



# **Three Things That Work**

**2016 Report of  
the Harry Frank  
Guggenheim  
Foundation**





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## Foreword

Peter Lawson-Johnston  
*Chairman of the Board*

It was just over a decade ago that Josiah Bunting III assumed the presidency of our foundation, dedicated to Harry Frank Guggenheim's quest to understand the causes of the harm we do each other and what might serve to diminish it. In the five years since our last report, our board, already replete with men and women highly accomplished in a variety of fields and earnestly committed to Harry Guggenheim's vision, has been augmented by three new directors, each with a distinctive and valuable perspective on our mission. Matthew Duveneck, a great-grandson of Mr. Guggenheim, is an ecologist with expertise in human influences on the natural environment. Tucker McNeil has served as a speechwriter for a number of political officials at both the state and federal levels, and brings to our deliberations a great deal of knowledge about current public policy issues. And Thomas Piper III, with years of experience advising both businesses and philanthropic organizations on investing, will enhance the quality of our decision making regarding the foundation's financial resources.

We acknowledge with enormous gratitude the long service of three board members who have retired in the period since the last HFG report.

Lois Rice joined our board in 1990, and the tenure of Lewis Lapham and Gillian Lindt began in 1997. We were most fortunate to have their counsel for so long.

Our pleasure in these superb additions to our board and gratitude for the service of our retiring directors are mixed with sadness at losing two mainstays of the foundation's work in this period. Both James M. Hester, president of HFG from 1989 to 2004, and James B. Edwards, who served on our board for twenty-eight years, passed away in December of 2014.

In the spring of 1989, I invited Dr. Hester, who had been a member of our board since 1984, to succeed Floyd Ratliff as president of the foundation the following July. Jim was retiring from the presidency of The New York Botanical Garden at the end of that year. Before that he had been president of New York University for fourteen years (taking that position at the tender age of 38) and rector of the United Nations University in Tokyo for five years. He was a former Rhodes Scholar with a bachelor's degree in history from Princeton University and a doctorate in international affairs from Oxford University.



Jim helmed this organization with great competence and energy for fifteen years, until Josiah Bunting III took over the presidency in 2004. Under Jim's leadership, the foundation's priorities shifted somewhat from a previous emphasis on animal models of human aggression to research on the nature of violence and aggression in the modern world. This transition led to a series of studies and publications on what research had shown on a variety of issues such as violence in entertainment, gun violence, urban crime, nationalism and violence, and the relationship between punishment and violence. To disseminate the insights of HFG scholars to a non-specialist audience, *The HFG Review*, an occasional publication in magazine format, was begun. To the same end, a competition was held to produce an undergraduate curriculum on violence in order to acquaint college students with the role of violence in human behavior and institutions.

Shortly after Dr. Hester assumed office, it became apparent that Daniel Island, a property near Charleston, South Carolina that Harry Guggenheim had bequeathed to our foundation, should be prepared for sale. A new highway across the island had greatly increased its value and therefore the payout requirements for the foundation's endowment beyond what our income-earning assets could afford. For five years, from 1990 to 1995, Dr. Hester spent a great deal of time making the arrangements that led to the sale of Daniel Island in 1998 with great financial benefit to the foundation.

James Edwards graduated from the College of Charleston in 1951 and attended dental school at the University of Louisville, receiving additional training at the University of Pennsylvania and Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. He became active in electoral politics shortly thereafter and (after defeating General William Westmoreland—another eventual director of this foundation—in the 1974 Republican primary) was eventually elected governor of South Carolina, serving from 1975 to 1979. In 1981, he became the U.S. Secretary of Energy, under President Reagan, holding that office for two years. He was then tapped to be president of the Medical University of South Carolina, a position he held for seventeen years, until retiring in 2000. He was a member of myriad corporate and foundation boards. Most important to us, of course, was the sage counsel he provided the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation as a director for nearly three decades, from 1979 to 2007.

The focus of our endeavor, inspired by a meeting among Harry Guggenheim, General Jimmy Doolittle, and Charles Lindberg and launched with a few exploratory grants in 1968, has never been more vital. I am exceedingly proud to be associated with our president, directors, and staff in their meaningful effort to clarify the factors that underlie the occurrence of violence, an indispensable part of the quest to reduce it.



## President's Statement

Josiah Bunting III  
*President*

The mission of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation was shaped by conversations Mr. Guggenheim initiated with friends and advisors as he neared the end of his career. Having recently witnessed the destruction of a world war, they looked to the future, hoping to have learned something from the past for charting social and political directions. Mankind had made such progress in medicine, engineering, transportation; they wondered why nations could not settle their differences without recourse to violence. With faith in the ingenuity of the human mind, his associates advised Mr. Guggenheim to leave as a legacy the means to enable the world's best thinkers to apply themselves to better understanding this dependency on violent solutions to problems of governance and economic competition. From these beginnings the present foundation has evolved, vital and robust, as this report testifies.

I'm occasionally asked about the foundation's purposes, and when I answer the response is almost invariable: "These must be boom times for you." The international scene is indeed replete with violence, though in recent decades it more often takes the form of violence within rather than

between nations. The Middle East is aboil with the continuing conflict over Israel and Palestine as well as sectarian violence, its currently most copious manifestation a fundamentalist insurgency intent on recreating a 7th-century caliphate and employing violent atrocities commensurately medieval in nature. A newly assertive Russia is projecting its military power in the Ukraine and Middle East, risking a possible confrontation with the West. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Libya are just three locations in Africa suffering violence driven by a mix of sectarian conflict and designs on valuable resources. Latin America's massive informal settlements are beset by rampant criminal violence, and the market that moves illicit drugs from their production zones through Central America and Mexico into the U.S. and Europe takes scores of lives daily.

The foundation continues in ardent service of its original mission, supporting scholarly inquiries into the factors that underlie these and other types of violence. Are lootable resources (oil, timber, diamonds) the motivations for insurgencies, or do they merely provide the financial wherewithal to pursue political goals? What role do the ideologies

espoused by rebel leaders play in impelling individuals to participate in violent conflicts as distinct from less lofty and more self-interested aspirations? Do civil wars widely glossed as ethnic or sectarian in nature reflect historically deep animosities between ethnic or religious groups or result instead from efforts of ethnic or religious “entrepreneurs” to convince would-be followers that another group threatens their very existence? Do military interventions by Western nations to dislodge brutal regimes improve the lives of the people on whose behalf they are undertaken or make things worse? Are rates of criminal violence influenced more by policing practices, oscillations in the labor market, or family structure and childrearing practices? Why is the sale of some illegal commodities associated with violence while that for others is not?

Over the past decade, the human toll of drug-trafficking violence in several Latin American countries has each year exceeded the number of deaths commonly used by scholars of armed conflict to decide whether an armed conflict is a war. In an effort to supplement the (often perilous) work of journalists reporting on this carnage with scholarly analysis, the foundation has been especially alert in the period covered by this report to requests for support of promising doctoral dissertations and outstanding research proposals on this topic. The resulting portfolio of HFG dissertation fellowships and research grants constitutes an important contribution to our understanding of this horrific problem. The essay inside describes these projects and provides a concise but comprehensive primer on the issue.

In addition to supporting the investigations of individual scholars, the foundation has devoted a good deal of its attention in recent years to improving the research capabilities of promising young scholars in Africa, as exemplified in our Young African Scholars program. And we continue in

our collaborative effort with New York’s John Jay College of Criminal Justice to enhance the quality of reporting on criminal justice issues. 2015 saw the 11th annual iteration of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Symposium on Crime in America at John Jay College, with the theme “Race, Justice, and Community,” a timely reflection of the growing national discussion about race, policing, and punishment. Both programs are discussed in illuminating detail in this report.

Recently, the foundation created an annual competition for the best English-language book in the field of military history, motivated by the belief that studies of the origin and conduct of past wars provide essential knowledge in the quest for a more peaceable future. The Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History will be given for the third time in 2016 and will now be administered as a cooperative effort between our foundation and the New York Historical Society.

The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation is the only organization dedicated exclusively to research on the causes of violence. We work in the firm conviction that sound efforts to ameliorate this source of misery, whether policies implemented by governments or programs underwritten by private organizations, require a sound basis in theory and evidence. In the absence of both, such efforts may entail a waste of money and human talent or, worse, an exacerbation of the problem they are ostensibly treating. The centerpiece of this report, *Three Things That Work to Prevent, Reduce, or Stop Violence*, contains five commissioned essays. Each distills out of a vast social science and policy literature—to which HFG scholarship has made many contributions—a few trenchant observations about what does and what doesn’t work in the quest to reduce violence. Some of the arguments are provocative; all are interesting. I believe you will find these essays well worth reading.

# How to Apply

## Research Grants

Most of our grants fall in the range of \$15,000 to \$40,000 per year, usually for periods of one or two years. Requests for greater amounts will be considered, but they must be strongly justified. Money is available for salary, field expenses, research assistance, clerical services, and any other expenses directly related to and necessary for the research project proposed. Applications are submitted online, with a deadline of the end of the day (11:59 pm, EST) on August 1. The application form and detailed guidelines can be found through a link on our web site, [hfg.org](http://hfg.org). Decisions are made in December, and money is available for funded projects as early as January 1.

## Ph.D. Fellowships

Fellowships are awarded to fund the writing phase of the Ph.D. dissertation, not the research that precedes it. Awards are \$20,000 and granted once a year. Applications are submitted online, with a deadline of the end of the day (11:59 pm, EST) on **February 1**. The application form and detailed guidelines can be found through a link on our web site, [hfg.org](http://hfg.org). Decisions are made in June, and a fellowship may begin as early as July 1. Dissertation applicants and their advisors must assure us that

the dissertation will be finished during the award year. It is not appropriate to apply if this time constraint cannot be honored.

## Education and Citizenship

Applicants for either the research grant or the Ph.D. fellowship may be citizens of any country. While almost all recipients of our research grant possess a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree, there are no degree requirements for the grant. Research grant applicants need not be affiliated with an institution of higher learning, although most are university professors. Ph.D. fellowships are available for graduate students enrolled at any university in the world who are writing doctoral dissertations on subjects related to the foundation's interests.

## Advice

Please read this section carefully. It contains our ideas about what makes a convincing, promising proposal for research. These comments are intended to direct you towards what we see as the most fruitful research plans and could prevent you from sending us an application requesting support for activities that we do not regard as supportable research.

Our foundation supports research and doctoral dissertations in the social sciences, humanities, and biomedical sciences that we believe will

increase understanding of the causes and control of violence and aggression. (Refer to the lists of research grants and dissertation fellowships earlier in this report for examples of the sort of work we fund.) We do not fund institutions or programs and, apart from our own conferences and workshops, we do not fund meetings or group projects. However, we will consider proposals for work to be conducted by more than one principal investigator, provided the necessity for more than one is well justified.

A good proposal will pose a specific research problem. After reviewing previous work in the area, the applicant will focus on questions that would be considered both important and unanswered by those familiar with the relevant literature and then will propose specific methods to approach the problem directly. As well, an application should not only convince us that its subject is interesting and understudied but also show us how larger, general lessons about violence will be drawn from an investigation of this particular instance of it.

A proposal describing a general problem—for example, “violence in the Great Lakes region of central Africa”—that does not include specific research questions the topic poses and a practical plan to get at the answers to those questions will not convince us that the project is likely to be productive. Likewise, it

is not very promising when an applicant asserts that “very little is known about”—for example, “resilience in children at risk for problem aggression”—and then proposes a project that differs little from the numerous studies that have, in fact, been conducted on the problem.

We generally prefer to support analysis over raw data collection. Scholars whose work relies on large data sets that are expensive to collect may find in our program an opportunity to ask for time to think about what the numbers mean and how those findings should affect the design of future studies.

While the practical value of some research is readily apparent, the applicability of scholarly insight is often only potential. We do not expect immediate social change to result from the completion of a foundation-supported project. However, we do look for evidence that an applicant is involved in the study of violence or aggression because of a concern with it as a problem in the world. Why is this particular case chosen by which to investigate this larger problem? How do salient questions to be investigated here relate to understandings developed elsewhere?

We do not fund in an area just because a project addresses an unsolved and apparently urgent problem related to aggression if we cannot be assured that first-rate, useful

research can be done. And we do not fund studies on topics that might be argued to have an indirect relevance to aggression or violence but do not have a central focus on it. Should there be any concern about whether a planned project is relevant to the foundation’s interests, please consult with one of our program officers.

Detailed guidelines for submitting applications for research grants and dissertation fellowships are available through a link on our web site, [hfg.org](http://hfg.org). Please read the guidelines carefully—including the budget rules—and follow instructions meticulously. Disorganized or incomplete submissions suggest the same qualities in the conduct of research and seriously damage a proposal’s chances of funding. Even typographical errors will distract the reader from your argument and might lead to a negative evaluation. Take the trouble to proofread your documents and to check your math in your budget and you will impress our reviewers as a careful and accurate worker.

The application process involves supplying information via an online form and uploading several documents, the longest of which will be a research plan, in the case of a research grant application, or a description of the doctoral research and planned dissertation, in the case of a dissertation fellowship application. In both cases, the



document should be *roughly* 15 double-spaced pages in length. Documents much shorter than that will strike our reviewers as thin; those much longer make the process of reviewing many applications more difficult. (Please do not use a font smaller than 12 points.)

## Budgets

Budget requests are appropriate only for expenses specifically related to the proposed research, and salary requests should cover only the time required by the research. We do not make it a priority to fund small percentages (3-7%) of the salaries of scholars employed in research universities so that they can devote small portions of their time to overseeing a project where the work is being done by students. These salary portions, with attached benefit percentages, add thousands of dollars to the cost of a project, money that could be given to other investigators who cannot complete their work without grant aid. Ask only for the salaries essential to getting the work done and which are not being paid by other sources.

## Evaluation

The applications are evaluated for their scholarly quality and methodological aptness, as well as for the salience of the research questions to the foundation's interests and mission. This is done with the help of a panel of

consultants who work together over several years and contribute to defining and refining the foundation's mission and to our ideas about how to pursue it.

As of 2015, the panel consisted of Rosemary Gartner (Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies, University of Toronto), Robert Hayden (Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh), Stathis Kalyvas (Political Science, Yale University), Clark McCauley (Social Psychology, Bryn Mawr College), Catherine Merridale (Institute of Historical Research, University of London), Randolph Roth (History and Sociology, Ohio State University), and Pamela Scully (Women's Studies, Emory University).

Proposals recommended by the review panel for funding are assessed by the Program Committee of the HFG board according to their understanding of the foundation's mission. The proposals are then passed on for consideration by the full board of directors at their meetings in December (for research grants) and June (for dissertation fellowships).

If a proposal is turned down, it can be resubmitted at a later deadline, although our reviewers will want to see evidence of progress in your thinking in the meantime. Although often it is not easy to pinpoint what was "wrong" with a proposal that was not funded, on request we will describe our general con-

cerns about the work so that you can re-think areas that might have affected our decision. But keep in mind that the evaluation process is very competitive, and often the only thing deficient in a rejected proposal was that, even though it was a very solid submission, it simply wasn't as strong as the ones we chose. We can fund only a very small percentage of the projects proposed to us. If your proposal has been rejected twice, it is usually not worthwhile to try yet again.

Members of the foundation staff are happy to discuss possible applications and answer questions about the application process, by phone, letter, or email ([info@hfg.org](mailto:info@hfg.org)). Our mission includes helping applicants prepare strong applications and then choosing among these the sharpest and most promising.

# **Research Grants 2011–2015**

**David Anderson**

(Biology and Biological Engineering, California Institute of Technology). The neural circuitry of aggression, sex, and sexual aggression. 2015.

**Tonio A. Andrade**

(History, Emory University). Ways of war: Toward a global military history. 2012.

**Javier Auyero**

(Sociology, University of Texas, Austin). In harm's way: Violence at the urban margins in contemporary Argentina. 2013.

**Laia Balcells**

(Institut d'Anàlisi Econòmica, CSIC). Dynamics of violence in conventional civil wars. 2011.

**Max Bergholz**

(History, Concordia University). "None of us dared say anything." Mass killing in a Bosnian community during World War II and the postwar culture of silence. 2013, 2014.

**Sarah Cameron**

(History, University of Maryland College Park). The Hungry Steppe: Famine, violence, and the making of Soviet Kazakhstan. 2015.

**Justin M. Carre and Ahmad R. Hariri**

(Psychology and Neuroscience, Duke University). Examination of psychological, hormonal and neural risk-factors underlying individual differences in human reactive and proactive aggression. 2011.

**Philip Cook**

(Economics and Sociology, Duke University). Crime gun theft. 2015.

**Henar Criado, Jordi Domenech, and Francisco Herreros**

(Political Science and Sociology, Universidad Complutense de Madrid/Universidad Carlos III de Madrid/Spanish National Research Council). Legacies of the past and support for terrorism in the Basque Country. 2015.

**Brian Delay**

(History, University of California, Berkeley). Shoot the state: Modernity and the means of destruction in the Americas: 1750-1920. 2013.

**Elaine Eggleston Doherty**

(Health, Behavior and Society, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health). Exploring violent careers over the life course: A study of urban African American males and females. 2012, 2014.

**Mila Dragojevic**

(Politics, University of the South). Collective crimes in times of war: Explaining local variation in violence against civilians. 2014.

**Nadia Abu El-Haj**

(Anthropology, Barnard College of Columbia University). The ethics of trauma: Combat, moral injury and the war on terror. 2015.

**Clifton R. Emery**

(School of Social Welfare, Yonsei University). Beijing-Seoul families and neighborhoods study. 2011, 2012.

**Ilya V. Gerasimov**

(Center for the Study of Nationalism and Empire). Ethnic violence vs. imperial segregation: Multinational criminality in the Russian Imperial City as a space of conflict and cooperation. 2011.

**Rebecca Gould**

(Humanities, Yale-NUS College Singapore). On traumatic modernities: Forced migration and Nakh cultural memory along Caucasus borderlands. 2014.

**Edward A. Gutierrez**

(History, University of Hartford). "Sherman was right": The experience of AEF soldiers in the Great War. 2011.

**John Hagan**

(American Bar Foundation, Northwestern University). Home foreclosures and criminal violence. 2011, 2012.

**Anthony R. Harris**

(Sociology, UMass Amherst). Before assault victims go to the hospital: Trying to measure "true" race differences in the seriousness of injury. 2012.

**Danielle Harris**

(Justice Studies, San Jose State University). Desistance from sexual offending across the life course: A multimethod approach. 2013, 2014.

**William Hay**

(History, Mississippi State University). King George's generals: How the British army lost America, 1774-1781. 2013.

**Chris Kyle**

(Anthropology, University of Alabama at Birmingham). Spatial analysis of criminal violence in Guerrero, Mexico. 2014.

**Ann A. Laudati**

(Environment and Society, Utah State University). From Coltan to cattle: Unearthing violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. 2012.

**Beth Lew-Williams**

(History, Princeton University). The Chinese must go: The violent birth of American border control. 2015.

**Federico Lorenz**

(CONICET—National Scientific and Technical Research Council of Argentina). Malvinas/Falklands War: Argentine experiences of the 1982 conflict through letters, war diaries and amateur photographs by soldiers and civilians mobilized during the war. 2013, 2014.

**Chowra Makaremi**

(Anthropology, Institut de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les Enjeux Sociaux (IRIS)). Contested narratives: A genesis of state violence in post-revolutionary Iran (1979-1988). 2013, 2014.

**Richard McMahon**

(History, NUI, Maynooth). Violence, law and the Irish migrant experience in Glasgow and New York, 1851-1900. 2012.

**Peace A. Medie**

(International Affairs and Diplomacy, University of Ghana). "There is still no justice here!" Theorizing women's movements' influence on postwar African states' enforcement of gender-based violence laws. 2014.

**Nuno Monteiro and Matthew Adam Kocher**

(Political Science, Yale University). Political violence during the German occupation of France: A micro level analysis. 2014.

**Godwin Onuoha**

(Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery (DGSD) Programme, Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa). Political economy of memory: The making, unmaking and remaking of the Nigeria-Biafra war. 2014, 2015.

**Isabelle Ouellet-Morin**

(Criminology, Université de Montreal). Stress reactivity to provocation and aggression in early adulthood: Do early victimization and regulation processes matter? 2013, 2014.

**Kwesi Kwaa Prah**

(Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, Cape Town). The search for peace in the South Sudan. 2011.

**Aaron B. Retish**

(History, Wayne State University). In the courts of revolution: Violence, legality and social control in the Soviet rural courtroom, 1917-1939. 2012.

**Viridiana Rios**

(Independent)

**and Mario Arriagada-Cuadriello**

(Revista Nexos).

An unexpected peace: Understanding resilient order and violence in multi-gang environments. 2014.

**Jeffrey Rossman**

(History, University of Virginia). Stalin's great terror: A documentary history of Soviet perpetrators. 2013, 2014.

**Randolph Roth**

(History, Ohio State University). Child murder in America. 2013.

**Jennifer Sessions**

(History, University of Iowa). Colonialism on trial: The Margueritte Affair in Fin-de-Siecle Algeria and France. 2013.

**Harel Shapira**

(Sociology, University of Texas at Austin). An education in violence: Teaching and learning to kill in central Texas. 2015.

**Rosalind Shaw**

(Anthropology, Tufts University). Disarming justice, demobilizing memory, producing 'postconflict' life in Sierra Leone. 2015.

**Pete G. Simi**

(School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska). Desistance from right-wing extremism. 2012.

**Judith Smetana**

(Clinical and Social Psychology, University of Rochester). Aggression and morality links in early childhood. 2015.

**Benjamin B. Smith**

(Political Science, University of Florida). History and rebellion: The origins of self-determination conflicts in the modern world. 2012.

**Paul Staniland**

(Political Science, University of Chicago). Governing coercion: States and violence in Asia. 2013, 2014.

**Magdalena Teter**

(History, Wesleyan University). The Pope's dilemma: Blood libel and the boundaries of Papal power. 2012.

**Gunes M. Tezcur**

(Political Science, Loyola University Chicago). Ordinary people, extraordinary risks: Joining the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey. 2012.

**Harry Verhoeven**

(Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford)

**and Philip Roessler**

(Government, College of William & Mary).

When comrades go to war: Post-liberation movements, elite politics and the internal dynamics of Africa's Great War. 2013, 2014.

**Nikolaus Wachsmann**

(History, University of London). The Nazi concentration camps. 2011.



# **Dissertation Fellowships 2011–2015**

**Noel Anderson**

(Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology). The geopolitics of civil war: External aid, competitive intervention, and the duration of intrastate conflict. 2015.

**Ana Antic**

(History, Columbia University). Psychiatry in flames of war: Development of “social racism” and psychiatric culture in Yugoslavia. 2011.

**Teofilo Ballve**

(Geography, University of California Berkeley). Territorial masquerades: Violence, paramilitaries, and frontier state formation in Colombia. 2014.

**Daniel Blocq**

(Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison). Formation of armed self-defense groups. 2012.

**Sayaka Chatani**

(History, Columbia University). Nation-empire: Youth mobilization in Japan’s colonized peripheries, 1895-1950. 2013.

**Cyd Cipolla**

(Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Emory University). “After these horrendous crimes, that creature forfeits his rights”: The violent sex offender as an exceptional criminal. 2012.

**Lei Duan**

(History, Syracuse University). Private gun ownership in Republican China 1912-1949. 2015.

**Maggie Dwyer**

(Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh). Anticipating the revolt: Trends in military mutinies in West and Central Africa since independence. 2013.

**Derek L. Elliott**

(History, University of Cambridge). Torture and revenue extraction in company-administered Madras, c. 1833-1857. 2013.

**Casey Ehrlich**

(Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison). Grassroots peace: Post-conflict reconstruction in rural Colombia. 2014.

**Anthony Fontes**

(Geography, University of California, Berkeley). What violence makes: Transnational gangs in postwar Guatemala. 2013.

**Mark Anthony Geraghty**

(Anthropology, University of Chicago). Genocide ideology, nation-building, counter-revolution: Specters of the Rwandan state and nation. 2011.

**Francesca Grandi**

(Political Science, Yale University). Troubled peace: Explaining political violence in post-conflict environments. 2013.

**Mallorie Hatch**

(Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University). The social cost of war: Investigating the relationship between intergroup and intragroup violence during the Mississippian period of the Central Illinois Valley. 2013.

**Anna Hedlund**

(Social Anthropology, Lund University). “Exile warriors”: Violence and community among Hutu rebels in the Eastern Congo. 2012.

**Froylan Enciso Higuera**

(History, SUNY: Stony Brook). Made in Sinaloa: From the regional to the global history of the Mexican war on drugs, 1909-1985. 2013.

**Matthew Hulbert**

(History, University of Georgia). Guerrilla memory: Irregular recollections from the civil war borderlands. 2014.

**Ian Johnson**

(History, Ohio State University). The Faustian pact: Secret Soviet-German military cooperation in the interwar period. 2015.

**Trenton Jones**

(History, Johns Hopkins University). Deprived of their liberty: Prisoners of war and the making of Revolutionary American Military Culture, 1775–1783. 2012.

**Mihaly Kalman**

(Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University). Hero shtetls: Jewish armed self-defense from the Pale to Palestine, 1871–1929. 2014.

**Kathleen Klaus**

(Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison). Claiming land: Institutions, narratives, and political violence in Kenya. 2014.

**Daniel Krcmaric**

(Political Science, Duke University). The justice dilemma: International criminal law, mass atrocities, and civil conflict. 2014.

**Jeffrey Lane**

(Sociology, Princeton University). The digital street: Adolescent violence, technology, and urban community. 2012.

**Janet Lewis**

(Government, Harvard University). Ending rebellion early: The initial stages of insurgency and counterinsurgency. 2011.

**Victor Louzon**

(History, Yale University). The 1947 Taiwanese Rebellion: Last battle of the Sino-Japanese War? 2015.

**Jared McBride**

(History, University of California, Los Angeles). A sea of blood and tears: Ethnicity, identity and survival in Nazi-occupied Volhynia, Ukraine 1941–44. 2013.

**Michael McConnell**

(History, University of Tennessee-Knoxville). Home to the Reich: The Nazi occupation of Europe's influence on life inside Germany, 1941–1945. 2014.

**Brian McQuinn**

(Anthropology, Oxford University). Inside a revolution: The cognitive foundations of armed struggle in Libya. 2013.

**Lena Meari**

(Anthropology, University of California, Davis). Sumud: A philosophy of confronting interrogation. 2011.

**Jean Pierre Misago**

(African Centre for Migration and Society, University of the Witwatersrand). Migration, governance, and violent exclusion: Exploring the politics of xenophobic violence in post-apartheid South Africa. 2014.

**Dasa Mortensen**

(History, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). Silencing histories of violence in Shangri-la: The contested history of Tibetan participation in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1966–1976. 2015.

**Andres Moya**

(Economics, University of California, Davis). The impact of violence on risk attitudes and subjective expectations, and the creation of chronic poverty among the internally displaced population in Colombia. 2011.

**Ishan Mukherjee**

(History, University of Cambridge). Violence, “Disorder,” and Decolonization: Practices of state control in Calcutta, 1945–1950. 2015.

**Rebecca Nielsen**

(Political Science, Yale University). Civil war, networks, and women in politics: Female secret societies in West Africa. 2014.

**Marc Oppen**

(Politics, University of Virginia). Fighting the people, fighting for the people: Insurgent governance and conflict outcomes. 2015.

**Javier Osorio**

(Political Science, University of Notre Dame). Hobbes on drugs: Understanding drug violence in Mexico. 2012.

**Tom Pessah**

(Sociology, University of California, Berkeley). Backgrounding: The meaning of cleansing in Israel/Palestine, 1948. 2012.

**Nicholas Radburn**

(History, Johns Hopkins University). The long middle passage: The enslavement of Africans and the transatlantic slave trade, 1604-1807. 2015.

**Paola Castano Rodriguez**

(Sociology, University of Chicago). The time of the victims: Understandings of violence and institutional practices in the National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation in Colombia. 2011.

**Colin Rose**

(History, University of Toronto). Homicide in North Italy: Bologna 1600-1700. 2015.

**Christian Sahner**

(History, Princeton University). Christian martyrdom in the early Islamic period. 2014.

**Katherine Saunders-Hastings**

(Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford). Order and insecurity under the Mara: Violence, coping, and community in Guatemala City. 2014.

**Raz Segal**

(Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Clark University). The disintegration of a borderland society: Genocide and mass violence in Subcarpathian Rus'. 2012.

**John Straussberger**

(History, Columbia University). The "Particular Situation" in the Futa Jallon: Ethnic conflict, political community, and belonging in twentieth-century Guinea. 2014.

**Rachel Sweet**

(Political Science, Northwestern University). Institutional choice in civil war: Rebel tactics for managing political disorder. 2015.

**Henning Tamm**

(Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford). The dynamics of transnational alliances in Africa, 1990-2010. 2012.

**Gene Tempest**

(History, Yale University). The long face of war: Horses in the French and British armies on the Western Front. 2012.

**M. Benjamin Thorne**

(History, Indiana University, Bloomington). The anxiety of proximity: The "gypsy question" in Romanian society, 1934-1944 and beyond. 2011.

**Ana Villarreal**

(Sociology, University of California Berkeley). The logistics of fear: Drug violence and everyday life in the Mexican metropolis. 2014.

**Joshua M. White**

(History, University of Michigan). Catch and release: Piracy, slavery and law in the early modern Ottoman Mediterranean. 2011. (Declined)

**Alec Worsnop**

(Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology). Organization and community: Determinants of insurgent military effectiveness. 2015.

**Adnan Zulfikar**

(Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania). If some obey, none shall sin: The development of communal obligations and their relationship to violence in Islamic legal theory. 2014.

# **HFG Research on Drug Violence in Mexico and Central America**



In the period covered by this HFG Report, the foundation has increased the number of research grants and dissertation fellowships given for work on violence in Mexico and Central America. Most of this research, though not all, has been about the striking increase in recent years in violence related to the trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States.

The transporting of cocaine from Colombia into the U.S. began in the 1970s and became voluminous in the 1980s, the profits subsidizing the growth of a small number of massively wealthy, politically influential, and yet increasingly violent criminal enterprises somewhat misleadingly called “cartels” (Medellin, Cali) by journalists and scholars alike. The primary transport route was by boat or plane through the Caribbean islands and into Florida, from where the drug was then distributed throughout the country by numerous smaller operations. In the early 1980s, the U.S. government undertook to shut down the Florida “highway” through a rigorous interdiction program carried out jointly by several law enforcement and military agencies, an effort that succeeded in effectively closing off this path by the end of that decade. In response, the Colombian cartels shifted their smuggling routes westward, shipping to Mexico either directly or via Central America. At the same time, American-funded anti-drug operations in Colombia and its coca-producing neighbors, Bolivia and Peru, were taking a toll on the fortunes of the major cartels, resulting in a proliferation of smaller, less visible, and less violent trafficking organizations.

The shift to an overland route into the U.S. created a new economic opportunity for Mexican drug trafficking organizations, which had well-developed systems for delivering locally produced marijuana and heroin to the U.S. dating back to the early decades of the 20th century. Mexican traffickers became cocaine couriers in the 1980s, paid mainly on commission for moving the drug across the border. As Colombian producers became increasingly reliant on their Mexican partners over the 1990s, the terms of the relationship evolved in favor of the latter. The Mexican organizations were no longer mere

couriers but wholesale buyers and sellers of cocaine; their wealth grew inversely with the Colombians’ decline in profit per kilogram. Today, well over 90% of the cocaine in the United States arrives by way of Mexico, and almost all of that first passes through one or more countries in Central America.

In the late 1980s, the dismantling of the dominant Mexican organization, the Guadalajara Cartel, through the systematic arrest of its top personnel spawned several new groups. The decade of the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s saw periodic spikes in homicide arising from competition among them over access to trafficking corridors (“plazas”) into the U.S. As well, the Mexican takeover of wholesale delivery of cocaine to the U.S. market spawned a number of domestic markets, especially in border cities such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez, which saw periods of violent contention for control of these local markets. However, these outbreaks were not widespread or sustained enough to alter a decades-long downtrend in Mexico’s overall homicide rate. This drop ended dramatically, however, after 2007, with homicides tripling over the next five years. As shocking as the rise in violence was the savage nature of much of the killing, including beheadings and other forms of mutilation, as well as its brazenness in the form of assassinations of public officials and the murder of journalists and others innocent of involvement in drug trafficking.

The uptick in Central America’s violence occurred earlier than Mexico’s, in the early 2000s in Guatemala and El Salvador and 2005 in Honduras. This change occurred after the advent of major cocaine smuggling in these countries. Combined with details about the identity of victims of the killings (perpetrators are rarely caught), this sequence leaves little doubt that, as in Mexico, trafficking rivalries contributed to the rise in violence. There is reason to think, however, that rates of violence would have increased even without the arrival of drug trafficking. Central America has seen an influx of forcibly repatriated violent young men since the U.S. Congress passed legislation in 1996 mandating the deportation of non-citizens who had spent

a year or more in prison. Some 50,000 people who had served prison sentences were sent back to their natal Central American countries over the next decade, many of whom were members of the violent Hispanic gangs of Los Angeles, chiefly the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and 18th Street (M-18) gangs. Mortal rivals in the U.S., their violence in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador has been exacerbated by the prevalence of powerful firearms after the intra-national Central American wars of the late Cold War decades. Recent homicide rates in each of these countries were at least twice as great as Mexico's was even in its worst year (thus far) for homicides, 2011.

The 2010 HFG report discussed Foundation-sponsored research and conferences about both political and drug-related violence in the Andean region, especially Colombia. In the past five years, HFG research grantees and dissertation fellows have elucidated each of the major developments in Mexico and Central America discussed above, providing historical and ethnographic context and quantitative analyses that, ideally, will inform the crafting of sound policy.

**Froylán Enciso** (Dissertation Fellow, 2013) charted the deep history of contemporary trafficking by focusing on the Pacific state of Sinaloa, the cradle of the Mexican drug trade. Drug trafficking into the U.S. began, by definition, when the U.S. outlawed the free trade in narcotics in 1914. Marijuana cultivation has a long history in Mexico, and poppy cultivation dates back over a century, brought to Mexico by Chinese laborers imported to work in the mines and railroads. In the 1920s, members of Sinaloa's economic elite, faced with reduced financial circumstances because of land redistribution after the revolution, enlisted peasants in opium growing, raising production levels and using the shipping infrastructure recently developed for agriculture to deliver marijuana, opium, and heroin to the U.S. Court cases from Sinaloa in this period demonstrate that not only Mexican but American citizens as well—and U.S. pharmaceutical companies--were involved in moving prohibited substances from Mexico into

the U.S. and vice versa. Opium production was significantly augmented in the 1940s as the U.S. government, to insure a sufficient supply of morphine for its soldiers, unofficially supported the cultivation of opium poppies in Mexico. Utilizing archival materials that had been largely off-limits to researchers until recent cracks in the control of Mexico's authoritarian PRI regime, Enciso documented the deep involvement of government officials in drug trafficking from its inception. Understanding government complicity in—indeed, control of—drug trafficking is key to understanding the relatively non-violent business practices of traffickers through most of the 20th century.

Why, after generations of trafficking, did the business turn so grotesquely bloody in the 2000s? Much of the explanation, **Javier Osorio** (DF, 2012) showed, lies with democratization, the loosening of the PRI's 70-year grip on power beginning in the 1990s, especially at the level of governorships and mayoralities. With the opening up of the political system to other political parties, including non-PRI presidential wins in 2000 and again in 2006, came an unsettling of long-standing arrangements between politicians and organized crime. This led to violence via at least two mechanisms. The election of a non-PRI candidate meant that the previously favored drug trafficking organization in that area might have lost its patron, a weakening that would embolden rival organizations to a takeover attempt. As well, politicians of the main opposition party, the PAN, for whom reduction of drug violence was a major campaign issue, undertook, when elected, to make good on that promise. In some cases, their efforts to suppress trafficking engendered a vicious counteroffensive. A major turning point was the election of PAN candidate Felipe Calderon as president in 2006. Shortly after assuming the presidency, he called out the army in massive numbers in a front-on attack against the cartels. Mexico's homicide graph turned up sharply after 2007, reflecting an estimated 65,000 deaths from drug-related violence over the next four years. Using a number of spatial econometric tools, Osorio

found that government anti-trafficking actions in a given municipality, whether assaults, arrests, or asset seizures, had substantial exacerbating effects on violence between traffickers in that location. And the greater the number of trafficking organizations in a location, the greater was this catalyzing effect of government interventions.

As Osorio's research shows, violence between cartels is potentiated by the presence in a given location of more than one such group. Such a finding might be predicted considering the nature of a criminal enterprise in which, as in other businesses, profits depend on market share and good logistics—unimpeded throughput of product from point of manufacture to consumer. It is thus not surprising that 80% of Mexican municipalities in which more than one cartel is operating have seen drug-related violence. But what about the other 20%—places that, given the presence of more than one cartel, “should” have suffered such violence but have had none or only little? **Viridiana Rios and Mario Arriagada** (Research Grant, 2014) are studying these dogs that don't bark. Using a web-scraping program to comb a number of newspapers and social media sites for every mention of cartel activity, whether violent or not, they generated a map of cartel presence across Mexico. With a sample of violent locales, they're conducting a paired comparison of each one with a place that matches the violent place on every dimension—economic, demographic, and geographic—conceivably relevant to the occurrence of trafficking violence, has more than one cartel present, and yet has not been violent. The explanation for the absence of violence might lie in a *modus vivendi* based on a shared belief between crime groups that violence is ultimately harmful to their bottom lines. Or it could be that quiet locations are blessed with a local political, religious, or civil-society figure who exerts a salutary, pacifying influence on all parties. The findings of this study could be invaluable for efforts to reduce the carnage besetting so many communities in Mexico.

While the local presence of multiple cartels makes violence more likely, members of other cartels are not the only victims of Mexican traffick-

ing groups. One of the shocking aspects of their violence is the frequency with which agents of the government have been targeted, for it is certainly not self-evident that this tactic would serve the interests of a criminal group; it might instead be expected to elicit state repression. **Benjamin Lessing** (DF, 2010) developed a quantitative model of the factors determining when anti-state violence would benefit a crime group and when not. He also created an extensive database of trafficker violence covering not just Mexico but Colombia and Brazil, which showed patterns validating the predictions of his model. Cartels employ violence against state agents either to compel changes in laws (violent lobbying) or to deter state agents from enforcing laws (violent corruption). The conditions favoring the use of violent lobbying are not common, so examples are relatively few, such as Pablo Escobar's campaign of terror to force Colombia's government to scratch an extradition treaty with the U.S. Violent corruption, far more common, is a way of augmenting a strategy of simple bribery. By inflicting violent punishment on public officials (chiefly police) for noncompliance with bribes offered or paid—the infamous “plato o plomo” (silver or lead) policy—criminals use the stick to enhance the appeal of the carrot and also probably reduce the size of the carrot needed to secure the impunity they demand.

The social science literature on Mexican drug violence tends to be aggregate in focus, yielding a picture of national trends. But detailed local and regional studies that contribute to our understanding of geographic variation in violence rates are important, too. **Chris Kyle** (RG, 2014) is conducting such a study in the southwestern state of Guerrero, which has had the highest homicide rate in Mexico for several years, with Acapulco, its largest city, at or near the top of Mexico's list of most violent cities. Kyle has combed local media to amass a database of all known drug-related homicides since 2007—now totaling some 11,000—as well as other trafficking and government anti-trafficking activities.

As has happened throughout Mexico, the organized-crime story has become more com-



January, 2014: A self-defense group disarms local police in Nueva Italia, Michoacan, Mexico. Members of this group, El Consejo de Autodefensas de Michoacán, accused the police of working for organized crime. The proliferation of these groups in Michoacán, Guerrero, and other states poses a vexing problem for the Mexican government. Some have been repressed, but other groups have been granted state approval. Some commentators see the latter practice as pragmatic; others condemn it as an admission of government's failure to provide security to citizens.

plicated in Guerrero as the cartels that once just moved drugs have diversified their enterprises, variously specializing in kidnapping and extortion, theft of timber, oil, and gasoline, and sale of contraband products within the state. Acapulco was once a major transfer point for ocean-borne cocaine, and violence spiked there in the middle and late 2000s as rival groups fought for control of this port. However, the amount of cocaine moving through has declined considerably since the middle of that decade. (The mountains of Guerrero continue to be the source of most of the opium that enters the U.S. as heroin, though.) Most of the violence in Acapulco now derives from fights over retail contraband markets and the intensive extortion and kidnapping activities that occur anywhere in the state with people and businesses worth targeting. No group is immune to these depredations. Schoolteachers in Acapulco, for example, have regularly been subjected to demands for half their monthly salary.

Most drug violence in the countryside revolves around forays by one cartel into marijuana- or poppy-growing regions under the sovereignty of another. However, rural areas have not been spared by the kidnapping and extortion rackets. In response to the utter inability or

unwillingness of local, state, and federal armed agencies to protect its people, Guerrero has seen the proliferation of community police forces. These are the latest incarnation of volunteer patrol groups that first arose in the 1990s in response to state indifference to cattle rustling and highway robbery. Policing their communities and even trying suspects and imposing punishments according to local custom, some of these groups have been "deputized" by the Guerrero government. This movement is a fascinating development, but not without perils. Some patrol groups have succeeded in reducing violence by deterring interlopers intent on taking over rivals' production areas. At the same time, though, there are credible reports of abuses, including abductions and executions, and of cartel involvement in some of the new groups. And, of course, unregulated crime-control entities pose troubling challenges to Mexico's efforts to establish the rule of law and protect basic rights.

**Ana Villarreal's** (DF, 2014) research has an even more precise geographic focus: Monterrey, a city in Mexico's northeast corner and one of its largest. Villarreal carried out two years of participant-observation fieldwork in a study that, unlike most of our other projects, explored the *consequences* of the surge of violence rather than its sources.



The drug violence that spiked in numerous Mexican cities in 2007 did not hit Monterrey as soon, but when it did it elevated the city to the third most violent by 2011. Villarreal immersed herself in the lives of every stratum of the population, from working class precincts to the toniest suburbs, revealing “the logistics of fear”—adjustments in daily living in response to the wave of street crime. She groups these adaptations under terms derived from warfare, a taxonomy that works surprisingly well. First, there’s *armoring*, both literal and figurative. Some of the wealthy actually outfitted their cars with armor. The well-to-do could also turn their streets into private redoubts with gates and guards. A number of parks were fenced in by local authorities to limit access. It turns out, though, that it’s scary to play inside a fenced-in park—how quickly can one exit if shooting erupts? The perverse consequence of this practice was the abandonment of some public spaces by all but those who are up to no good. In *camouflaging*, a small business would try to make itself less attractive to extortionists by maintaining a dilapidated exterior. Sales of luxury cars declined while economy cars became more popular; people were trading down to lower their profile. *Caravanning* was exemplified by cars spontaneously clustering on the highway and even in parts of the city for protection in numbers. Solo pedestrian excursions became rare, family walks common in both poor and affluent neighborhoods.

The same kinds of defensive provisions that Villarreal detailed for Monterrey can be seen elsewhere in Latin America, including in the Central American countries beleaguered by gang violence. Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala all have gang traditions dating back many decades. Every sizable city had neighborhood gangs, the claimed purpose of which was, in essence, to protect their communities from other gangs. While members were involved in crime—robbery, burglary, extortion—and were violent, the violence was directed mainly towards members of other gangs, and rarely with fatal outcomes. In the main, they refrained from preying on their own communities. As one ex-gangster



Disparate public responses to rampant violence in Monterrey, Mexico. Top: A local artist’s macabre commentary on how citizens have become injured. A man pursues normal pastimes, including barbecuing, as he comments, “The streets of Monterrey smell delicious, like carne asada.” Bottom: One of thousands of publically displayed handkerchiefs commemorating family or friends killed or “disappeared” in the drug wars: “Gustavo Castañeda Puentes. Detained and disappeared by the Monterrey police, patrol cars 534, 538 and 540. February 25, 2009. I have your smile tattooed on my heart. I love you my son. Your parents and siblings will not stop looking for and waiting for you. Embroidered by: Mom.”



told **Katherine Saunders-Hastings** (DF, 2014) during her fieldwork in a barrio of Guatemala City, “It was just bad form to rob your own people.”

What has changed is the targets of violence and extortion, a transformation that began throughout Central America in the 1990s, coincident with the arrival of the Latino gangs, or *maras*, from the United States. Neighborhood gangs affiliated themselves with one or the other of the major *maras*, which had no allegiance to particular communities. The haphazard demobilization of soldiers and guerrillas after the civil wars flooded the region with guns. Desire for the newly available weapons led to an increase in extortion to get money to buy them and, in turn, the guns, initially wanted mainly for inter-gang warfare, now made it easier to dominate *anyone* who lacked them. Whereas the American *maras* had operated with certain constraints regarding what categories of people could properly be targeted, any code of ethics has largely eroded among the gangs of Central America. Protection has given way to predation. Gangs are as territorial as ever, but previously territoriality was an avowed matter of local pride; today it's about maintaining a monopoly over extortion and local drug markets, the latter spawned by the movement of cocaine through these countries by trafficking organizations. Gang leaders have come to view their communities, in the words of Saunders-Hastings, more as a manager would his mine than a mayor his municipality.

In the early 2000s, the governments of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador imposed a brutal repression, commonly referred to as *mano dura* (in essence, “iron fist”) as a response to the gang menace, deploying the military and police in mass arrests, jailing as many *mareros* as the prisons could hold—and then many more—and killing many of the rest. In Honduras and El Salvador, gang membership was made illegal. In all three places, mere possession of the florid, unnerving tattoos that signify gang membership was sufficient basis for imprisonment or worse. **Anthony Fontes** (DF, 2013), also working in Guatemala, has analyzed

the unplanned consequences of the mass imprisonment of gang members. Before the *mano dura* era, gangs had run their extortion rackets as local businesses, with little coordination across them. By bringing together in prison the leaders of local gangs, imprisonment has facilitated the emergence of a more centralized, more corporate structure, one that spans localities. With centralized planning, a gang “click” (cell) from one neighborhood can recruit someone from a gang across the city to carry out a hit against a third group or a resistant extortion victim anywhere in the city.

That the prisons could become corporate headquarters for gangs is not surprising given the porousness of Guatemalan prisons. People, money, drugs, weapons, and cell phones move in and out with little friction, allowing imprisoned gang leaders to dictate what goes on outside. Government repression of the *mareros* and their wholesale relocation from street to prison meant they could no longer as easily draw their sustenance from robbery, drug dealing, and other street work, making extortion, which entails less vulnerability to police sweeps, all the more appealing. The gangs reap millions by coercing regular payments from victims. Virtually all of this money goes into the hands of incarcerated leaders, who distribute it to prisoners and prisoners alike. Guards and prison directors, in turn, tolerate the flow of “prohibited” goods in and out of their facilities.

It is unsurprising that citizens throughout Latin America in communities beset by high levels of criminal violence, often bestial in nature, are generally supportive of the no-holds-barred approach to crime control. This is true notwithstanding a thread of protests against the often indiscriminant interventions by military and police forces. Even among those unconcerned about such excesses, though, there is an ambivalence to their endorsement of the iron-fist policy, a pessimism about its prospects for success in the long term. “If you have an armed guard watch your kid,” one father observed to Saunders-Hastings, “he’ll probably behave. But that doesn’t mean you’re raising him right.”

There are softer approaches to the quest for citizen security in this region. Efforts to create effective but transparent law enforcement and judicial institutions based on modern human-rights doctrine are abundant. As well, every major city has many civil society organizations and social service agencies trying to inoculate at-risk youth against the seductions of crime and provide them with educational and vocational skills that could ready them for legitimate work—were it available. And there are programs that work at getting criminal youth to renounce their gang affiliation and adopt a life of responsible citizenship. These face nearly insuperable obstacles. Apart from the scarcity of legal jobs for uneducated young men, there is the problem of the lifelong allegiance gang membership entails and the punishment that abandoning that commitment can incur. According to **Kevin Lewis O'Neill** (RG, 2010, 2012), until recently there were only two ways out of Mara Salvatrucha: death or Christian conversion (though the latter does not guarantee a safe exit). Central America, as elsewhere in Latin America, has in recent decades seen a prodigious growth in Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity, and many of the anti-gang interventions in the region are motivated by the belief that a transformation of the self through Christian redemption is the key to avoiding the inevitable ruin that gang life entails. There are several forms of gang ministry, and in Guatemala City O'Neill studied them all: prison missionaries, Pentecostal halfway houses, street ministries, even a "reality" TV show in which former gang members are ministered to in order to turn them into entrepreneurs. These endeavors are funded by both national and international groups, some of which are religious in orientation and others of which, such as USAID, are not. Each funding stream influences the language and conceptual framework used in the work it sponsors. Prison chaplains, cognizant of the interests of secular funding agencies, exhort prisoners to convert themselves not just for their own redemption but also for the sake of "regional security." Programs reliant on Pentecostal organizations, on the other hand, employ those most practiced in

the language of Christian rehabilitation—ministers who have worked in Christian drug and alcohol treatment and who tend to treat their clients as if they're addicted to gang life. They employ a "psycho-theological morality," in which the massive gang problem is one of defective self image and Godlessness rather than poverty, educational deficits, and oligarchic political systems.

The most recent data on violence in Mexico and Central America—which in this region is a reliable reflection of levels of drug-related violence—presents a mixed picture. Mexico has seen a steady decline in homicides since its 2011 peak, though the current rate is still well over twice what it was before the spike began in 2008. Rates of extortion and kidnapping, however, have been increasing in recent years. This combination may indicate that the Mexican government's continuing effort to "decapitate" the major cartels has succeeded in winnowing the field, enfeebling some groups though possibly strengthening others, bestowing on them exclusive control over trafficking routes, with fewer incidents of violent contention as a result. The increase in other forms of organized crime may reflect the diminishing profitability of drug trafficking for the weakened groups. Both Guatemala and Honduras have seen substantial drops in homicides since 2013, though, as is true in Mexico as well, scholars and statistically minded journalists keep a skeptical stance toward government data. In El Salvador, a 2012 truce between the major gangs—Barrio 18 and MS13—is generally credited with an enormous drop in homicides between 2011 and 2012. Optimism about the sustainability of this decline was dashed when the truce failed and murders spiked again in 2014.

In short, if a uniform trend in violence in this region of the world is taking shape, it is not yet apparent. What does seem clear is that systematic research, exemplified by the work of these HFG scholars, is essential for an understanding of both the factors fueling the bloodshed and those that hold the promise of a way out.

# **Program Activities**

# Harry F. Guggenheim Symposium on Crime in America

2005-  
John Jay College of  
the City University  
of New York

The 2015 session of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Symposium on Crime in America was the 10th anniversary of this collaboration with John Jay College, the criminal justice school of the City University of New York. This annual gathering of criminal justice practitioners, scholars, and journalists is intended to improve the quality of reporting on crime and the justice system in print, radio, television, and digital media. That goal, in turn, is motivated by the recognition that policy makers form their understanding of crime and crime control from news coverage, both directly, through their own consumption, and indirectly, through public attitudes that also derive largely from the news media.

Each year a new group of 15-20 journalists is chosen to attend the symposium as H.F. Guggenheim Reporting Fellows. They benefit from the perspectives of prosecutors, defense attorneys, police and corrections officials, and representatives of foundations and community organizations. As well, they hear from academics who bring the insights of objective research to the freighted issues of crime and justice that make up the work of these practitioners. And, of course, the scholars and prac-

tioners learn from each other, as do the journalists. This annual event is also open to the public.

## Highlights from the 2015 Session

The 2015 session, held on February 9-10, began with an overview of U.S. crime trends for the previous year. Both property and violent crimes were down again, a continuation of the good news that began in the early 1990s. U.S. crime rates continue to be at 1960s levels.

Given the string of highly publicized police killings in the previous year, it was fitting that the symposium include an extensive, two-hour discussion of police relations with minority communities, *After Ferguson: Lessons from a Tragedy*. Among the panelists were Darryl Forte, the chief of the Kansas City, Missouri police department, and David Kennedy of John Jay College, whose approach to violent crime reduction ("focused deterrence") has been adopted in dozens of U.S. cities. Forte observed that the violent protests in Ferguson could have happened anywhere, as certain widespread police tactics make many in predominantly black neighborhoods feel targeted rather than protected. Drug sweeps, for example, are a tactic that tends to be indiscriminant and rough. They've been popular with police in part because media coverage of them provides viewers with vivid images of police "doing something." Massive numbers of stop-and-frisk encounters are another example of a practice whose damage to police-community relations may outweigh its crime-control benefits. All such tactics contribute to the differing perceptions of police by blacks and whites. Kennedy cautioned that seemingly trivial police practices also can have disproportionate effects on these perceptions: Instructing officers to avoid the appearance of lighthearted behavior (smiling, joking) at the site of a fatal crime scene would go some way toward promoting mutual respect between police and the people they are meant to serve.

Panels on the inundation of jails and prisons with mentally ill prisoners and on sentencing policy and public safety included the current and two for-

mer heads of New York City Corrections (Joseph Ponte, Michael Jacobson, and Martin Horn), the director of Cook County Corrections, the assistant sheriff of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, and the sheriff of Norfolk County, Virginia. They were univocal in decrying the warehousing of great numbers of offenders with obvious mental illness in institutions wholly ill-equipped to treat them. The jails at Rikers Island, for example, hold about 14,000 inmates, and according to recent estimates, 40% have been diagnosed with a mental illness at some point in their lives.

How to reduce America's world-record prison and jail populations without sacrificing safety is a recurrent topic at the HFG symposium. In recent years the discussants have included former "law and order" legislators who are now part of a growing "smart on crime" (by contrast with "tough on crime") movement that, improbably, has united liberals and many conservatives in common cause.

The conference included a debate over the trend toward "evidence-based sentencing," which uses an actuarial approach to deciding a convicted defendant's fate. Formulas that incorporate socioeconomic and demographic attributes known to correlate with likelihood of re-offending are championed by some as preferable to relying only on the conventional considerations—the crime committed and criminal history—to decide on a sentence. Advocates see this as a move toward more objective decision-making. Critics see it as a dangerous departure from the proper basis for sentencing—just deserts—and one that considers factors that simply have no place in such deliberations—such as whether any of the offender's family members have been convicted, or even victimized, in a crime.

A panel on the National Institute of Justice's "Mending Justice" initiative discussed efforts to apply to mishaps in the criminal justice system the same system-failure analysis that has long been part of transportation safety reviews and is increasingly used in medicine. In the past, wrongful convictions, police misconduct, or failures to find the perpetrator of a crime would be focused on



Connecticut Governor Daniel Malloy, a former prosecutor, discusses criminal justice reform at the 2012 Harry Frank Guggenheim Symposium on Crime in America

identifying the one or two individuals who could be *blamed*; if no such culprit was found, more often than not that was the end of the effort. To paraphrase James Doyle, who edited the NIJ's volume on the subject, the world of criminal justice and the media that monitor it act as if whenever there's no one to hang, there's nothing to learn. We tend to think that accountability is the same thing as punishment . . . In medicine and aviation, there's an understanding that no disaster can be explained by a single cause . . . The right answer to the question "Who is responsible?" . . . is always everyone involved . . . not just the nurse or pilot or cop on the front line but the distant actors who hired them, designed their training, set their budgets, assigned their duties, and failed to supervise them.

What is needed, in short, is the adoption of the same sort of dispassionate, non-blaming, risk-reduction systems approach found in other domains. The panelists included, among others, the DA of Milwaukee, John Chisholm, and Gordon

Schiff, a physician at the forefront of the patient-safety movement. All urged the journalists present to be as eager to cover these efforts as they are to indict individuals for mistakes.

### **2015 Journalism Awards**

The HFG Symposium is also the occasion for the awarding of the John Jay/H. F. Guggenheim Awards for Excellence in Criminal Justice Reporting. Two awards are given, both for print or online journalism, one for a single story and one for a series. The 2015 winners were Jennifer Gonnerman, for a *New Yorker* story, “Before the Law” (October 6, 2014), and Doug Pardue, Glenn Smith, Jennifer Berry

Hawes, and Natalie Caula Hauff of Charleston’s *The Post and Courier* for a five-day series, “Till Death Do Us Part” (August 20–24, 2014). Gonnerman’s story subsequently became a Pulitzer finalist in the Feature Writing category, and the *Post and Courier* team won a Polk Award and then (with editor Mitch Pugh) the Pulitzer Prize in the Public Service category. Their series was about South Carolina’s exceptionally high rate of domestic killings of women. In May of 2015, the South Carolina legislature passed a new domestic violence bill that redresses a state history of mild treatment of domestic violence offenders; legislators and the governor credited the *Post and Courier* series with stimulating action.

# HFG Support for Social Science Training and Higher Education in Africa

## 2010–

The Foundation supports scholarship on violence because of a conviction that understanding a problem is the first step toward solving it. In making funding decisions we support a balance between insider and outsider views of a problem of violence. Scholars from elsewhere may see aspects of a situation relatively transparent to those in the midst of it; but indigenous scholars, who may have to live with the consequences of their research “findings,” supply a complementary and rich perspective on the problems they study.

After considerable outreach in the early 2000’s, addressing issues of access and trust, applications from African scholars began to come in. Our relationship with individual scholars and with the then-active African Association for Political Science were the most productive ways of spreading information about our program of research support. Yet we were concerned by the weaknesses we perceived in proposals from younger African scholars, educated in recent decades as universities there were losing their financial stability and commoditizing their offerings, educating a very low percentage of their young people for a job market that doesn’t exist and placing little priority on research

skills. In 2005 we started a special biannual competition for small grants for research for young African scholars, selecting ten graduate students and recent Ph.D.s every other year for a program of methodology workshops, editorial advice, and opportunities to present their findings at an international conference. What began as a collaboration with the African Association of Political Science became an independent HFG program in 2010. Since then, three classes of Young African Scholars have gone through the program’s combination of sponsored research and workshops.

In 2011, our Young Scholars met in Accra, Ghana, to discuss their research proposals. Participants were Olaoluwa Akinoluwa, Anusa Daimon, Sylvester Dombo, Beatrice Lamwaka, Dominic Makwa, Felix Mulindangabo, Simon Omare, Polokelo Rantsudu, and Tietso Tlou. They were advised by Esther Acolatse, Vivian Choualal, Karen Colvard, Margaret Lee, Gillian Lindt, Luutu Mukasa, and Mercy Oduyoye. In 2012, after fieldwork and writing, the same group presented their work at the University of Venda, South Africa, at a meeting organized by the Africa Institute of South Africa.

The 2013 Young Scholars meeting took place in Kampala, Uganda, and brought together Innocent Dande, Valery Ferim, Prince Guma, Evelyn Kaney, Dominic Makwa, Tapiwa Mapuranga, Godfrey Maringira, Emmanuel Mwaka, Rasha Salem, and Eria Serwajja. The advisors were Ezra Chitando, Karen Colvard, Margaret Lee, Luutu Mukasa, Pamela Scully, and James Williams. They presented their papers at the UK African Studies Association meetings at the University of Sussex in 2014.

The most recent class of Young Africans convened in 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. They included Margaret Ayansola, Edmore Chitukutuku, Godfrey Maringira, Chenai Matshaka, Bwesige Mwesigire, Florence Ncube, Ndumiso Ngidi, Philip Olayoku, and Jude Onyima. Ezra Chitando, Vivian Chouala, Karen Colvard, Luutu Mukasa, Godwin Murunga, Pamela Scully, and James Williams were the advisors. The students are conducting their fieldwork as this report goes to publication.



## North Africa

With advice from Seteney Shami (the Arab Council for the Social Sciences, Beirut) and Laryssa Chomiak and Robert Parks of the Centers for Maghrib Studies in Tunisia and Algeria, we are developing similar seminars for young scholars from North Africa. Although North Africans have been welcome in the existing Young African Scholars program, there are some differences in educational traditions and choice of subjects that may justify a distinct program.

## Collaboration

As our outreach to young African scholars has unfolded, we have learned from other programs for young professionals and scholars from the continent. Carnegie Corporation has a special interest in African higher education, recently under the direction of Tade Akin Aina, and through the Social Science Research Council has funded several programs targeting this group. In 2010, King's College London launched a now independent entity, the African Leadership Centre in Nairobi, to train young professionals and diplomats. The Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa conducts many programs every year to support the scholarship of young Africans.

In March 2011, our foundation invited representatives from these and other organizations for an informal discussion about African higher education, with two proponents from Uganda, Mahmood Mamdani and Kalundi Serumaga, and Tade Aina offering reflections on the African intellectual project. Kate Parry discussed primary and secondary education in African communities. The African university has had a vexed relationship with colonial and post-independence governments both, and the economics of structural adjustment in the late twentieth century pressed universities to produce more graduates at a lower cost while directing curricula towards market-driven demands. Mamdani has called this a “consultancy culture” and is restructuring the Makerere University Institute for Social Research to recover practices of rigorous



Students and advisors at the 2015 Young African Scholars meeting, Nairobi: Bwesige Mwesigire, Sarah Chant, Jude Onyima, James Williams, Margaret Ayansola, Vivian Chouala, Florence Ncube, Pamela Scully, Chenai Matshaka, Anusa Daimon, Godfrey Maringira, Luutu Mukasa. Back row: Edmore Chitukutuku, Philip Olayoku, Godwin Murunga, Ndumiso Ngidi, Karen Colvard, Ezra Chitando

intellectual work and research, while also confronting the reality that the university itself grows out of paradigms created from Western, not African, experience. That confrontation shapes the program of the Marcus Garvey Pan African University, as Kalundi Serumaga described it: a curriculum that values indigenous knowledge and Western-style learning equally and distributes its campus over multiple “sites of knowledge,” including farms, shrines, classrooms, and other locations where Ugandans have knowledge to impart. (The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation has been supporting both institutions during the period of this report.)

Tade Aina summed up this approach to African higher education: “Transformation implies practical and epistemological ruptures with previous ways of doing things and a reconstruction of structures, relations, cultures, and institutions. In the case of African higher education, transformation entails going beyond reform; it involves a reexamination of inherited institutions and how we think about and

live within them, and a reconstructing of these institutions as durable, sustainable structures geared to meet Africa's needs."

Tom Asher, Rookaya Bawa, Margaret Clemons, Karen Colvard, Aminata Diaw, Claudia Fritelli, Andrea Johnson, Carol Langstaff, Godwin Murunga, Niamani Mutima, 'Funmi Olonisakin, and Stuart Saunders also participated.

### **Reunion: July 14–16, 2013, Pembroke College, Cambridge University**

Diverse points of view were apparent at that meeting about higher education in Africa and about the relative value of the "elite" programs which we support. But everyone agreed that one of the most robust and valuable products of our programs, not anticipated by the organizers, was the networks of support for each other constructed by the alumni of each workshop and program. Conversations about their work and about opportunities available to scholars like themselves, along with announcements of Ph.D.s earned, babies born, and new jobs won, have continued for five years and counting.

With this insight came the inspiration to hold a Guggenheim Young Africans reunion, and to invite some of the other organizations with programs similar to ours to sponsor their alumni's attendance as well. We were able to track down participants from our first six years of support, and the SSRC, CODESRIA, Future Generations, and the

Africa Institute of South Africa sent representatives as well to our meeting at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Participants presented papers related to their current work, met new and old friends, and joked about giving their lectures where the colonial masters had trod.

Reuniting Guggenheim scholars were Olaoluwa Akinloluwa, Zohra Bouguerra, Percyslage Chigora, Anusa Daimon, Evelyn Dede, Sylvester Dombo, Moses Duriji, Dominic Makwa, Godfrey Maringira, Olatubosun Olabimpe, Simon Omare, Evans Ondari, Erias Serwajja, Paul Sixpence, David Udofia, and Olajumoke Yacob-Haiso. Naledi Modise, Itumelens Lindlani Mukhova, Marvellous Ndlovu, and Simphiwe Ngwane were sent by the Africa Institute of South Africa. Cleophas Karooma and Jean Pierre Misago were sent by the SSRC, and Hermenegildo Mulhovo and Ikwo Udoh represented Future Generations. Tade Aina and Inderjeet Parmar gave lectures to the group and Aminata Diaw discussed opportunities with CODESRIA.

## Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History



Allen Guelzo, 2014 winner (left), Alexander Watson, 2015 winner (right)

The annual Guggenheim-Lehrman Prize in Military History was inaugurated in 2013. The prize is \$50,000, awarded to the author of the best English-language book in military history in a given year. It is a collaborative initiative of the foundation and Lewis E. Lehrman, co-founder of the Gilder-Lehrman Institute of American History. The intent of the prize is to draw public attention to military history as an important staple of education in the areas of international relations, diplomacy, and conflict studies. The study of steps to war, the conduct of military campaigns, and diplomatic responses to war can play an essential role in the quest for a more peaceable future.

The winner of the 2014 prize (for the best book in military history published in 2013) was Allen Guelzo, for *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*. The other finalists were Rick Atkinson, for *The Guns at Last Light: The War in Western Europe*; Roger Knight,

for *Britain Against Napoleon: The Organization of Victory*; Peter R. Mansoor, for *My Journey with General David Petraeus and the Remaking of the Iraq War*; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, for *The Men Who Lost America*; and Richard Overy, for *The Bombing War: Europe, 1939–1945*.

The winner of the 2015 prize was Alexander Watson, for *Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I*. The other finalists were Julia Lovell, for *The Opium War: Drugs, Dreams, and the Making of Modern China*, and David Reynolds, for *The Long Shadow: The Legacies of the Great War in the Twentieth Century*.

The award is announced at a ceremony each spring at the New-York Historical Society, which co-sponsors the prize with the foundation.

# Understanding Mexico's Drug Violence

December 9-10, 2011  
New York



Mexico's drug-trafficking organizations had long conducted their illicit business of delivering marijuana, opium and heroin, and, more recently, methamphetamine and cocaine to the United States with relatively little publically visible violence. Beginning in the 2000s, however, periodic spikes in violence occurred as these groups fought over access to trafficking routes and their corrupt government gatekeepers, routes that became increasingly valuable as Mexico became the proximal source of Andean cocaine for U.S. consumption. This violence became prodigious as a result of an aggressive, militarized effort by Mexico's federal government, beginning in 2007, to suppress the drug trade, a campaign that stimulated, by conservative estimate, 70,000 homicides in the following years.

At the end of 2011, the foundation held a meeting of policymakers, journalists, and scholars to forge a better understanding of the factors driving the violence, the logic of its often grotesque forms, the economics of the drug trade, the diver-

At a protest in Mexico City in 2013 against the government's failure to suppress violence, a mother shows pictures of four sons, all missing. 85,000 is a conservative estimate of the number of people who have died in Mexico since 2008 in violence related to the illicit drug market.

sification of drug cartels into extortion and other non-drug sources of income, and the changing role of Mexico's government in drug trafficking, from facilitator of smuggling to antagonist and catalyst for violence. The participants were Luis Astorga, John Bailey, Marcelo Bergman, Edgardo Buscaglia, Howard Campbell, Kevin Casas-Zamora, Alfredo Corchado, Rafael Fernández de Castro, Carlos Flores, Richard Marosi, Shannon O'Neil, Eric Olson, Viridiana Rios, Gema Santamaría, David Shirk, and Joel Wallman.



## H.F. Guggenheim Fellowship at Pembroke College

To memorialize Harry Frank Guggenheim's matriculation at Pembroke College at Cambridge University in 1911 and to further the work that he envisioned for his foundation, HFG underwrote the Harry F. Guggenheim Research Fellowship in Humanities and Social Science at Pembroke in 2011, to be held

for three years by a scholar whose work concerns the causes and nature of violence. The fellow is also expected to give public lectures in Britain and the United States in coordination with the publication of a book resulting from his or her research during the fellowship. The college selected for this honor Dr. Joanna Bellis, whose research centers on historical accounts of war and violence written during the medieval and early modern periods. A monograph, *The Hundred Years War in Literature, 1337-1600*, is in press, as is a co-edited collection, *Representing War and Violence in Later Medieval Europe*, which arose from a conference Bellis organized at Pembroke in 2013. Both books will appear in 2016. Her critical edition of "The Siege of Rouen," a 15th-century eyewitness poem by John Page, appeared in 2015.



The capture of Romorantin by Prince Edward, son of King Edward III, in 1356, shortly before the Battle of Poitiers, at which Edward captured the French king. Taken from an English chronicle.

# Sources and Circulation of Crime Guns

September 2012,  
September 2014  
New York

The foundation hosted a planning meeting (2012) and then a research-coordination meeting (2014) of researchers engaged in an unprecedented multi-method, multi-city study of illegal gun markets. The project is being administered by the University of Chicago's Crime Lab, a group of social scientists

and policy analysts working on problems of criminal violence. Working in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Milwaukee, and New York, the research team is combining surveys of inmates, ethnographic work with gang members, network analysis, and data on crime gun tracings, all with the purpose of clarifying the mechanisms through which guns are acquired by people who shouldn't have them.

Interviews with prisoners in the Cook County and Los Angeles jails have yielded important information on the means by which those arrested for gun offenses came by their guns and their moti-

The yield of a 2012 undercover operation by the NYPD against gun traffickers. A major source of guns used in crime in U.S. states with stronger gun regulations is the "Iron Pipeline" through which guns from loosely regulated states in the South flow to states in the North.



ventions for acquiring them. Those insights are complemented by fieldwork with criminally active residents of Chicago and Boston that further illuminates how underground gun markets operate. Analysis of who gets arrested with whom allows the precise construction of the social networks of high-risk persons. Using this method in Boston revealed that 85% of shootings in one neighborhood occurred within a social network comprising less than 3% of the neighborhood's population. Results from all of the gun traces initiated by a city's police department provide important information about the sources of guns used in that city's crimes. A gun trace uses the serial number on a gun recovered at a crime scene or confiscated from an illegal possessor to identify the licensed dealer and buyer involved in the gun's original sale. In the aggregate, these traces shed light on how quickly crime guns move from such sales to illegal use ("time to crime"), what percentage of criminals get their guns through a licensed dealer, and which regions, states, and dealers are the source of a disproportionate fraction of the guns used in a city's crimes.

HFG is supporting one component of this study with a special one-year grant (i.e., one given outside of the competitive application process through which our grants and dissertation fellowships are normally chosen) to Philip Cook (Public Policy and Economics, Duke University), the Principal Investigator of the Multi-City project, as of January 2015. Gun trace data for Chicago, Los Angeles, and possibly several others will be mined to estimate how many of the guns used in crime originated in theft. Knowing how big a role theft plays in gun acquisition has implications for how much effort law enforcement (ATF, state and local police) should place on theft prevention as opposed to interrupting the illicit market. The FBI keeps a database of all guns reported stolen and it captures a high percentage—upwards of 75%—of all of the roughly 240,000 guns stolen from homes each year (according to the annual National Crime Victimization Survey). By searching this theft database for serial numbers of crime guns that were acquired by police and traced, the researchers can assess the magnitude of gun theft as a source of guns used in crime.



# Dissertation Workshop on Drug Violence in Mexico

October 24–26, 2012  
University of San Diego

In a further effort to promote social-science research on drug-related violence in Latin America (“Understanding Mexico’s Drug Violence”), the foundation undertook to identify doctoral students writing dissertations on this topic and bring them together for a conference with senior scholars having relevant expertise. The purpose was to provide the students with useful feedback on their data and analysis to help them produce high-quality dissertations. The meeting was hosted by the Justice in Mexico Program at the Trans-Border Institute of the University of San Diego. The students were Angelica Duran-Martinez (Political Science, Brown), Froylan Enciso Higuera (History, SUNY Stony Brook), Reynaldo Rojo Mendoza (Political Science, University of Pittsburgh), Javier Osorio (Political Science, Notre Dame), Viridiana Rios (Government, Harvard), and Ana Villarreal (Sociology, UC Berkeley). Other participants: Luis Astorga (Institute for Social Research, UNAM), Rafael Fernández de Castro (International Studies, ITAM), Peter Reuter (Public Policy, University of Maryland), David Shirk (Trans-Border Institute, University of San Diego), and Joel Wallman (HFG). Several of the graduate students eventually contributed articles to a special issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (December 2015) edited by David Shirk and Joel Wallman.

# War, Warfare and Violence

January–April, 2013  
University of Virginia

In the spring of 2013, the foundation collaborated with the University of Virginia's Miller Center in organizing a panel discussion and a series of lectures entitled "War, Warfare, and Violence," which took place at the Miller Center. Participants included a number of former HFG grantees, dissertation fellows, and advisors. The panel discussion, "Restraining the Toll of War and Violence," dealt with the merits and shortcomings of post-war justice mechanisms, from national tribunals to institutions with transnational jurisdiction, such as the International Criminal Court. HFG scholars Andrew Gilbert (Anthropology, McMaster University) and Severine Autessere (Political Science, Barnard College) were among the panelists. Foundation scholars giving lectures were Clark McCauley (Psychology, Bryn Mawr College), "Sources of Terror"; and David Cunningham (Sociology, Brandeis University), "The American Impulse Toward Terror."

# Representing War and Violence in the Pre-Modern World

**September 23, 2013**

**Pembroke College,  
Cambridge University**

discussed at the conference could be called anti-war; even the most shocking descriptions of murder and mayhem in these centuries were produced to elicit revenge and stir up the authorities. Another presentation evoked the England of 1000, besieged by Viking marauders and losing hope rapidly. Many thought it clear that God was most displeased with the English and that the end of England—and possibly of the whole world—had come. A theological debate arose at the time which asked whether it would be necessary for the entire country to repent before it was saved, or whether individuals could do so and save their own souls, even if England were forsaken. This seems to be a moment in the history of ideas where individual fate is becoming distinguished from that of the collective.

Joanna Bellis, the Harry Guggenheim Fellow at Pembroke College, organized this conference about the depiction of war and violence in medieval and early-modern painting, pageantry, and literature. Richard Kaeuper, an HFG grantee for his work on chivalry and war and a keynote speaker, cautioned against reading pre-modern texts with modern eyes, as people in the Middle Ages did not think about war (or art) as we do. Thus, though one participant pointed out a corpse on a painted battleground which seemed to be looking out at the viewer, as if silently condemning the horrors of war, Kaeuper observed that, as compatible as this interpretation is with modern sensibilities, it would not have been characteristic of an artist's view of war at that time. In fact, none of the literature or paintings

# **Festschrift Conference for Sir Lawrence Freedman**

**September 26, 2013**

**King's College London**

On the eve of the retirement of Sir Lawrence Freedman, a towering figure in the study of modern military strategy, the Foundation funded a meeting at King's College London. Freedman was recognized for his extraordinary success in maintaining the highest of academic standards and at the same time advising British policymakers, who, like those elsewhere, often have less wisdom than power. He was, for example, a member of the 2009 British inquiry into the Iraq War, and is now tasked with writing the definitive history of the Falklands War.

Sir Michael Howard, the distinguished historian of war, interpreter of Clausewitz, and Professor Freedman's mentor, offered seasoned observations on current studies of the history of war, arguing that this work must go beyond the mere history of wars to consider the social and cultural transformations wars engender. Several presentations on deterrence, once Professor Freedman's prime domain, illustrated how history has transformed how we think about that subject. Just war, limited war, and asymmetric warfare came in for revisionist treatments drawing on Professor Freedman's work.

# Youth, Economics, and Violence

April 26–April 30, 2015

Salzburg, Austria

Where there are large concentrations of young people and few places in the legitimate economy for them, there is crime and violence. Both attributes characterize the developing world, especially its urban areas, as well as underdeveloped areas within the developed nations, that is, high-poverty pockets in the midst of generally thriving economies. Young men, whether devoid of schooling or educated but living in countries whose economies lack positions for them, are susceptible to the promises of radical political or politico-religious ideologies promoting violent expression of dissatisfaction with the order of things. At the same time, though, young people are at the forefront of non-violent but insistent movements agitating for political regimes responsive to citizens' voices and economic systems free of oligarchic impediments to enterprise. With the under-25 segment reaching 50% of the population in developing nations, the issue of "youth as promise, youth as peril" is urgent—and increasingly so.

With support from HFG and Carnegie Corporation, Salzburg Global Seminar brought together 60 participants from 28 countries for five days in April of 2015 to think through every facet of the issue. Government officials, scholars, and representatives from many and diverse non-governmental groups heard plenary lectures and took part in panel discussions and small-group sessions.



Top, left to right: Carol Langstaff (Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation), Motahar Amiri (Fotohof Art Gallery), Manish Sharma (Panjab University)

Bottom, left to right: Ahmed Hadji (Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum), Paolo Singer (Oxford University), Wagdy Al Kadasi (Yemeni Youth Development Center)



Clockwise from top: Janet Jobson (DG Murray Trust), Eduardo Moncada (Barnard College), Jana Vobecká (KAICIID); Aaron Schachter (Public Radio International); Katherine Aguirre Tobón (Igarapé Institute); Daniel Egel (RAND Corporation); Urbain Thierry Yogo (CERDI), Université d'Auvergne); One of numerous conference sub-groups.





We asked pre-eminent authorities in several of the domains of violence with which the foundation is concerned—criminal violence, intimate partner violence, terrorism, civil war, and international war—to forward three things, whether specific policies or general approaches, that work to prevent, reduce, or stop that form of violence. The five essays they crafted, written with the non-specialist in mind, are at once tutorials and editorials, informative yet opinionated in just the right way.



This does not mean it would be folly to offer specific approaches that work to prevent, reduce, or stop criminal violence. However, our inability to offer a comprehensive explanation for the drop in violent crime should make us wary of one-size-fits-all crime control programs or policies. Furthermore, the fact that violent crime dropped in places where there were no major crime control initiatives and where violent crime was not a major public concern means that at least some crime declines are the result of a diverse range of social, economic, demographic, and cultural factors, rather than interventions narrowly targeted at crime. With that in mind, I offer the following three ways to prevent, reduce, or stop criminal violence.

This suggestion is most relevant to developed countries, where rates of violent crime tend to be much lower on average than in low- and middle-income countries. Developed countries have the luxury, especially given the decline in violent crime, of shifting resources away from the criminal justice system and investing them in institutions—such as the family, schools, health care, the labor market—that could incidentally reduce violence even further. Promoting the healthy development of children and safe, nurturing relationships with their caregivers,

In 1990, 2,245 people were victims of homicide in New York City, a rate of close to 30 homicides for every 100,000 inhabitants. In 2010, the number of victims had dropped to 536 and the rate to about 6 per 100,000. The “New York miracle,” as some have called it, extended beyond homicide and included stunning reductions in attempted murder, robbery, and aggravated assault, among other crimes. It appears that if we want to know what works to prevent, reduce, or stop criminal violence, we should look to what happened in New York City over this twenty-year period. Plenty of people have, some of whom conclude the crime decline there is linked to the institution of stop-and-frisk policing practices, the dismantling of public drug markets, and the growth in gentrification, among other things. Where all of these explanations fall short is their inability to account for the fact that



A Head Start program in Sullivan County, New York. The documented long-term effects of participation in Head Start, though variable by ethnicity, include greater high-school completion rates and reduced arrest rates, making it, among its other virtues, an indirect but cost-effective crime-reduction program.

providing parents with the resources to encourage cognitive development and self-control in their children, creating safe and stimulating schools that encourage student attendance, reducing environmental hazards in homes and workplaces, increasing the availability of mental health care—all of these have been shown to have benefits across a number of domains, including crime prevention. As institutional investments are generally not intended or evaluated as crime control programs, they may fail to catch the attention of criminologists or crime policy makers. Nevertheless, not labeling these investments as crime control initiatives has certain benefits: It avoids stigmatizing individuals and groups served by these programs as “at risk” or “crime prone” and signals the importance of healthy children and families, well-functioning schools, etc., as socially valuable in and of themselves.

In countries with high rates of violent crime, devoting resources to social institutions aimed at building more inclusive and just societies is also critically important because we know that violent crime rates are lower in countries with lower levels of inequality, where citizens view social and politi-

cal institutions as legitimate, and where there is a strong social safety net. Nevertheless, where safety is threatened on a daily basis by violent crime, greater investment in criminal justice institutions is likely to be necessary. At the same time, it is critically important to be aware of the unintended and negative consequences of relying too heavily on the criminal justice system to prevent and control violence, particularly where faith in the legitimacy or effectiveness of criminal justice and legal institutions is lacking. Even in countries where the public has considerable trust in these institutions, crime prevention programs that rely on criminal justice interventions—Scared Straight programs, aggressive policing practices, boot camps, mandatory minimum sentences, lengthy prison sentences—can have no or negative effects rather than reducing crime. (An abundance of research indicates that increasing severity of sentences has little or no negative effect on crime, whereas increasing the certainty of punishment does.) Such interventions also encourage the perception that crime is the critical problem, rather than, for example, mental illness, drug addiction, or lack of economic opportunities;

this perception, in turn, increases fear, distrust, and withdrawal from public life in a society. Finally, even when criminal justice interventions do have some crime reduction effects—e.g., some have argued that the enormous increase in imprisonment in the US in the 1990s contributed to the crime decline—often they are not cost-effective; the same amount of money spent on social programs would prevent more crime.

## **2. Take a long-term perspective**

Violent crimes elicit a visceral reaction and a desire for immediate solutions; politicians and policy makers know that their popularity will never suffer by responding swiftly to citizens' concerns about violence, especially where that response promises rapid results. But the New York miracle did not occur overnight; it had its roots in social and cultural changes that began well before the 1990s. Cognitive therapies for offenders encourage slow, reflexive, and careful thinking, the deferral of gratification, and attention to the potential negative consequences of one's actions. Politicians and the public similarly need to learn to "think slowly"—in other words, not to respond intuitively and automatically to violent crime and to avoid the appeal of simple solutions to complex problems.

Most of the institutional investments described in the previous section by their very nature are unlikely to have immediate effects on violent crime. The effects of early childhood and school enrichment programs emerge relatively slowly and over the long term. This can make them less appealing to politicians, with their short time horizons, but these programs' more immediate consequences—e.g., improved health of mothers and infants, increased school attendance—can still increase political capital. Taking a long-term approach also allows for a more comprehensive assessment of the nature and context of the problem, as well as continuous evaluation of prevention programs rather than assessments based on follow-up periods of just a year or two. Findings from these evaluations can then be used to improve program effectiveness and reduce

the chances of iatrogenic effects, i.e., backfiring, as has been shown to occur, for example, in Scared Straight anti-delinquency programs and some interventions with gang members.

## **3. Design programs for specific contexts and problems, relying on local analysis and input**

Suggestions 1 and 2 should not be taken to imply that investments in programs designed to have more immediate and targeted effects on violent crime are not important. However, how much to invest in these programs and what they should look like will depend very much on local levels and type(s) of violence. In places in the developed world where violent crime rates are low, devoting resources to crime control programs should probably not be a high priority; doing so could create the impression that violent crime is both cause for considerable alarm and something that can be reduced to zero. The former can have negative effects on a community, by decreasing trust and civic engagement, and can divert resources from more important social problems; the latter is an unattainable expectation and can create an unrealistic demand for a risk-free society.

At the same time, many low- and middle-income countries have major violent crime problems—particularly in cities—that require targeted, short-term crime control strategies paired with longer-term institutional investments. It is in these places that the largest, most immediate payoffs in crime reduction can occur, but designing and implementing effective interventions requires in-depth knowledge about local crime problems as well as community input and involvement. Importing programs found to be effective in other, very different contexts—for example, urban areas in the United States—may be tempting but is unlikely to work unless the programs are altered to take account of the local context; and it can make violence worse, particularly if the local community feels an intervention is imposed on them without their consultation. "Zero-tolerance" policing, for example, when imported whole-cloth to less-developed countries

can exacerbate rather than ameliorate conditions conducive to crime. In contrast, when community members are involved in identifying the problem and developing responses, the effectiveness of both formal and informal social controls on crime and delinquency is enhanced. Various types of situational crime control interventions (e.g., increasing street lighting in public areas, surveillance technologies) and hot-spot policing have been found to be effective in a variety of high-violence contexts, especially when combined with improvements to urban infrastructure (e.g., more accessible public transportation and inclusive public spaces). But, again, the success of these programs is highly dependent on knowledge about local context and the buy-in of residents and local community organizations. The effectiveness of policing in controlling crime has been shown to depend, in part, on the legitimacy of police practices in the eyes of the communities in which they work.

## Conclusion

Admittedly, the three suggestions offered above do not identify specific programs, policies, or interventions that we can confidently say will reduce criminal violence in a wide variety of contexts. Rather, they are orienting principles for developing such programs, policies, and interventions for specific contexts. Of the three, the first—i.e., not focusing on violent crime or the criminal justice system—is perhaps the most important, because it encourages thinking about criminal violence not in isolation but as critically connected to other forms of violence in a society. Where violence by the state, by organized crime groups, by armed rebels, or

within families is endemic, violent crime is also likely to be endemic. Thus, the other articles in this section are relevant to the prevention and reduction of violent crime. With that in mind, I strongly encourage readers to examine their suggestions for reducing violence.

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[illegible]

Since 1990, few types of violence have seen greater increases in public policy attention, resources, and condemnation than violence between intimate partners. This increase is due, in part, to the perceived relationship between this type of violence and the status of women in society. The documentation and recognition of the extent of intimate partner violence worldwide have led many countries to change social acceptance of these acts, reform their legal and social programs, increase sanctions for offenders, enhance the availability of treatment for offenders, assist and empower victims, and coordinate public and private community organizations dedicated to reducing this violence. This understanding of the nature of intimate partner violence and the imperative for governments and societies to address this issue provides the basis

These and other efforts appear to have reduced violence between spouses and intimates, particularly in Western, industrialized nations. In two countries where detailed statistical records are readably available over a twenty-year span, the United States and United Kingdom, rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) have declined dramatically. Since 1994, the U.S. Department of Justice has reported that the rate of IPV has decreased by two-thirds across the United States. In the United Kingdom, the reduction in the rate is closer to 75 percent over nearly the same period. Had the rates of IPV remained unchanged, the last two decades would have seen 15 million additional victimizations in the U.S. and 4 million in the U.K. While all forms of homicide are rare in the U.K., in the U.S. homicides by a current intimate partner declined from 2,408 in 1994 to 1,410 in 2012, a 42 percent reduction. Had this reduction not occurred, an additional 15,000 U.S. residents, mostly female, would have died at the hands of their partner during this eighteen-year span. While there have been substantial reductions in most types of crime in the U.S. over this period, the drop in rates of intimate partner violence exceeds the declines found in other types of violence.

## Attitudes

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some forms of violence between family members and intimate partners had been considered justified or at least acceptable in the U.S., the U.K., and in many other societies. Even when these types of violence were unacceptable in some places by some people, respect given to private family matters would often limit others' use of either informal or formal (governmental) social controls to address violence within a household. These attitudes have changed. Few if any of the traditionally acceptable rationales for violence between intimate partners find much support today in the U.S. or the U.K. Moreover, in both these societies, violence between intimates is now considered to be such a serious crime that interventions from outside of the family, including intrusions by governmental agents of social control and private agencies offering social services, are widely supported and, in some cases, mandated by law.

How and why these changes in attitude came about is not clear. They seem to be related to changes in the role of women in these societies, but intimate partner violence was not an explicit concern of early feminist reforms, such as voting rights and equity in education and the workplace. Rising rates of violent crime during the 1970s led to a greater acceptance of national leadership in promoting more severe approaches to crime in general, but those concerns were explicitly focused on violence by strangers, not by intimate partners. Whatever the larger social forces that led to these changes in attitude, one argument for their importance as a factor in the reductions of IPV in the U.S. and the U.K. is that the size and scope of the change in attitudes are consistent with the direction, size, and scope of the reductions in intimate partner violence. However, widespread changes in social behavior do not occur and are not sustained on the basis of changes in attitudes alone.

### **Mobilizing the Criminal Law**

Changes in attitudes with respect to the acceptability of violence and the necessity for societal interventions provided support for a variety of

efforts to affect the behavior of specific individuals. The area that has received the most attention is the use of criminal sanctions. In the U.S., prior to the 1970s, most law enforcement officers were not authorized to arrest anyone, intimate partner or not, for committing a misdemeanor assault—one with no weapon or visible injuries—which the officer did not personally witness. Even in jurisdictions where misdemeanor arrests were legally permitted, many police managers believed that arresting an intimate partner provided little help to the victim and probably made the situation more risky for police officers. In addition, while many court reformers noted the appalling number and severity of family assault cases in heavily overloaded urban criminal courts, they did not believe that these courts were likely to be effective in reducing this violence or the social conditions that led to it. In the 1980s, legal actions brought by advocates for female victims successfully demonstrated that the police failed to respond to violence in the home in a manner commensurate with how they responded to violence in the street.

In 1984, a small but well-designed research project fielded in Minneapolis reported that invoking the criminal law by arresting the offenders in domestic violence calls produced a 50-percent reduction in repeat offenders. This research received extraordinary visibility and was generally well received by victim advocates and by police professionals. Many state legislatures authorized the police to make warrant-less arrests in misdemeanor assaults. Replications of the Minneapolis research and other studies on the effects of arrest have, on average, supported a deterrent effect for arrest, but the reductions in violence due to arrest were not as large as those found in the original Minneapolis report. In addition, in some studies, the violence-reducing effect of arrest varied depending on whether the suspect was employed or not or was married or not. However, enthusiasm for the use of criminal sanctions was not diminished by these caveats, and subsequently several U.S. state legislators went beyond the initial Minneapolis



findings and mandated the use of arrest for various types of intimate partner violence. The 1994 the U.S. Violence Against Women Act provided federal support for the widespread use of arrest as well as the prosecution, conviction, and jailing of offenders. In addition, the use of criminally enforced court-issued restraining orders, fines, GPS-based monitoring for those on probation, and even imprisonment, once rarities for misdemeanor assault of any kind, are all now more commonly used when a violent incident involves an intimate partner. Moreover, in the U.S., where private gun rights are strongly supported, there is bi-partisan support for the lifetime prohibition on owning firearms following a conviction for misdemeanor assault against an intimate partner that was included in the 1994 and subsequent federal legislation. By 2015, few communities anywhere in the U.S. or the U.K. do not officially support criminal justice intervention into family violence. These changes in attitudes and in policies have been labeled the “criminalization of domestic violence,” and this movement reflects a complete reversal in perspective about what law enforcement and courts could and should do in response to violence between intimate partners.

The thrust of these new efforts quickly turned to using arrest and other criminal sanctions as the primary means to address the behavior of the mostly male intimate partner violence offenders. The best evidence from experimental studies and from nationally representative surveys of victims is that arrest—the least severe and most widely used and immediately imposed sanction—reduces subsequent violence. However, until recently, there was no synthesis of studies that examined whether victims were safer after the criminal justice system had prosecuted, convicted, and/or incarcerated their arrested batterers. New evidence, produced by combining outcomes from a large body of non-experimental research, revealed that on average, the incidence of repeat offending recorded by the police was only slightly reduced among those who were prosecuted compared to those who, for whatever reason, were not, and the same was true in

comparing those who were convicted with those who weren’t. Only when some researchers assessed repeat offending through victim interviews instead of official records were these reductions statistically significant, that is, greater than what might be expected to occur by chance. However, this same meta-analysis found that *incarcerating* IPV offenders after a conviction is associated with a significant *increase*, not a decrease, in the rate of re-offending as measured using official data sources.

The available evidence is mixed as to whether other approaches—such as deploying “second responder” teams (follow-up visits by police and/or service providers), issuing restraining orders, mandating batterer treatment, or prohibiting gun ownership—will reduce intimate partner violence. Despite the lack of consistent findings, it is important to remember that *some* evidence exists showing that each of these approaches works well for some types of people. Moreover, for criminal approaches to reduce the incidence of intimate partner violence at the aggregate level, it is not necessary that all of these programs consistently work with all the people sanctioned or treated. In fact, criminologists have long argued that the main impact of criminal justice sanctions occurs by communicating two things to the large number of *potential* offenders. First, the increased use of sanctions needs to communicate that specific behaviors once tolerated by society, such as intimate partner violence, are no longer morally acceptable or legally justifiable. Second, the increased use of sanctions against specific individuals needs to communicate the increased threat of their future use against all individuals who might commit these offenses, not just the relatively small number who were identified and sanctioned in the past. These societal-level effects are more difficult to document than the effects of specific sanctions on specific persons, but the substantial reductions and relatively low levels of intimate partner violence in the two societies that have adopted the use of criminal approaches as national policy are consistent with there being some impact from these two general effects.

## Social Policies

Beyond the use of the criminal justice system to reduce future victimization, many social and educational programs and practices have been put in place toward the same end. For instance, government and private support for emergency housing for victims of intimate partner violence is now commonplace in both the U.S. and the U.K. Although these programs may collaborate with local law enforcement agencies, they are typically operated as private organizations with only limited oversight by local and national governments. The main argument for the effectiveness of these programs is not based on systematic research. Rather, support for the use of emergency shelters stems simply from their widespread noncontroversial use and the absence of a clear-cut alternative program or policy with which they can be compared. Interestingly, research has documented that the greater availability of these emergency services for female victims is associated with aggregate level reductions in intimate partner homicides against *males*, suggesting that the utilization of these facilities has provided women the option to leave their batterer before resorting to lethal violence to protect themselves and their children.

Over time, these emergency housing programs have offered more than temporary shelter to the victims and their children. Today, they often initiate the identification and delivery of needed social services to the women and children seeking emergency shelter. By helping their clients to pursue alternative living, employment, and health care options, these programs endeavor to free them from the circumstances that facilitated the violence by their partner. To date, however, scholars have not collected sufficient evidence to capture the extent to which these enhanced programs translate into long-term violence prevention benefits for their clients.

In addition to programs designed to assist directly victims and their children, a number of other approaches have evolved to address factors associated with violence between intimate part-

ners. Among the most widely used are programs that focus on modifying the thinking and attitudes of male offenders. These batterer treatment programs typically involve weekly meetings that may last as long as 12 months. They are typically operated by private organizations, even though many of their participants are mandated by courts to attend these programs as an alternative to a criminal justice sanction. The extensive research on these programs has regularly documented that the participants' violence against their partners is reduced while they are in the program, but the challenge has been to identify specific treatment modalities that will consistently reduce recidivism *after* the clients have completed their program. Other programs designed to address the needs of victims or offenders operate completely independently of the criminal justice system or other government agencies. For instance, alcohol and drug treatment programs address issues of violence, as do educational programs that bring moral and religious considerations to counseling programs for women, men, or both partners. Within any jurisdiction, individuals may have benefited from the services of a variety of programs over time, but this mixture of treatments contributes to the difficulty of identifying measurable and lasting effects on their clients. While concrete evidence for consistent long-term abatement in violence from any specific approach remains elusive, it is reasonable to believe that each contributed to the reductions observed in the U.S. and U.K.

## Transferability to Other Societies

The evidence for what prevents, reduces, or stops intimate partner violence comes primarily from the experiences in the United States and United Kingdom. Thus, it is not clear to what extent these approaches will work in other societies. The shifts in attitudes and policy innovations that took place in the U.S. and the U.K. stemmed, in great part, from an assessment of what was wrong with these societies and what resources existed to address those problems. Recent multi-national studies suggest

that changes in attitudes about the acceptability of intimate partner violence are occurring in many other societies, but it is not yet clear that those changes are sufficient to provide support for state or societal interventions to reduce it.

The changing treatment of intimate partner violence that occurred in the United States and United Kingdom derived from a broad spectrum of criminal justice reforms not widely adopted in other countries. Both societies invested heavily in improving the professionalism and effectiveness of the criminal justice system generally, which means that the approaches used to reduce intimate partner violence might not have been so successful without these broader reforms addressing crime and justice issues. Using the criminal law against intimate partner violence may not be an appropriate approach where the law is not effectively or fairly used against other offenses. Criminal law alone is unlikely to reduce intimate partner violence without substantial resources, professional improvements in the criminal justice system, and widespread changes in attitudes about violence in intimate partner relationships.

Preventing, reducing, and stopping intimate partner violence in other societies may at first depend more on the role of private agencies and social programs and less on government efforts. In the U.S. and the U.K., demonstrating what needed to be changed and what change looked like on a small scale occurred first, and that may be what is needed to reduce violence elsewhere. Shelters, batterer treatment programs, coordination of social services, and even private legal action may be kinds of local action that other societies can adopt without formal government support or the use of criminal sanctions.

Changes in how the U.S. and the U.K. addressed intimate partner violence benefited from efforts at the local level to understand the nature of violence between intimates and what might be done to reduce it. A closer understanding of what is actually going on, whether by formal research and statistics or simply by well-grounded knowledge

of local conditions, may be a necessary condition for determining what will and what will not work in a particular location. Perhaps the least promising approach in other societies would be to follow blindly the steps taken in the United States and United Kingdom.

### **Current and Future Applicability to the U.S. and the U.K.**

The policies and programs in place to reduce intimate partner violence may not, ironically, be the most effective ways to further reduce intimate partner violence. Criminal sanctions and private treatment programs may be needed to keep violence down to current rates, but they might not reduce them further. Research has found that while most offenders commit just one or two offenses, a smaller proportion commit many offenses. For instance, the studies evaluating the impact of arrest have documented that, regardless of any criminal justice sanctions that may have been applied to them, most suspects do not repeat their violent behavior towards an intimate partner. However, the same research found that a small proportion continue to assault the same and other victims at a high rate.

In short, the current strategy may have been effective with low-rate offenders, but it has not been very successful at systematically identifying the high-rate offenders or treatments or sanctions that are effective with them. In the future, we will need to test new approaches that emphasize the use of information from many agencies to identify those with the potential to be either a high-rate offender or a high-rate victim or both. This approach does not require changes in public attitudes but it does involve developing even more powerful diagnostic skills and treatment modalities than presently exist. For example, following up on some pilot efforts, several large-scale initiatives are currently being developed to determine if a locally coordinated program of information sharing can identify either high-risk offenders or high-risk victims and provide the appropriate intervention before new violence

occurs. Evaluations of these programs are ongoing, but it will be years before we know how much more intimate partner violence might be reduced using these innovative approaches.

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A word cloud centered around the word "Terrorism". Other prominent words include "civilian deaths", "enemies", "policies", "religious", "doctrine", "country", "question", "answer", "hard", "leverage", "consequence", "Prevention", "strategy", "mobilization", "possible", "causes", "frightens", "simple", "expenditure", "uncertain", "effects", "narrowly", "authoritarian", "contact", "different", "exhaustion", "geography", "deep", "multiple", "predictable", "enemies", "Boston Marathon", "celebrate", "changes", "contributing", "shocks", "counter", "followers", "contingent", "poor", "numbers", "triggers", "bombing", "act", "work", "society", "resources", "variation", "political", "grand", "ethic", "security", "considered", "chance", "decade", "psychological", "unstable", "American", "social", "psychological", "effects", "unstable", "American", "social", "psychological", "effects".

Policies that might work well for an established, prosperous, and stable Western democracy might not work at all—or even be feasible—for a poor, unstable country with weak security institutions and authoritarian traditions. A country with deep social, economic, religious, and ethnic cleavages would find confronting terrorism to be more problematic than would a more cohesive society. Geography matters; terrorism can be an urban or a rural phenomenon, or both. Variations in context could be discussed at length, but the bottom line is that terrorism occurs in diverse circumstances.

Another important consideration is whether the threat of terrorism is domestic or transnational

It is not just an academic conceit to say that this question has no simple answer, because the term “terrorism” subsumes so much variation. Terrorism can be defined as a type of political violence that shocks and frightens more than it destroys, an attempt at communicating or signaling more than an effort to destroy an enemy, and a way of leveraging relatively small expenditure of effort and resources into large psychological effects. It is predictable that many different sorts of actors will use it in a mix of contexts. The consequence is that effective policy has to be tailored to specifics and that a “grand strategy” against all terrorism may not be possible or desirable. And the outcomes of even the best considered and narrowly focused policies are uncertain and contingent. Prevention is especially hard in the case of terrorism, which can

or a mix of the two forms. Good governance does not guarantee immunity but can ensure that locally based terrorism does not gain traction. However, stable democracy is not an antidote for international terrorism. Where terrorism is a border-crossing phenomenon, a threatened state must defend itself directly but may also need the cooperation of the (typically weak) states where the groups using terrorism are located or supported. The same group may thus pose one sort of challenge for the third party (e.g., the United States) and another for the host country government (e.g., Iraq, Afghanistan, or Pakistan). Policies that might be effective in preventing or reducing terrorism cannot be forced onto a resistant local government (such as including Sunnis in the Shia-dominated regime and reducing corruption in Iraq). The need for coordination does not always yield compliance, as frustrated patrons quickly learn. The problem is further complicated because in weak dependent states, terrorism is often mixed inextricably with civil war, insurgency, or sectarian conflict. Effective ways of preventing, diminishing, or halting transnational terrorism will require international cooperation (which can involve military as well as political or economic assistance). Yet such linkages can increase the vulnerability of the patron state.

Recognizing these complexities and contradictions, I will still offer three propositions that are inter-related and equally important in formulating sound policies regarding terrorism. One concerns legitimacy, the second moderation and patience, and the third is about upholding security.

Legitimacy in the context of terrorism has two dimensions: The defender against terrorism must diminish the opponent's legitimacy while upholding its own. Often the same policy measure can accomplish both objectives—or undermine them.

What it takes to erode the adversary's legitimacy will depend on the variations in contexts and types of terrorism described above. Measures might involve reform of existing institutions and policies intended to ameliorate popular dissatisfactions that the terrorist factions have seized upon as justification.

It is critically important to understand the relationship between the proponents of violence, however few in number they may be, and the communities they claim to represent and with whom they share history and identity. Undermining the opponent's legitimacy might also involve rewarding those political actors who express their dissent peacefully, such as political parties or social movements with an ideology similar to that of the violent group. It is important to recognize that opposition groups often disagree about method more than ultimate goal. It may be possible to undermine a terrorist opponent's legitimacy by opening the path of negotiations and entering a peace process that offers an alternative to violence. Doing so may split the opposition, leading in the short run to more violence by rejectionist factions, but in the long run conciliatory overtures may isolate them and remove the rationale for using violence. Faced with violent Islamist extremism, the U.S. State Department's Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications is also trying to undermine the adversary's ideological appeal by promoting "counter narratives" through social media, but these do not appear to have been persuasive. The American government is hardly the most credible source when it comes to dissuading potential jihadist recruits.

The defending government must also refrain from counter-terrorism responses that weaken its own legitimacy. Such blunders or mistakes are not hard to identify: excessive and heavy-handed use of force, discrimination against the populations from which terrorism is thought to spring (ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities or immigrants, for example), adoption of Draconian systems of legal punishment, mistreatment of prisoners, secret prisons and renditions, restrictions of civil liberties, or tolerance of private or rival violence against supposed terrorist groups. In particular, counter-terrorism measures that inspire a desire for revenge on the part of a targeted population are counter-productive. Governments must avoid succumbing to provocation, which is often what the terrorists are actually seeking.



Sometimes, however, playing into the terrorist adversary's hands cannot be avoided or seems worth the price in light of other policy priorities. For example, the Obama administration chose to assist the Iraqi government in fighting ISIS, thus angering Islamists who reject any American presence in Muslim lands and probably increasing the risk of terrorist attacks against Americans. Such trade-offs should be explicit; legitimacy requires transparency in decision-making, meaning that the defending government must be able to explain and justify the response.

The second way forward is what could be referred to as the course of patience and moderation. This means that political leaders confronted with terrorism or the prospect of terrorism should think before acting, expect and promise results over the long-run, not the short-run, and be willing to accept some level of risk. The leaders of democracies must inform and educate their publics about the real risks of both terrorism and the response to terrorism. It is rare that terrorism alone, however painful, is an "existential" threat to an otherwise stable country; in fact, it is hard to think of an instance, despite the frequent invocation of such mortal national dangers by politicians and political commentators. The 9/11 attacks were horrifying but in themselves did not diminish American national security. The survival of the nation was not at stake. The reactions of targeted governments are much more consequential than terrorism itself. Overreaction can lead to institutional, legal, and political changes that are difficult to reverse when the crisis or emergency has passed.

The limits to government capability must be openly recognized. For example, even in the best of circumstances it is unlikely that a campaign of terrorism can be halted immediately after onset. As noted earlier, a small conspiratorial underground can, even with little popular support, initiate a campaign of terrorism. Terrorism is an easy and cheap tactic, which is why it is commonly referred to as the "weapon of the weak." Perfect prevention is not possible; governments should not promise that

terrorism can be prevented or eradicated entirely. Both absolutes are illusory goals. Even if it were possible, the cost of completely eliminating terrorism might be unacceptably high in terms of civil liberties and basic freedoms, even international reputation. In addition, success in ending terrorism directed at one country might solve its domestic problem by exporting or deferring it.

The last (but by no means least) principle of intelligent counter-terrorism is reasonable and efficient security measures. A targeted or defending government has to protect potential victims from violence, especially since terrorism most frequently targets defenseless civilians. Obviously this requirement is related to legitimacy, since insecurity erodes legitimacy—indifference or even the appearance of indifference is harmful. It is the duty of the state to protect the lives of its citizens and maintain control of its territory. The Nigerian government's inability or unwillingness to protect its people from Boko Haram's depredations, such as the kidnapping of school girls, damaged its standing to the extent that the ruling party lost power in subsequent elections. The government's responsibility includes as well the constituency that the terrorists claim to be representing. For example, the Shia-dominated government in Iraq needs to protect its Sunni citizens from both Islamist and Shia militia violence.

Accomplishing this goal depends on robust intelligence, law enforcement, and judicial as well as military institutions. Where such institutions are weak or lacking, foreign assistance can help build counter-terrorism capacity. Much productive counter-terrorism effort involves systematic attention to details and information-sharing, "low politics" in other words. Dealing with transnational terrorism requires extensive cross-border cooperation among national intelligence agencies as well as strengthening police and judicial capacity in weak states. Much American assistance to the Indonesian government, for example, has gone to civilian, not military, institutions.

Security has both defensive and offensive aspects. Terrorists must be denied access to targets

and weapons, and they must be detected, apprehended, and punished fairly and appropriately. The use of military force should be a last resort, but when military force is effective it is based on good intelligence. Precision, proportionality, and discrimination are impossible otherwise.

Much controversy has surrounded the use of drones as an American counter-terrorism measure. Drone strikes have removed key jihadist terrorist leaders from action and disrupted their organizations. However, the secrecy that surrounds the decision-making in these strikes means limited public understanding of the criteria for selecting targets. Open discussion of benefits and costs, such as the impact of civilian casualties, is also absent. The transparency that legitimacy requires is inadequate.

The applicability of a strategy of deterrence to non-state actors is another disputed question. Generally, analysts agree that deterrence by denial can work, which means that a government can establish a level of physical protection that is so high that terrorists are discouraged from attacking. Societal resilience is a contributing factor, as it denies terrorists the presumed reward of causing fear and shock. However, deterrence by retaliation or punishment is more elusive, in part because it is difficult to determine responsibility for terrorist attacks. In addition, effective deterrence depends on credibly threatening to harm something that the adversary values. In theory this is a simple requirement, but in practice it is problematic. The Islamic State presumably values the territory in Syria and Iraq that it now governs as the “caliphate,” but

would the U.S. be willing to cause the deaths of thousands of civilians in bombing strikes in order to punish the Islamic State?

In sum, what is most likely to work is a prudent and carefully considered response that upholds the government’s legitimacy while diminishing that of the terrorist. Government leaders should not give in to emotion, a desire for quick solutions, or the temptation to promise a complete removal of the threat of terrorism. Effective counter-terrorism depends, finally, on state capacity not just in the use of force but in upholding the rule of law.

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## A word cloud visualization of terms related to conflict. The most prominent words are 'Civil War' and 'Conflicts'. Other significant terms include 'Internal War', 'Worldwide', 'Locations', 'Activity', 'Armed', 'Intensity', 'Level', 'Peacekeeping', 'Presence', 'Fatalities', 'Damage', 'Aggregate', 'Countries', 'Mediation', 'Aggression', 'States', 'World', 'Civil'. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with some words appearing multiple times. The colors are primarily shades of blue, green, and yellow.

In 2014, the last year for which data has been compiled, 40 armed conflicts were active in 27 locations worldwide. Out of those, 11 reached the intensity level of war, i.e., they caused at least one thousand battle-related deaths in one calendar year, the generally accepted threshold used by scholars of war. All 11 cases were instances of internal or civil war, albeit wars entailing a considerable presence and activity of foreign powers; in fact, 33% of all internal conflicts were “internationalized” in the sense that one or more foreign states contributed troops to one or both sides. Indeed, and quite remarkably, of all the 40 active conflicts in 2014, just one was an interstate war: the conflict between India and Pakistan, which caused fewer than 50 fatalities. In short, when talking about war in the contemporary world, we almost always speak of civil war. Hence,

The overlap between civil war and war should not be meant to imply that the factors that contributed to the decline of interstate wars will necessarily also help reduce or prevent civil wars. For example, the development of nuclear weapons and the rise of nationalism are factors that made most wars of conquest obsolete (by making it impossible to annex “disloyal” populations), yet they tell us little about why civil wars take place. Likewise, the expanding and universally endorsed (if sometimes breached) norm against interstate war does not seem to apply to civil wars. If anything, the decline of interstate wars has contributed to the fueling of civil wars, as superpowers or regional powers have used civil wars as a substitute for a direct clash between themselves that is seen as too costly. The current war in Syria with the direct involvement of several foreign powers is a case in point.

The most frustrating thing about designing policies to prevent, reduce, or stop civil wars is that the structural factors that are most reliably associated with a lower incidence of civil war are precisely those that tend to be the least amenable to policy intervention—and vice-versa. For instance, and as mentioned, ending the Cold War turns out to have been critical in stopping civil wars and preventing new ones from arising, yet this was not the type of political development that could have been implemented via public policy. Unfortunately, the same is true of some key factors that have been found in cross-national research to be associated with civil war onset.

First and foremost among those factors is a country's aggregate wealth. Civil wars are much more likely in very poor countries (also known as the "bottom billion" countries). In fact, civil wars almost never take place in highly developed countries. The mechanism behind this observation is a matter of debate. It could well be that extreme poverty drastically reduces opportunity costs, making it more likely that individuals would be willing to risk their lives in order to achieve social change. Alternatively, it could be that states tend to be weakest where poverty is greatest, thus opening the door to any kind of challengers and leading to wars of "all against all," as discussed most famously by Thomas Hobbes. Some studies find that the presence of natural resources, especially oil, makes a country more vulnerable to civil war. Again, though, the explanation for this correlation is not obvious. It could either be the result of the motivation to loot or a reflection of weak institutions, as a result of the well-known "resource curse": States that rely on plentiful natural resources generally have few incentives to create robust institutions associated with good governance, rule of law, and political stability. At the same time, we should keep in mind that aggregate poverty may be a statistically significant predictor of civil war but it remains a poor substantive predictor—at any moment in time, the great majority of poor countries remain free of civil war.

Unlike economic development and state capacity, government type appears in most studies to be unrelated to the likelihood of civil war, although some do find that "anocracies" (i.e., liberalizing autocracies, regimes that are neither strongly autocratic nor democratic) tend to be more vulnerable to civil war onset, suggesting that regime transitions open up the window to violent conflict. However, one of the most interesting developments of the post-Cold War era is the multiplication of negotiated settlements (as opposed to clear-cut military outcomes) as a way to end civil wars, often resulting in democratic transitions. Democracy, in other words, is more commonly an *outcome*

of civil war rather than a cause of its eruption or absence. Lastly, some recent studies find a causal link between the exclusion of ethnic minorities from power and the likelihood that these minorities will take up arms and fight for autonomy or secession. However, while power sharing may reduce the sense of exclusion among minority populations, it is also a hard task to accomplish. Moreover, highly institutionalized types of ethnic power-sharing (e.g. those known as "consociationalism") may prevent conflict, but they also freeze ethnic identities, thus increasing the future likelihood of conflict. Lebanon and Cyprus are cases in point.

One rare example of a policy measure targeted at a structural determinant of civil war onset is the so-called Kimberley Process, a joint initiative of governments, industry, and a variety of NGOs that was established in 2003 and aimed at stemming the international trade of "conflict diamonds," i.e., diamonds used by rebel movements to finance violent conflicts. Although begun with considerable optimism, this scheme eventually came in for equally considerable criticism as regards its effectiveness. In any case, diamonds provide financing in a very limited subset of civil wars and hence this was a policy with a very narrow range. And the difficulty with which it was forged highlights the impediments to enacting international policies that manage to connect a broad set of actors.

Unlike the highly publicized blood diamonds, political-economic competition between world or regional powers is a factor that regularly contributes to both the onset and escalation of civil wars, as evidenced most recently in Syria and in the recent past in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Especially when the major culprits are states that are members of the United Nations Security Council, there is little that can be done to influence them.

To summarize, then, the first and most important thing we can do to prevent civil wars is to speed worldwide economic and political development, that is, encourage policies that promote economic growth and the creation of political institutions that are associated with stronger, more effective states.



The Somerset House Conference of 1604 led to the Treaty of London, ending a 19-year war between England and Spain. Since the Cold War, diplomacy has become an increasingly common approach to both preventing and ending civil wars.

Obviously, these are huge and slow-moving processes. Nevertheless, assuming that current trends continue, it is reasonable to expect that the future will include much less civil war than the present.

Moving to less reliable but more practical areas, two additional possibilities should be addressed. The first centers on activities led by the United Nations, including both preventive diplomacy and post-conflict peacekeeping, and the second is the practice of international mediation. Both have grown considerably since the end of the Cold War and constitute areas where additional investment is likely to yield positive effects.

United Nations activities have expanded substantially over the years. The first peacekeeping mission and the first high-profile mediator were deployed by the UN in 1948. Since then, peace operations, which include a large range of activities, have expanded to include almost 130,000 women and men currently serving in almost 40 missions. The portfolio of UN actions directed at conflict prevention and de-escalation is very broad. It includes the issuing of official condemnations, the undertaking of diplomatic actions (good offices, mediation, fact-finding, civilian monitoring missions), the levy-

ing of sanctions against specific countries, and the deployment of force, be it peacekeeping missions or authorizations of non-UN multinational forces.

Post-conflict peacekeeping is perhaps the UN activity with the highest visibility. Although prominent failures always attract considerable attention, several recent studies of the UN's full peacekeeping record find that the UN has been quite successful: The presence of peacekeepers at a conflict site significantly reduces the risk of renewed warfare. These studies also report that even when fighting continues, the presence of UN peacekeepers is associated with a reduction of its intensity, as well as the levels of violence affecting civilians. There is no doubt that post-conflict peacekeeping is an expensive and complex enterprise, but if these studies are correct, then this practice is nonetheless an effective way to reduce the human costs of civil war and the likelihood of its future recurrence. This is not to say, of course, that they could not be improved.

How about the much more cost-effective, not to mention more humanitarian, approach of preventing a conflict from erupting in the first place? There is much more skepticism when it comes to the effectiveness of these efforts, including, and



most notably, within the UN itself. In June of 2015, the UN High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations issued a report pointing out that the “culture of prevention” that the UN wished to promote had failed to materialize so far. The panel called for prioritizing mediation (and conflict prevention more generally), characterizing them as perhaps the greatest responsibility of the international community.

Undoubtedly, successful preventive diplomacy is very hard to implement and even harder to study. UN prevention failures are much easier to observe because of the simple fact that conflicts that erupt are visible whereas conflicts that are prevented are not. Nevertheless, a recent study has attempted to address this issue by studying the effect of UN action on all intra-state disputes over self-determination—the kind often described as “ethnic”—in the period from 1960 to 2005. The researchers focused on countries with already well-developed self-determination movements. About 40% of these movements became involved in a civil war, demonstrating that escalation to civil war is not a rare phenomenon in such settings. The researchers found robust support for the direct preventive effect of UN Security Council resolutions related to diplomatic activity, and more specifically for the ability of UN-led diplomacy to prevent self-determination movements from engaging in violent conflict. Of 142 self-determination movements at risk of armed conflict, 19 were the subjects of a directly pertinent UNSC resolution condemning the actors, while 25 had an indirectly pertinent resolution condemning them. The study reports a significant correlation between UNSC resolutions directly authorizing diplomacy in these countries and conflict non-escalation, suggesting that such efforts can prevent the onset of violence.

In short, both UN peacekeeping and preventive diplomacy, particularly of the high-profile type associated with Security Council resolutions, can be quite effective. Improving it and expanding these activities sound like good short- and medium-term investments.

How about international mediation? In its basic form, this is a process whereby political actors already embroiled in a violent dispute seek the assistance (or accept an offer of assistance) from a state or non-state organization in order to settle their conflict. The key point here is that this organization does not have the capacity to enforce an agreement—it is a facilitator, not an enforcer. In other words, mediation is a non-violent process. Often, mediation attempts focus on procedural issues, such as setting out the conditions that would get negotiations started, rather than focus on the substance of the conflict itself. The most attractive feature of international mediation is its cost-effectiveness. Compared to most other policies it is remarkably cheap, and if it succeeds in preventing a conflict from erupting, remarkably effective from a humanitarian perspective.

Mediated settlements have become increasingly common, especially following the end of the Cold War. In fact, there were more mediation attempts during the 1990s than during the entire 1945–89 period, and a broad number of organizations have become engaged in this practice, especially regional intergovernmental organizations.

Recent research has highlighted the potential role that well-coordinated and resourced international mediation can have in terminating civil wars. Mediation can become indispensable in a civil war because of the so-called “credible commitment” problem. Unlike in interstate wars, where a negotiated settlement means that rival states can go back to their business of peaceful governance, ending civil wars requires that rebels put their arms down. However, they know that when they do so, they will be at the mercy of the government, which now has a strong incentive to renege on its agreement and crack down on the now defenseless opposition. The rebels, in short, may not accept the government’s commitment to the settlement as believable, leading them to reject any agreement that cannot be guaranteed by credible outside actors. If one adopts a very broad definition of success so as to cover all types of agreement, from ceasefire to



comprehensive and durable settlement, then fewer than half (45%) of mediation efforts succeed. Other studies, however, find that over half of all mediation efforts during the post-Cold War period resulted in a ceasefire. In short, while mediation is no silver bullet, its potential is also quite significant and its practice growing. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of research on the much-less visible preventive mediation taking place before conflicts escalate into armed engagement.

There is no consensus on whether a particular strategy or sequence of mediation is more successful, whether mediator bias in favor of any of the conflict actors is necessary or not, or exactly what are the criteria whereby mediators pick the conflicts where they invest their efforts. One factor that appears to increase the likelihood of success is mediation by an international organization (e.g. the UN or a regional intergovernmental organization) or by major powers such as the US, suggesting that significant resources and international prestige matter.

To summarize, structural processes such as economic growth and political development are our best long-term bet for reducing the incidence

of civil wars. Prosperous democracies manage conflict in peaceful ways because they both reduce its economic stakes and supply several channels for peaceful political competition. In the short-to-medium term, however, we would be well advised to invest in UN activities, including peacekeeping, preventive diplomacy, and international mediation. These are slow-moving, tedious, and hardly spectacular processes, but they are more effective than we tend to give them credit for.

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## What Is Being Prevented?

For this essay's purposes, war is a state's use of large-scale, deadly force outside of its own borders against another actor (often a state but not always). This is something of an artificial distinction. Bashar al-Assad's attacks on the so-called Islamic State (as well as innocent civilians) within Syrian territory would not count as war. But the ongoing air campaign by the United States and other countries against that same non-state actor would. Many ostensibly civil wars, especially in Africa, are actually proxy wars, fought by forces supported by neighboring states, the Democratic Republic of Congo being a particularly chronic and horrifying example of this. Perhaps the biggest recent development in the study of global violence is the recognition that there is no clean division between civil and interstate wars.

It should not surprise us that if defining war poses challenges, nailing down its cause and prevention is even more perplexing. The complicated, strategic, and adaptive nature of politics (and political scientists) suggests that disagreement on what prevents war is inevitable. For this reason, war will almost certainly remain a *possibility* in international life. But there are reasons to think its *probability* can be reduced further.

## When Is War Rational?

All three explanations I offer here are built on an understanding that states compete violently not just for power, but because the current distribution

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Before figuring out its causes, let us gratefully acknowledge the past few decades' decline in interstate war in general, war between developed states in particular, and especially great power war. The era since World War II has been an unprecedented stretch without major armed conflict between very large countries. Nonetheless, many current, actively violent conflicts—Ukraine and Russia, Yemen and a Saudi-led coalition, India and Pakistan—contain the potential for large death tolls, economic destruction, massive flows of displaced persons, and regional instability. And while great power war has mercifully disappeared for the time being, any outbreak would have catastrophic consequences, and so the merest possibility of such a disaster demands continued attention to its causes and the means of its prevention.

of assets (territory, resources, preferred policies, and abstract but important goods such as prestige) does not reflect the current balance of power. In this conception, war becomes a costly form of bargaining over revising the status quo to re-distribute assets. Within this logic, a declining state is as willing to fight to maintain its ample slice of the pie as a rising state is to fight for a bigger one.

If war is a costly way to solve a bargaining problem, this leads to a famous puzzle (addressed separately by Geoffrey Blainey and James Fearon): Why would rational actors capable of basic math ever go to war? If there is something of value at dispute, and both sides' wartime costs in blood and treasure would eat into any potential gains from fighting, surely the parties should be able to agree on simply dividing the spoils in accordance with war's anticipated outcome. One rather elegant answer to this puzzle lies in the fact that, when bargaining, incentives exist for parties to exaggerate how much they care about the issue ("resolve") and how much power they have should it come to blows ("capability"). Knowing the other side might be bluffing can still make war possible, despite its inherent costliness. Because it cannot be certain of their true magnitudes, a state may propose dividing the contested good based on an overestimate of its military advantage or an underestimate of its opponent's interest. The resulting mismatch between each side's assessment of the likely outcome of war precludes an agreement and thereby makes war a rational response.

By this logic, to minimize the probability of a crisis escalating to war, we should make the expected benefits for each side of war versus peace starker and less easily misrepresented to the other. This undermines the effect that private information (i.e., bluffing) can have on making war "rational," and thus can lead to peaceful resolution or at least a very tense lack of fighting. In this essay I suggest three ways to make the math of conflict easier: international transparency, a deeply lopsided distribution of power, and nuclear deterrence. While all three conditions reduce the likelihood of

war, getting to them is not easy, frequently dangerous, and in some cases immoral.

## Transparency

If bluffing makes war possible, then knowledge not only confers power but promotes peace as well. Surprise is such a useful thing militarily, however, that states are understandably reluctant to augment their rivals' knowledge by revealing their capability or war plans. Had Egypt and Syria divulged the sophistication of their surface-to-air missiles in 1973, Israel might have resolved disputes over the Sinai sooner and avoided the Yom Kippur War. One could argue that, in their response towards Russia's designs on Ukraine, Western states have been hampered by ignorance of how much Russia valued Crimea.

While it is unlikely that states will ever have all the desired information about their opponents, any extra information (indeed even "bad" information) can reduce the likelihood of war. One implication is that spying (information gathering against potential opponents) can limit war, because the newly informed state can propose a better bargain for itself that also leaves less room for war. The more one state knows about an opponent, the better able it will be to offer a settlement to the crisis that maximizes its own benefit while being just preferable by the opponent to a costly war. Similarly, American badgering of a reluctant China to reveal its military capabilities, may, to the extent it succeeds, make peace marginally more likely.

While many focus on international institutions' more evident peacemaking role, their value as reliable information clearinghouses is often overlooked. The most consequential function of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs might well be—despite its name—the list of states' armaments that it maintains. The NGO Transparency International's focus on openness and corruption in arms sales rather than the arms sales themselves is another welcome development. Knowing who has what weapons matters. Obtaining information about arms sales is much easier than stopping the sale itself.

Seemingly small things can make marginal but important differences. “Hotlines” between rivals are essentially an information provision device designed to prevent fighting in times of intense crisis. The remarkably invasive inspections of nuclear facilities intrinsic to US-Russian arms agreements (and a potential Iran nuclear deal) are another example of peace maintenance through information sharing.

Diplomacy, often given short shrift as “cheap talk” by students of international conflict, can also work in this sense. To alter Churchill’s famous phrase slightly, “jaw jaw” can delay “war war”; at the very least, diplomacy keeps the benches from being cleared. John Kerry’s “failed” shuttle diplomacy between Israel and Palestine was never likely to produce an agreement, but it has served an important purpose by holding out the prospects to both sides of gaining more information about the other as well as providing a continued reassurance that there remains a space for bargaining without war.

Finally, a deeper understanding of the culture and perspective of other countries can make war less likely not simply because it promotes a sense of shared humanity, but because one can better understand the goals another state might have in a crisis, as well as its coercive capability to achieve them—countries differ markedly in their “strategic cultures,” that is, beliefs about how and when their military should fight. “Mirror imaging” of a potential opponent has often contributed to badly handled crises that led to war.

The bad news is that states jealously guard information about not only their military capabilities but their “true” foreign policy goals (what bargaining theory calls the “reservation price”) as well. It is rational for Israel to publicly state that only an Iran free of any uranium processing capability is acceptable, but it probably is willing to settle for less. The most powerful countries often reveal the least. This is coupled to international institutions’ arguably mistaken emphasis on active peacemaking rather than simple information sharing. Thus, as power continues to shift in the world, continuing to

prevent major-power war may require more blunt, and perhaps less pleasant, alternatives to making the math easy.

## **Unipolarity**

The war-as-bargain approach suggests that if the difference in two nations’ military capabilities is so large that no amount of bluffing can disguise it, information deficits become less dangerous and peace becomes more likely. Research shows that states of equal military power are at greater risk of an armed conflict than are unbalanced dyads. We live in an era of huge global disparity of power, and that is likely a factor that makes for peace.

International politics literature refers to the most important powers in the world as “poles.” While the Cold War world was bipolar, this is clearly no longer the case. The United States may be in relative decline—other large countries’ economies and militaries are growing faster—but its lead over any other state remains immense in both domains, particularly in military power. By the most conservative measures, the United States remains responsible for a third of global military expenditures. Its core allies (NATO, Japan, South Korea, and Australia) account for a third of the remaining global spending. More concretely, the United States owns about 70% of the world’s aircraft carrier deck space, as good a measure as any of the ability to project power around the world. To say the least, a war against the United States, or even preparing for a war with the United States, seems a game not worth the candle.

The huge advantage in American military capacity has other war-dampening benefits. The United States dominates the international arms market. This allows it to pursue a policy of “unilateral restraint,” for example by refraining from being the first to introduce qualitatively superior weapons to a region. The United States exported its sophisticated AMRAAM missiles to Asian states only after China had purchased a similar Adder anti-aircraft missile from Russia. Conversely, the more competitive the arms market, the more likely it is we will



A *Chicago Tribune* cartoon from 1898 depicts the U.S. astride the Pacific. Research suggests that the likelihood of war is lower when one nation is economically and militarily dominant over all others in its region.

see proliferation of high-tech conventional weapons, which holds the potential to spiral into war.

If power disparities are stabilizing, then power shifts are dangerous. Transitioning away from a unipolar world may not be good for peace. The United States currently enforces a large number of international rules, not because it is nice, but because it is powerful and happens to like the current arrangement. If the distribution of power is changing over the long run, then we are likely to see an increase in tension as other states chafe against the status quo constructed by the United States. A more competitive arms market, and indeed a more competitive world, will lead to proliferation, arms racing, and disputes.

So should the United States, as some suggest, seek to maintain its massive lead even to the point of containing China? There are many reasons to argue against this, but one overlooked factor is

that the massive growth in the economy (and thus the international influence) of China, and to a lesser extent of India and Brazil, is basically the result of more than a billion people being pulled slightly out of grinding poverty. In this sense, preventing war by maintaining a lopsided distribution of wealth, the necessary precursor for keeping an international power advantage, might itself be immoral. Still, if China and other developing states continue to rise, how can we keep the calculus of crisis bargaining firmly against war?

## Nuclear Weapons

Many wars break out because states fear for their survival. Nuclear weapons, as the ultimate “defense” against an existential threat, remove this concern, albeit in an ironic and dangerous way. Nuclear weapons, more than any other tool of international politics, tend to make the math of conflict simple. The prospect of going from zero to charcoal briquette in fifteen minutes tends to concentrate the mind. Few observers of the Cold War found it a particularly pleasant era of international politics, but the likelihood of a full-scale confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union was almost certainly diminished by both sides’ fear of an exchange of nuclear weapons.

In contemporary tensions, nuclear weapons make war between Russia and NATO scary, but also unlikely. Any future friction between China and the United States is likely to be constrained by the presence of nuclear weapons. History suggests that a nuclear-armed Iran could be managed and *might* even lead to greater regional stability.

I know of no social scientist who claims that a robust nuclear deterrent on both sides makes crises more likely to spiral into war. But few analysts are comfortable with nuclear proliferation. Developing a “secure second strike” capability (the ability to retaliate even after being attacked with nuclear weapons) is a difficult and protracted process. Other countries might have incentives to attack before the process is complete, as Israel has done against both Iraq and Syria.

Once a state knows it has achieved “mutually assured destruction” with an opponent, it is less reluctant to start trouble, knowing that escalation to nuclear war is unthinkable, a development known as the “stability-instability paradox.” Mutual nuclear threat has probably prevented a full-scale war between Pakistan and India, but it also did not stop, and indeed may have encouraged, the spectacular 2001 attack on India’s parliament or the 2008 rampage in Mumbai by Lashkar-e-Taiba, a terror group with strong ties to the Pakistani security apparatus. Vladimir Putin may think that he can muscle his neighbors because the West does not think Kiev is worth a nuclear exchange. And he is correct.

Another problem with relying on a nuclear peace is that states do not seem content with mutual vulnerability. The United States, for example, has historically been hell-bent on overcoming it through the creation of high-precision warheads that could pre-emptively take out an opponents’ arsenal, continuing efforts to create a missile defense system, and the quite astonishing acquisition of thousands of nuclear weapons to the point of “overkill” many times over. By undermining an opponent’s confidence in its ability to retaliate, such actions can remove any stabilizing influence of a nuclear arsenal.

Finally, preventing war by threatening to incinerate millions of civilians is morally questionable, to say the least. And a nuclear weapons accident, however improbable, would have consequences that are almost beyond imagining. Yet nuclear proliferation is a fact and it makes peace more likely by making war so dangerous.

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Josiah Bunting III, *President*

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Tina Bennett  
Brogann Bowden  
Dana Draper  
Matthew Duveneck  
Victor Davis Hanson  
Donald C. Hood  
W. Patrick Lang  
Carol Langstaff  
Lewis H. Lapham (Lifetime)  
Peter Lawson-Johnston II  
Reeve Lindbergh  
Gillian Lindt (Lifetime)  
Theodore D. Lockwood  
(Lifetime)  
Tania McCleery  
Thomas K. McNeil, Jr.  
Jeremiah Milbank III  
Thomas L. Piper III  
Lois Dickson Rice (Lifetime)  
Andrew Roberts  
Patricia Rosenfield  
H. Kirk Unruh, Jr.

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Josiah Bunting III (non-voting)  
Peter Lawson-Johnston  
Thomas L. Piper III

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Donald C. Hood  
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Deirdre Hamill, Director of  
Finance and Administration  
Nyeleti Honwana, Program  
Officer  
Joel Wallman, Senior Program  
Officer

## Reviewing Panel

Rosemary Gartner  
Robert Hayden  
Stathis Kalyvas  
Clark Richard McCauley  
Catherine Merridale  
Randolph Roth  
Pamela Scully

## Legal Counsel

Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen &  
Hamilton

## Auditors

Marks Paneth

# Financial Data

## Statement of Financial Position, December 31, 2014

### Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,888,377
Investments	\$59,784,615
Property and Equipment	\$14,057
Prepaid Expenses	\$55,959

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$61,743,008</b>
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### Liabilities and Net Assets

Unrestricted	\$61,743,008
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<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$61,743,008</b>
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