as our communities more just.

**TALKING POINTS**

- In the U.S., domestic right-wing terrorism is most clearly related to the following factors:
  - Higher abortion rates
  - Higher levels of female participation in the work force
  - A Democratic president
- Changes in gender relations may be profoundly threatening to certain individuals, resulting in their use of terrorist tactics to attempt to re-assert control.
- Symbolic targets and threats to identity privilege are more important to motivating right-wing terrorism than objections to policy or more straightforward material or economic factors.
Reasons for Leaving Terrorist Organizations

Mainstream thinking suggests that military tools are required to eradicate terrorism (see the post-9/11 war in Afghanistan and the current war against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, as well as U.S. President Trump’s many proclamations on the subject). Research on how and why individuals disengage from terrorist activity, however, suggests that there are viable non-military options for addressing terrorism.

Building on previous studies that identified a range of “push” and “pull” factors facilitating terrorist disengagement, the authors investigate which of these factors are more often associated with individuals’ decisions to leave terrorist organizations. Based on their assessment of existing research, they formed the following hypotheses: 1) in general, push factors will be more often associated with decisions to leave than pull factors will be; 2) de-radicalization (or the loss of ideological commitment) will not be the main factor in terrorist disengagement, nor will it be a necessary condition for disengagement; and, 3) individuals will be more susceptible to pull factors the less ideologically committed they are.

Hypothesized Push/Pull Factors for Terrorist Disengagement

**Push Factors**
- Unmet expectations
- Disillusionment with strategy/actions of terrorist group
- Disillusionment with personnel
- Difficulty adapting to clandestine lifestyle
- Inability to cope with physiological/psychological effects of violence
- Loss of faith in ideology
- Burnout

**Pull Factors**
- Competing loyalties
- Positive interactions with moderates
- Employment/educational demands or opportunities
- Desire to marry/establish a family or family demands
- Financial incentives
- Amnesty


Continued Reading:
- Walking away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements
- How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qa’ida
- Victims, Perpetrators, Assets: The Narratives of Islamic State Defectors
To answer their research question, the authors analyzed 87 English-language autobiographies written between 1912 and 2011 by individuals previously (or in some cases currently) involved in terrorist organizations in various capacities (from the “bomb maker” to the “lookout,” from “those responsible for propaganda” to the “individuals who plant a bomb or pull a trigger”). Terrorist organizations from across the political spectrum (right-wing and left-wing) and motivated by a range of concerns (nationalist/separatist, religious, etc.) are represented in these autobiographical accounts. The authors identify 185 “engagement events” (“period[s] of sustained involvement in a terrorist group”) from these accounts and 170 “disengagement events” (“sustained period[s] of time in which the individual remains uninvolved in a terrorist group following a period of involvement”). These disengagement events can be broken down into two types of categories: collective or individual, and voluntary or involuntary.

The authors are most interested in the factors correlating with individual, voluntary disengagement—in other words, those cases where someone decided to leave a terrorist organization, as opposed to being forced to leave (and in the absence of the whole organization turning away from terrorism). Through statistical analysis, they determine which push and pull factors were most often experienced before—and/or credited as playing a role in—decisions to leave terrorist organizations, as compared to cases of involuntary disengagement.

In the end, they find support for all three hypotheses. First, push factors are more common motives for leaving terrorist organizations than pull factors are. Although pull factors are still important to decisions to disengage in some cases, the authors did not find a significant relationship between pull factors and decisions to disengage. The push factors most associated with decisions to leave were various forms of disillusionment (with the group’s strategy or actions, its leaders, its other members, or one’s day-to-day activities), as well as burnout. Second, although “loss of faith in ideology” was reported as playing a role in decisions to leave a terrorist organization 29% of the time, it was not the most common reason and was certainly not a necessary precondition for leaving. And, third, individuals who were less ideologically committed at the time of leaving a terrorist organization were more likely to report pull factors playing some role in their departure than those who were more ideologically committed. It is unclear, however, whether this is because their lower level of ideological commitment made them more susceptible to pull factors or because these pull factors may have played a role in diminishing their ideological commitment.

---

**Push Factors:**
Experiences related to one’s involvement in terrorism that drive him or her away.

**Pull Factors:**
Influences outside the group that attract one to a more traditional social role.

**Terrorist Activity:**
The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. (U.S. Department of Defense)

See discussion on the debate around definitions of terrorism in the entry on domestic right-wing terrorism.
Despite the widespread belief that violence—in this case, terrorist violence—can only be met with violence (i.e., military action), this research brings to light some of the ways in which military action against terrorism may not be an effective tool for weakening terrorist organizations, at least through the mechanism of individual disengagement. Other research suggests the same on a broader level: a RAND study found that only 7% of terrorist organizations end as a result of military action against them (Jones & Libicki 2008). Military action is assumed to work, in part, by coercing the target group through the threat or use of violence that could hurt members of that group, yet, according to this study, “fear of being a victim of violence” was one of the least-experienced and least-cited push factors by those who ultimately decided to leave their terrorist organizations. In other words, decisions to leave were not largely influenced by the threat of military violence against them. Instead, the prominence of disillusionment as a primary factor motivating disengagement points to the way in which military action might actually be counterproductive insofar as it could strengthen one’s commitment to a terrorist organization and/or weaken disillusionment processes by creating greater cohesion among members of the organization (in opposition to a common enemy). Likewise, military action could also decrease individuals’ uneasiness over the terrorist activities in which they are engaged when these are used to counter clear military violence. More broadly, with regard to military strategies against organizations like ISIS, we must consider how military action will influence the various push and pull factors that facilitate terrorist disengagement. Will military action contribute to these factors and thereby encourage terrorist disengagement—or will it actually strengthen the commitment of individuals to continue their engagement in terrorism? What more effective nonviolent options might exist for influencing these push and pull factors?
As the authors note, this research highlights the value of focusing on activities that influence the push factors associated with terrorist disengagement, while also not neglecting activities that influence pull factors. Though pull factors are found to be less prominent than push factors in decisions to disengage from terrorism, they still play an important role in many decisions. Creating policies and programs that influence push factors is more difficult, however, than creating ones that influence pull factors, as outsiders have little control over the internal workings of a terrorist organization or an individual’s experiences in that organization. But, as the authors suggest, there may be interesting interactive dynamics to explore between push and pull factors. One possibility is to encourage alternative voices from credible/authoritative sources that provide counter-narratives to those offered by a terrorist group (for more on this idea, see Horgan 2009). The more someone involved in a terrorist organization is exposed to these outside interpretations (a pull factor), especially of the actions carried out by the terrorist organization to which s/he belongs, the more likely s/he may be to begin to note inconsistencies or negative qualities within that organization, leading to disillusionment (a push factor). More generally, the most effective efforts will be those that highlight such inconsistencies between a group’s ideology and its actions (such as ISIS’s killing of Sunni Muslim civilians on whose behalf it purports to be fighting), though special attention must be given to how and by whom that message is communicated.

**TALKING POINTS**

- “Push factors” are more commonly linked to decisions to leave terrorist organizations than “pull factors” are.
- The most prominent “push factors” in terrorist disengagement are forms of disillusionment (with the group’s strategy or actions, with the group’s leaders, with other members in the group, and with one’s day-to-day activities), as well as to some extent burnout.
- “Loss of faith in ideology”—what is often called de-radicalization—is not the most prevalent reason given for leaving a terrorist organization and is definitely not a necessary precondition for disengagement.
- Less ideologically committed individuals are more likely to report “pull factors” playing some role in their decision to leave a terrorist organization than those who were more ideologically committed at the time of departure.

The Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission began in July 2003 to bring peace and stability in Solomon Islands. Since then, Australia has contributed more than $2 billion through RAMSI military, police and development cooperation programs to restore peace in Solomon Islands.
United Nations (UN) peacekeeping has evolved in recent years. It originally involved the placement of impartial military forces between belligerents with their consent and was guided by the non-use of force except in self-defense. However, in response to criticisms about passivity in the face of civilian atrocities, UN peace operations have become more "robust," meaning they are increasingly guided by mandates enabling them to use military force not only in self-defense but also to protect civilians, ensure humanitarian access, and/or support state authority. What are the effects—especially the unintended effects—of this move towards more "robust" peace operations?

To explore this question, the author first examines the history of UN peacekeeping, including changes in both its definition and its practice, particularly with reference to recent instances of "robust peacekeeping": Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, and the Central African Republic (CAR). On the level of definitions and doctrine, robust peace operations can still fall under the rubric of "peacekeeping" as long as a key distinction between "peacekeeping" and "peace enforcement" is maintained: peacekeeping involves the use of military force on the tactical level with the consent of the host country and/or major parties, and peace enforcement involves the use of military force on the strategic/operational levels without the consent of the host country and/or main parties. This distinction can also be described as one between "defensive" (peacekeeping) and "offensive" (peace enforcement) uses of force. The author finds, however, that these distinctions are much clearer in theory than in practice: in several recent robust peacekeeping operations, deployed in areas of ongoing fighting, the UN has shifted into an offensive use of force, sometimes even on the strategic/operational level. The author also notes the UN’s shift to using force not only for civilian protection but also for stabilization, further pointing out that these shifts entail the UN operation taking sides. In Côte d’Ivoire, DRC, Mali, and CAR, the UN sided with government authorities (in Côte d’Ivoire, making a judgment about who constituted the legitimate government) against rebels/militias fighting those authorities, becoming in some ways a party to the conflict and tied up in the very violence it was deployed to prevent/stop.
The author argues that, although the “robust turn” in UN peace operations can be seen to help achieve important objectives like civilian protection, there are also necessarily unintended consequences to any use of military force. He then explores some of these unintended consequences in six areas—“vulnerable civilians; safety and security of UN personnel; humanitarian space/access; human rights; post-conflict peacebuilding and development; and the political process”—noting the way in which peacekeepers’ increased use of force may jeopardize other important goals and the UN mission’s broader work.

First, somewhat paradoxically, more “robust” peacekeeping for civilian protection purposes can actually result, and make the UN complicit, in endangering the very civilians peacekeepers are meant to protect—either by itself inadvertently injuring or killing civilians in the cross-fire, by partnering with local armed forces who may intentionally harm civilians, or by causing targeted armed groups to engage in revenge attacks against civilians perceived to side with the UN (and/or its partners). Second, UN peacekeepers—as well as civilian components of the UN mission—may become more vulnerable to attacks by armed groups who begin to interpret peacekeepers’ partiality and their greater militarization as reason to treat them as legitimate military targets. Third, humanitarian actors share a concern that close association with robust peacekeeping will jeopardize humanitarian space—created with reference to the principles of “neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity”—leading to decreased humanitarian access and greater insecurity for humanitarian actors. Fourth and fifth, substantive components of the UN mission in the areas of human rights and/or peacebuilding and development may be weakened or undermined due to the state-centrism frequently entailed by robust peacekeeping. Sixth, the UN’s substantive political negotiation work is necessarily constrained (and its impartiality undermined) when UN peacekeepers’ use of force is instrumental to bringing about a new political reality. This arrangement can result in potentially exclusive political arrangements “somewhat predetermined” by decisions made on the battlefield—especially regarding which parties are or are not designated as “legitimate political actors”—which can generate fresh grievances and reinforce the root causes of conflict.

The author concludes with some broader systemic effects of the “robust turn” in UN peacekeeping: the possibility that these changes will both “jeopardize the traditional principles of peacekeeping,” thereby creating greater disagreement over such missions and causing a drop in troop contributions from UN member states, and further impede cooperation between the UN and humanitarian actors.

Robust peacekeeping:
The use of force by a United Nations peacekeeping operation at the tactical level, with authorization of the Security Council, to defend its mandate against spoilers whose activities pose a threat to civilians or risk undermining the peace process.1

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

There is a tendency to speak and think of war-making and peacekeeping as completely different enterprises. Indeed, their very names represent them as opposites. But just as we should always be critical of the use of euphemistic language to sanitize violence—making it more palatable—so should we also question our received ideas about what counts as “good” violence and “bad” violence. Through its investigation of the recent “robust turn” in UN peacekeeping, this research complicates these distinctions to some extent, forcing us to see the ways in which even “good” violence—military action used to “keep the peace” or to protect civilians—may have harmful effects. The point is, there are particular consequences that come when a military force—even a UN peacekeeping force—begins to engage in violence, whether called warfare or not: it will likely kill or injure civilians, even if unintentionally, and it will begin to lose any claim to impartiality it may once have had, thereby becoming a party to the conflict and feeding into cycles of violence. It is important, therefore, to critically assess decisions to use military violence, even—in fact, especially—when its use is portrayed as benign.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

If robust peacekeeping can bring about harmful, unintended consequences, what is the alternative, especially when civilian lives are at risk? Are there any methods for protecting civilians that do not themselves become implicated in cycles of violence? One promising approach that has recently gotten more attention (including in a UN report on peacekeeping) is unarmed civilian peacekeeping/protection (UCP), the use of teams of trained, unarmed civilians in war zones to protect civilians and prevent violence through activities like accompaniment and proactive presence. Such teams engage with all actors on a human level, building relationships with civilian and armed actors alike—though sometimes using their international status as a deterrent when necessary—in an effort to create space for local actors to wage or resolve their conflicts nonviolently. Organizations like Nonviolent Peaceforce and Peace Brigades International, among others, have taken this approach in contexts as diverse as Guatemala, Sri Lanka, and South Sudan. These organizations operate with severely limited resources, especially compared to the resources devoted to military forces, even UN peacekeeping forces. Therefore, concerned citizens, funders, and governments can contribute money and time to such organizations, while also advocating on their behalf to raise the visibility of unarmed civilian peacekeeping as a viable alternative to armed peacekeeping.
Robust peacekeeping, though it may succeed in protecting civilians in the short-term, has unintended consequences that may jeopardize other important goals and the broader work of UN missions.

The greater militarization and partiality entailed by robust peacekeeping may actually put civilians at risk, along with peacekeepers, other UN officials, and independent humanitarian actors, in some cases also diminishing humanitarian space/access.

The state-centrism entailed by robust peacekeeping may compromise the more substantive aspects of a UN mission, prejudicing its human rights, peacebuilding and development, and political work too far in favor of the government’s concerns at the exclusion of others.

The “robust turn” in UN peace operations may more broadly jeopardize peacekeeping principles and consensus around UN peacekeeping, cause a drop in troop contributions from UN member states, and impede cooperation between the UN and humanitarian actors.
This Magazine is where the academic field and the practitioners meet. It is the ideal source for the Talkers, the Writers and the Doers who need to inform and educate themselves about the fast growing field of Peace Science for War Prevention Initiatives!
John W. McDonald
U.S. Ambassador, ret.
Chairman and CEO, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

As a longtime peace activist, I’ve grown weary of the mainstream perception that “peace is for dreamers.” That’s why the Peace Science Digest is such a useful tool: it gives me easy access to the data and the science to make the case for peacebuilding and war prevention as both practical and possible. This is a wonderful new resource for all who seek peaceful solutions in the real world.
Kelly Campbell
Executive Director, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility Co-founder, 9/11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows

The Peace Science Digest is the right approach to an ever-present challenge: how do you get cutting-edge peace research that is often hidden in hard-to-access academic journals into the hands of a broader audience? With its attractive on-line format, easy to digest graphics and useful short summaries, the Peace Science Digest is a critically important tool for anyone who cares about peace – as well as a delight to read.”
Aubrey Fox
Executive Director, Institute for Economics and Peace

The field of peace science has long suffered from a needless disconnect between current scholarship and relevant practice. The Peace Science Digest serves as a vital bridge. By regularly communicating cutting-edge peace research to a general audience, this publication promises to advance contemporary practice of peace and nonviolent action. I don’t know of any other outlet that has developed such an efficient forum for distilling the key insights from the latest scholarly innovations for anyone who wants to know more about this crucial subject. I won’t miss an issue.
Erica Chenoweth
Professor & Associate Dean for Research at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver

Peace Science Digest is a valuable tool for translating scholarly research into practical conclusions in support of evidence-based approaches to preventing armed conflict.
David Cortright
Director of Policy Studies at the Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame

How many times are we asked about the effectiveness of alternatives to violent conflict? Reading Peace Science Digest offers a quick read on some of the best research focused on that important question. It offers talking points and summarizes practical implications. Readers are provided with clear, accessible explanations of theories and key concepts. It is a valuable resource for policy-makers, activists and scholars. It is a major step in filling the gap between research findings and application.
Joseph Bock
International Conflict Management Program Associate Professor of International Conflict Management, Kennesaw State University

“...we must welcome the expansion of peace awareness into any and every area of our lives, in most of which it must supplant the domination of war and violence long established there. The long-overdue and much appreciated Digest is filling an important niche in that ‘peace invasion.’ No longer will anyone be able to deny that peace is a science that can be studied and practiced.”
Michael Nagler
Founder of the Metta Center for Nonviolence
RECOMMENDED SOURCES OF PEACE JOURNALISM AND ANALYSIS:

**PEACEVOICE**
A peace and justice op-ed distribution service and an extensive library of ready-to-publish commentary and op-eds written by peace professionals, focusing on changing the U.S. national conversation about the possibilities of peace and justice and the destructive cycle of war and injustice. PeaceVoice operates on the belief that presenting academically informed opinions that promote peace and nonviolent conflict resolution provides the public one of the best, and most absent, deterrents to war and injustice. (www.peacevoice.info)

**TRANSCEND MEDIA SERVICE**
A nonprofit peace network specializing in exclusive analysis, research and policy commentary on local and global affairs. Topic areas include political, economic and social issues; as well as global insight on nonviolence, activism conflict resolution and mediation. (www.transcend.org/tms)

**PEACE POLICY**
A product of the University of Notre Dame’s Kroc Institute for Peace Studies, providing research-based insight, commentary, and solutions to the global challenge of violent conflict. Contributions include writing from scholars and practitioners working to understand the causes of violent conflict and seeking effective solutions and alternatives war and the use of force. (www.kroc.nd.edu/news-events/peace-policy)

**FOREIGN POLICY IN FOCUS**
A “Think Tank Without Walls” connecting the research and action of 600+ scholars, advocates, and activists providing timely analysis of U.S. foreign policy and international affairs, and recommends policy alternatives seeking to make the United States a more responsible global partner. (www.fpif.org)

**OTHER WORDS**
Distributor of no-cost commentary, op-eds, columns and cartoons focused on empowering readers to become more engaged in issues of local and global peace, justice, democracy, economy and the environment. (www.otherwords.org)

**POLITICAL VIOLENCE @ A GLANCE**
Political Violence @ a Glance answers questions on the most pressing problems related to violence and protest in the world’s conflict zones. Analysis comes from a distinguished team of experts from some of America’s top universities. The goal is to anticipate the questions you have about violence happening around the world and to offer you simple, straight-forward analysis before anyone else does. No jargon. No lingo. Just insightful content. (www.politicalviolenceataglance.org)

See more issues and get a print subscription at: Communication.WarPreventionInitiative.org
Our vision is a world beyond war by 2030 and humanity united by a global system of peace with justice.

Our mission is to advance the Global Peace System by supporting, developing and collaborating with peacebuilding efforts in all sectors of society.

Nonviolence – We promote strategic and principled nonviolent solutions over any kind of armed conflict.

Empathy – We view social problems through the eyes of others and respectfully communicate with each other in the pursuit of mutual understanding.

Planetary loyalty – We consider ourselves global citizens, living in harmony with humanity and nature.

Moral imagination – We strive for a moral perception of the world in that we: (1) imagine people in a web of relationships including their enemies; (2) foster the understanding of others as an opportunity rather than a threat; (3) pursue the creative process as the wellspring that feeds the building of peace; and (4) risk stepping into the unknown landscape beyond violence.

Support Rotary International’s focus on peace by aiding the Rotarian Action Group for Peace with human, logistical and content-related resources.

Support development of effective strategies to convince Americans that the United States should not promote war, militarism or weapons proliferation, but rather embrace conflict resolution practices that have been shown to prevent, shorten, and eliminate war as viable alternatives to local, regional and global conflicts.

Support building grassroots social movements seeking a world beyond war.

Actively contribute to peace science and public scholarship on war prevention issues.

Share information and resources with multiple constituencies in an understandable manner.

Provide evidence-based information on peace and conflict issues with immediately potential doable policy advice to public policy makers.

Advance the understanding and growth of the Global Peace System.

Convene national and international experts in ongoing constructive dialog on war prevention issues via our Parkdale Peace Gatherings.

Connect likely and unlikely allies to create new opportunities.

Participate in peacebuilding networks and membership organizations.

We are at a stage in human history where we can say with confidence that there are better and more effective alternatives to war and violence.

A Global Peace System is evolving.

Poverty, employment, energy, education, the environment and other social and natural factors are interconnected in peacebuilding.

Peace Science and Peace Education provide a path to a more just and peaceful world.

Multi-track diplomacy offers a sectoral framework for creating peacebuilding opportunities.