**DETERRENCE THEORY**

Threat-based strategies have always been central to international relations. In international security, a policy of deterrence generally refers to threats of military retaliation directed by leaders of one state to the leaders of another in an attempt to prevent the other state from resorting to the threat of use of military force in pursuit of its foreign policy goals.

However, deterrence can be envisaged as the use of threats by one party to convince another party to refrain from initiating some course of action. A threat serves as a deterrent to the extent that it convinces its target not to carry out the intended action, because of the costs and losses that the target would incur. Proponents of deterrence theory believe that people choose to obey or violate the law after calculating the gains and consequences/losses of their actions. Be that as it may, it is difficult to prove the effectiveness of deterrence to the notice of law enforcement. Thus, we may never know why others do not offend.

Deterrence theory gained increased prominence as a military strategy during the cold war (i.e between U.S.A. and its allies with capitalist ideology and Russia and its allies with socialist ideology) with regard to the use of nuclear weapons. It took on a unique connotation during this time as an inferior nuclear force, by virtue of its extreme destructive power, will deter a more powerful adversary, provided that this force could be protected against destruction by a surprise attack. Deterrence is a strategy intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not yet started, or to prevent them from doing something that another state desires. United States policy deterrence of 1980 under the leadership of their former President Ronald Reagan of arms build-up was so instrumental during such epoch.

According to Schelling, the capacity to harm another state is now used as a motivating factor for other states to avoid it and influence another state’s behaviour. To be coercive or deter another state violence must be anticipated and avoidable by accommodation. It can therefore be summarized that the use of the power to hurt as bargaining power is the foundation of deterrence theory, and is most successful when it is held in reserve. Good examples are what transpired between U.S.A. and Russia, U.S.A. and North Korea, U.S.A. and Iran, etc.

Worthy of note is the fact that propaganda is often used by states to deter its adversary. And also, the forms of deterrence could be direct, indirect or pre-emptive deterrence as the case may be.

There are two basic types of deterrence. These are;

1. **General deterrence:** General deterrence is designed to prevent crime in the general population. Thus, the state’s punishment of offenders serves as an example for others in the general population who has not yet participated in criminal events. It is meant to make them aware of the horrors of official sanctions in order to put them off committing crimes. Examples include the application of the death penalty and the use of corporal punishment.

Since general deterrence is designed to deter those who witness the infliction of pains upon the convicted from committing crimes themselves, corporal punishment was traditionally, and in some places is still, carried out in public so that others can witness the pain. Although outlawed in the United States, public punishment is still used in other countries. For instance, in August 2001, Nigeria introduced shari’a, or Islamic law, that allows the application of corporal punishment. That same month, Iran sentenced 20 people to be caned for consuming alcohol. In November 2001, Saudi Arabia lashed 55 youths for harassing women. Likewise, Human Rights Watch reports that under Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq, those who violated military orders or committed other crimes could be punished by amputation of arms, legs, and ears. Finally, in England and the United States, hangings were once carried out in public. The public and family members were allowed to attend so that they could see what happened to those who broke the law. Today, some advocates call for televised executions as a way of deterring murder.

1. **Specific deterrence:** Specific deterrence is designed by the nature of the proscribed sanctions to deter only the individual offender from committing that crime in the future. Proponents of specific deterrence also believe that punishing offenders severely will make them unwilling to reoffend in the future. A drunk driver, for example, would be deterred from drinking and driving because of the unpleasant experience he or she suffered from being arrested, or having his or her license taken away or his or her car impounded. The state must apply enough pain to offset the amount of pleasure derived from drinking.

Deterrence is both a theory in international relations and a strategy of conflict management. Deterrence can be defined as an attempt to influence other actors’ assessment of their interests. It seeks to prevent an un­desired behavior by con­vincing the party who may be con­templating such an action that its cost will exceed any possible gain (Lebow 1981: 83). Deterrence presupposes that decisions are made in response to some kind of rational cost-benefit calculus, that this calculus can be successfully manipulated from the outside, and that the best way to do so is to increase the cost side of the ledger. Compellence, a sister strategy, uses the same tactics to attempt to convince another party to carry out some action it otherwise would not. Although they have not always been called “deterrence”, threat-based strategies that attempt to manipulate the cost-calculus of other actors have long been practiced: There is ample evidence of their use by all the ancient empires.

The advent of nuclear weapons made it imperative for policy-makers to find ways of preventing catastrophically destructive wars while exploiting any strategic nuclear advantage for political gain. This chapter describes early theoretical approaches to deterrence, their application in practice, and the subsequent critique of them. Drawing on works that made use of Soviet, US, Chinese, and Israeli archives, and interviews with officials from these countries and Egypt, the following discussion provides an overall assessment of the consequences of deterrence during the Cold War. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of post-Cold War deterrence and promising areas for research.

**Deterrence Strategy**

Deterrence played a central role in the US strategy in Indochina during the Johnson and Nixon administrations. Deployment of forces, the character of the engagements they sought and the level and choice of targets for bombing were never intended to defeat the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (Viet Cong) or North Vietnam, but to compel them to end the war and accept the independence of South Vietnam. The Indochina intervention ended in disaster and helped to spawn a series of critiques of the theory and strategy of deterrence in the 1970s.

As mentioned, Vietnam paradoxically demonstrates the truth that modern civilization has generated expectations and norms that severely constrain the power to punish. The air and ground war aroused enormous opposition at home, in large part because of its barbarity, and public opinion ultimately compelled a halt to the bombing and withdrawal of US forces from Indochina. The bombing exceeded World War II in total tonnage, but was also more restricted. The US refrained from indiscriminate bombing of civilians and made no effort to destroy North Vietnam’s elaborate system of dikes. The use of nuclear weapons was not even considered. Restraint was a response to ethical and domestic political imperatives. Similar constraints limited US firepower in Iraq in the Gulf War of 1990–91, and enabled the Republican Guard and Saddam Hussein to escape destruction.

The ability to absorb punishment derives even less from material capabilities, and may even be inversely related to them. One of the reasons why Vietnam was less vulnerable to bombing than Schelling and Pentagon planners supposed was its underdeveloped economy. There were fewer high-value targets to destroy or hold hostage. With fewer factories, highways, and railroads, the economy was more difficult to disrupt, and the population was less dependent on existing distribution networks for its sustenance and material support. According to North Vietnamese strategic analyst Colonel Quach Hai Luong: “The more you bombed, the more the people wanted to fight you” (McNamara: 194). Department of Defense studies confirm that bombing “strengthened, rather than weakened, the will of the Hanoi government and its people” (McNamara: 191, 341f.). It is apparent in retrospect that the gap between the protagonists in material and military capabilities counted for less than their differential ability to absorb punishment. The US won every battle, but lost the war because its citizens would not pay the moral, economic, and human cost of victory. Washington withdrew from Indochina after losing 58,000 American lives, a fraction of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese deaths even at conservative estimates. As Clausewitz understood, political and moral cohesion based on common interests is more important than material capabilities.

A comparison between South and North Vietnam is even more revealing. The Army of the Republic of South Vietnam (ARVN) was larger and better equipped and trained than the Viet Cong or the North Vietnamese, and had all the advantages of US air power, communications, and logistics. The Republic of South Vietnam crumbled because its forces had no stomach for a fight. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese sustained horrendous losses whenever they came up against superior US firepower, but maintained their morale and cohesion throughout the long conflict. Unlike ARVN officers and recruits, who regularly melted away under fire, more Viet Cong and North Vietnamese internalized their cause and gave their lives for it. At the most fundamental level, the Communist victory demonstrated the power of ideas and commitment.

**Assumptions of Deterrence Theory**

The assumptions of deterrence theory are;

* + 1. They assume that deterrence strategy breeds peace and stability in the international community.
    2. That building up of arms by states helps avoid war/crisis among nuclear nations.
    3. Assume that states/actors issuing threat(s) have retaliatory capability in what is known as Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD).
    4. Assume that powerful states make use of military prowess in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals.
    5. They also assume that states/people choose to obey or violate order/law after carefully calculating the gains and losses or consequences.

**FEMINIST THEORY**

Feminism as a theory of International Relations became dominant in the 1990s. This theory introduced gender as a relevant empirical vis-a-vis analytical tool for understanding International Relations as well as a normative standpoint from which to construct alternative world orders.

*One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine (Simone de Beauvoir, 1970).*

# Adherents to this theory criticize others theories, particularly realism and neo-realism, for being male-oriented and male-dominated and instead insist that justice should be done to women by recognizing their significant role in the spheres of security, diplomacy and statecraft. It is also demanded that women should be saved from torture, harassment, exploitation, servitude, humiliation *inter-alia*, in all parts of the world so that they may lead and/or live a secure and decent life. The proponents of this theory are; Cynthia Enloe, Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, [Marilyn French](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marilyn_French), Jean Baker Miller, Juliet Mitchell, etc.

Feminism shifts the study of international relations away from a singular focus on inter-state relations towards a comprehensive analysis of transnational actors and structures and their transformation in global politics to issues of class and gender politics. With their emphasis on non-state actors, marginalized people and alternative conceptualization of power, feminist perspective sheds more light on International Relations.

Feminist scholarship encompasses a variety of strands of work, but all have in common the insight that gender matters in understanding how international relations works, especially in issues relating to war and international security. Some feminist scholars have argued that the core assumption of realism, especially of anarchy and sovereignty reflect the ways in which males tend to interact and to see the world. In this view the realist approach simply assumes male participants when discussing foreign policy, decision making, state sovereignty or the use of military force. According to feminist, women influence International Relations (more often through non-state channels than male do), influences often ignored by realism (Goldstein, 2001:127).

In recent years, studies of this kind have proliferated due to some reasons; first, gender relations are being reshaped by the trends of liberalization and globalization. Second, issues relating to gender inequality and injustice have been a subject of concern and many non-governmental organisations have drawn attention of the states towards the eradication of crimes against women such as trafficking for sexual purposes, servitude, domestic violence, etc. Third, the matter has been taken up and seriously deliberated at the international level. The United Nations (UN) celebrated 1975 as women’s year, 8th March as International Women’s Day, and 1975-85 as the Decade for Women. Women’s Conferences were held at Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995). A resolution adopted by the Security Council of the UN (N0. 1325 of 2000) *inter alia,* “urges Member-States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.”

Beyond the common understanding that gender is important, there is no single feminist approach. There are several such approaches. Each moves forward on its own terms and although they are interwoven (all paying attention to gender and to the status of women) they often run in different direction. These strands or approaches are as follows:

1. **Standpoint Feminism:** The standpoint feminism emphasizes or values the unique contribution of women as women. Because of their greater experience with nurturing and human relation, women are seen as more effective than men in conflict resolution as well as in group decision making. Standpoint feminists believe there are real difference between gender that are not just social constructions and cultural indoctrination. This perspective creates a platform from which to observe, analyse and criticize the traditional perspective on International Relations.
2. **Liberal Feminism:** Liberal feminists are seeking to end women‘s exclusion from or under-representation in office, power and employment, they seek women‘s equal rights in the military including in combat. They see women Protection as a way of keeping them from power and their dependence on men as compromising their claims to full citizenship which is usually understood to include fighting for one‘s country. Other feminists are critical of Liberal feminists as seeking equality in masculinist institutions on men’s terms. In different ways, they seek to change the institutions themselves to be women friendly (Pettman, 2001:587).
3. **Radical Feminism:** Radical feminism argues that women’s subjugation is universal though taking different forms at different times. Some see women as a sex class, systematically and everywhere subject to men’s sex right. Violence against women is seen as key to keeping women resource less and in their place (Pettman, 200 1:587).
4. **Socialist Feminism:** Socialist feminist put together class and gender, arguing that a class analysis alone leaves out much that women experience. It cannot explain why women are those responsible for reproductive and family labour, why women are so over-represented among the poor, or why gender inequities often re-enforced by violence against women continue even where women are integrated into the workforce.

**Feminists Assumptions**

1. The first assumption of feminist theory is that women influence International Relations (more often through non-state channels than men do), influences often ignored by realism (Goldstein, 2001:127).
2. They assume that if women are accorded the proper recognition they should in the society, that is, their contributions in politics; whether national or international, they will be able to do as men do.
3. Kate Millet says that in case of women ‘personal political’; it should be accepted that women are the providers of a whole range of support services for militarization; they are reserve armies in home industries, transnational peace activists and revolutionary actors in freedom struggles and civil wars.
4. That the core concepts of international relations like security, war and statecraft should be redefined. For instance, international security should cover security of women and international violence should cover issues such as torture and persecution of women.
5. Women should have adequate representation in international organisations and institutions.
6. According to the liberal feminists, gender imbalances in the society do not only discriminate against the status of womanhood but that it causes them to waste their talents.