**Abstract**

**Fasulo** - My dissertation argues that U.S. policymakers’ fears of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) vulnerability were precipitated by the need to plan for limited nuclear war rather than by the potential loss of strategic stability. The promulgation and operationalization of National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 242, which--relying on escalation control—attempted to constrain the bounds of strategic war by terminating a conflict on terms favorable to the United States short of nuclear cataclysm, forced the United States to rely upon its Minuteman ICBM force to execute its preferred nuclear warfighting strategy. Subscribing to a doctrine that emphasized the role of a single pillar of the nuclear triad (unlike assured destruction) inculcated far greater consequence to Soviet strategic modernization and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) than would otherwise have been the case. Soviet strategic modernization, pairing increased missile accuracy with large throw weight missiles, constituted a starker threat to the United States strategic force under a limited war doctrine because successful strikes against Minuteman would rob the United States of its ability to control escalation to a point short of cataclysm. American policymakers, facing Soviet strategic modernization, were compelled to use SALT as a vehicle for curbing the silo-killing technological improvements so baleful to a limited war strategy and conducive to ICBM vulnerability. Through the 1970s, because bombers and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) could reliably execute an assured destruction mission, the credibility of the American deterrent was never in doubt; only in executing limited war operations, where the unique characteristics of the ICBM were required, could the Soviet strategic arsenal pose an actual threat to a credible American response.

**Foster** - This dissertation argues for an overlooked mechanism of organizational change, in which changes in the human capital exert pressure on group leaders to transform their organizations. This dissertation addresses an under-examined facet of organizational evolution and an important factor in group resilience. The central research goal of the project is to develop a general theory of how organizations evolve in response to changes in the makeup of their membership. Understanding the impact of grassroots-driven and bottom-up transformational pressures on the evolution of organizations has a wide array of implications, from philosophical questions about how organizations maintain their identity and priorities to tactical conclusions about how to best nurture or combat organizations undergoing internal transformations. The research is designed to make theoretical and empirical contributions to social scientific theories about organizational dynamics and the evolution of organizations. Through substantive case studies, this dissertation contributes to the political science literature on the organizational dynamics of militant organizations. Militant organizations serve as valuable case studies as they often face structural constraints that make them more prone to bottom-up transformations. In particular, the pressures of operating under repressive pressure from the state, with a limited base of recruits, and often adopting decentralized organizational forms across relatively large territories can be expected to magnify the transformational pressures identified by the theory.

**Gilbert** - What explains kidnapping by violent, political organizations? Despite a dramatic spike in kidnappings over the last several decades, there has been limited scholarly examination of this tool of coercion. Addressing this gap, my dissertation examines the kidnapping strategies of violent, political organizations (VPOs), including rebels, terrorists, and paramilitaries. I argue that kidnapping is an unexplored but critical component of VPOs' taxation and funding schemes. Itself a form of extortion, kidnapping is part and parcel of a broader system to extract tribute from local populations. It is used both as the most lucrative way to punish those who refuse to pay the VPOs' taxes, as well as an extremely effective, strategic message to compel others to cooperate. In this way, kidnapping is both tactical and strategic for VPOs. Two central hypotheses follow: First, VPOs should only kidnap if they rely on taxation and extraction from the local population; groups with an external source of funding – such as diaspora remittances, resource wealth, or support from the state – should not take hostages. Second, kidnapping VPOs must establish an enforcement infrastructure: it requires significant operational complexity to take, house, feed, guard, and negotiate for a hostage, as well as protect against policing. To test these hypotheses, I leverage quantitative analysis of an original, global dataset of the kidnapping behavior of 1,882 VPOs from 1970-2015, as well as qualitative evidence from extensive interviews with ex-combatants from the Colombian civil war: the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), April 19th Movement (M-19) and United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). Through in-depth case studies and count models that estimate the likelihood of kidnapping, this project explains a heretofore underexamined tool of coercion and violence against civilians.

**Grinberg** - One common, but largely overlooked, instrument of statecraft is military capacity building. To reduce costs, states frequently turn to partners to undertake part, or sometimes all, of the burden of employing military power to defend territory, deter aggression, compel policy concessions and fight wars. To increase the military effectiveness of these partners, *delegating states* often provide them with armaments and military training. What makes capacity building puzzling is that it is incredibly risky because of the problem of misuse. Making sense of patterns of capacity building, then, requires understanding how delegating states prevent misuse. I develop theory and evidence for two sets of arguments. First, I argue that carrots and sticks – the strategy that states are traditionally thought to use to prevent misuse – is less of a panacea than believed because typical features of international and domestic politics generate moral hazard. This moral hazard arises not only when hidden action makes it hard to recognize misuse, but also in two situations that inhibit the *sanctioning* of misuse: when domestic-political actors (e.g. defense industry, bureaucrats) develop a vested interest in maintaining the status-quo relationship with the partner and when punishment would hasten the collapse of a weak partner government. Second, I argue that delegating states frequently turn to two complementary *strategies of manipulation* to prevent misuse: (1) withholding capabilities that could be efficiently misused against other adversaries (I call this *tailoring*); and (2) transferring arms to the partner's adversaries in order to maintain an equilibrium balance of power between the partner and its adversaries (I call this *counterbalancing*). These strategies prevent misuse by preemptively manipulating the threats and opportunities that partners face. Leveraging policymaker interviews, comparative case studies and quasi-experimental analysis of data on arms transfers and military training to show that strategies of manipulation are empirically important solutions to the problem of misuse and that variation in the ability of states to implement these strategies can help explain broad patterns of capacity building.

**Lee** - What factors determine which strategy is adopted by a nuclear patron? How is each strategy manifested as actual force employment? For the first question of strategy adoption, I argue that the interaction of two variables—1) the type of threat posed by an enemy to a client, and 2) the likelihood of an enemy’s quick victory over a client in case of war—determines which strategy is adopted by a nuclear patron among four distinct strategies: “forward nuclear deployment,” “nuclear defense pact,” “forward conventional deployment,” and “conventional defense pact.” For the second question of strategy implementation, I assert that each strategy is embodied as the unique mixture of conventional and nuclear forces prepositioned at particular locations. To show the predictive power of my theory, I perform a congruence test using the universe of cases of extended deterrence. Subsequently, I conduct four in-depth case studies to obtain the causal validity of the argument, including 1) the U.S. extended deterrence to NATO-Europe, 2) U.S. extended deterrence to South Korea, 3) the U.S. extended deterrence to the Philippines, and 4) the Soviet extended deterrence to Cuba.

**Whalen** -When is a civil war no longer a civil war? “Civil war” is rarely a neutral term. Those who use it—or deny its applicability—are usually making a political argument. My dissertation, *The Lebanese Wars: Civil Conflict and International Intervention, 1975-1985* demonstrates how the term “civil war” served competing political agendas in the Middle East during the Cold War. Viewing the war through an international lens, I relate two interconnected narratives: how international military interventions in Lebanon changed between 1975 and 1985 and how these interventions changed the course of the war itself. In *The Lebanese Wars,* I explain how the first ten years of Lebanon’s civil war raise an important question with far-reaching implications: when is any civil war no longer a civil war? Juxtaposing discussions in Washington, Damascus, and Tel Aviv with events on the ground in Beirut, I explore the relationship between intentions and outcomes in foreign policy.I argue that influence flowed in two directions during these escalating interventions. Involvement in the Lebanese wars affected intervening countries for many years afterward; events that took place in Lebanon after the Multinational Force deployment are events of U.S., French, and Italian history, as well as Lebanese. Between 1975 and 1985, the behavior of nearly all of the war’s participants—from Lebanese militias, to U.S. administrations, to Palestinian factions—reflected a common evolution: first, an acceptance of the idea that security depends on ideological, sectarian, or ethnic homogeneity, and second, an aspiration to engineer that homogeneity where it does not exist—usually by force. I prioritize U.S. and Lebanese sources, with Israeli and Syrian perspectives offering context and evidentiary support. Structuring my project to intentionally draw Lebanese and U.S. narratives of the war into conversation with each other allows *The Lebanese Wars* to stand out as a unique historical work of both academic and political significance.