

It is especially difficult to assess the impact of deterrence on conflict resolution because policymakers are generally reluctant to admit the ways in which they have been constrained by an adversary's practice of deterrence. Researchers must generally infer the impact of deterrence from the documentary record of the substance of subsequent policy decisions and their timing. Interpretations based on evidence of this kind are almost always subject to challenge.

One or both sides can also misperceive the motives of the other and practise deterrence against a country whose leaders do not wish to upset the status quo by force. Deterrence will be counterproductive in these circumstances."¹⁶² It is also likely to become self-fulfilling, confronting analysts with the same problem they must grapple with in cases of immediate deterrence where apparent success is confirmed tautologically.¹⁶³

Finally, whether deterrence is practised by one or both adversaries, conflict resolution or amelioration is almost invariably the result of changes in goals and strategies on *both* sides. Deterrence would have us look only at the challenger, and in a very narrow way. To establish the impact of deterrence in the transformation of a conflict, it is necessary to analyze the broader foreign policies of both sides, not only their strategies of deterrence. But this kind of analysis cannot be undertaken in the absence of a theory that identifies the additional variables and specifies relationships between these variables and deterrence.

THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF DETERRENCE

Our analysis of deterrence raises important questions about the methods appropriate to its study. Generally speaking, analysts have relied on two methods: detailed comparative analysis of a number of

¹⁶² Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), ch.3; Lebow and Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," pp.36-40, examine the ways in which general deterrence can exacerbate conflict.

¹⁶³ This point is made by Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, ch.3.