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Util Good

**Only utilitarianism takes into account the inevitability of sacrifices and compromise – any other framework is utopian and inevitably fails.**

Nye, prof. of IR at Harvard University, 1986 (Joseph, “Nuclear Ethics”, p. 24)

Whether one accepts the broad consequentialist approach or chooses some other, more eclectic way to include and reconcile the three dimensions of complex moral issues, there will often be a sense of uneasiness about the answers, not just because of the complexity of the problems “but simply that there is no satisfactory solution to these issues – at least none that appears to avoid in practice what most men would still regard as an intolerable sacrifice of value.” When value is sacrificed, there is often the problem of “dirty hands.” Not all ethical decisions are pure ones. The absolutist may avoid the problem of dirty hands, but often at the cost of having no hands at all. Moral theory cannot be “rounded off and made complete and tidy.” That is part of the modern human condition. But that does not exempt us from making difficult moral choices.

**Policymakers specifically must act through utilitarianism because they can only make decisions based on the good of the public.**

**Goodin, fellow in philosophy at Australian National Defense University, 1990** (Robert, “The Utilitarian Response”, p. 141-2)

My larger argument turns on the proposition that there is something special about the situation of public officials that makes utilitarianism more probable for them than private individuals. Before proceeding with the large argument, I must therefore say what it is that makes it so special about public officials and their situations that make it both more necessary and more desirable for them to adopt a more credible form of utilitarianism. Consider, first, the argument from necessity. Public officials are obliged to make their choices under uncertainty , and uncertainty of a very special sort at that. All choices – public and private alike – are made under some degree of uncertainty, of course. But in the nature of things, private individuals will usually have more complete information on the peculiarities of their own circumstances and on the ramifications that alternative possible choices might have for them. Public officials, in contrast, are relatively poorly informed as to the effects that their choices will have on individuals, one by one. What they typically do know are generalities: averages and aggregates. They know what will happen most often to most people as a result of their various possible choices, but that is all. That is enough to allow public policy-makers to use the utilitarian calculus – assuming they want to use it at all – to chose general rules or conduct.

Best if public officials use utilitarianism because they have only general information.

Robert Goodin, fellow in philosophy at Australian National Defense University, 1990. (The Utilitarian Response, ed. Lincoln Allison.) Pg. 142

Consider, first, the argument from necessity. Public officials are obliged to make their choices under uncertainty, and uncertainty of a very special sort at that. All choices – public and private alike – are made under some degree of uncertainty, of course. But in the nature of things, private individuals will usually have more complete information on the peculiarities of their own circumstances and on the ramifications that alternative possible choices might have for them. Public officials, in contrast, are relatively poorly informed as to the effects that their choices will have on individuals, one by one. What they typically do know are generalities: averages and aggregates. They know what will happen most often to most people as a result of their various possible choices. But that is all.

That is enough to allow public policy-makers to use the utilitarian calculus – assuming they want to use it at all – to choose general rules of conduct. Knowing aggregates and averages, they can proceed to calculate the utility payoffs from adopting each alternative possible general rule. But they cannot be sure that the payoff will do to any given individual or on any particular occasion. Their knowledge of generalities, aggregates and averages is just not sufficiently fine-grained for that.

Util Good

Laws should be utility-maximized to increase predictability and lower enforcement cost.

Robert Goodin, fellow in philosophy at Australian National Defense University, 1990. (The Utilitarian Response, ed. Lincoln Allison.) Pg. 143 – 44

The more high-minded version is this. If laws have to be general in form, and apply to everyone alike, then we can make some pretty shrewd guesses as to what sorts of future laws might be enacted; and we can plan our own affairs accordingly. If particularized rules (or substantial discretions in applying the rules) are permitted, then anyone and everyone might be made an exception to the general rule. Under such circumstances, no one can know for sure what will be required of him in the future. Yet there are substantial utilitarian gains – both to the individuals themselves, and to others whose own plans depend for their success upon the actions of those individuals – from being able to enter into long-term commitments in some confidence that they will indeed be carried out. From all that, it follows that there are substantial utility gains from requiring that laws be relatively general in their form and hence relatively predictable in their content.

Another way of arguing for the desirability of that practice, still thoroughly utilitarian in form, is this. Enforcement costs are in utilitarian terms a deadweight loss to be minimized in so far as possible. One way to minimize such costs is through the self-regulation of people’s conduct. If people can be brought to internalize social norms, adopting them as their own and shaping their conduct accordingly, there would be no need for expensive enforcement measures, with obvious utilitarian advantages. But for principles of conduct to be easily internalized in this way, they must be few in number and general in form. If the idea is to let people govern their own conduct in line with rules, then they must be able, first, to learn and recall all the relevant rules when the occasion demands; and, second, to apply the rules to particular situations for themselves, without the aid of authoritative guidance in each instance. All of that is easier, and hence the utilitarian payoffs higher, the less numerous and less complex the rules are.

Whereas the classic argument from justice is that it is ‘only fair’ that people be governed according to general rules, the utilitarian argument from desirability is that it is ‘only prudent’ to do so. In that way, people can largely anticipate what the rules will require of them, and apply the rules for themselves without expensive social enforcement.

Utilitarianism shapes policies very similar to ones proposed by deontology.

Robert Goodin, fellow in philosophy at Australian National Defense University, 1990. (The Utilitarian Response, ed. Lincoln Allison.) Pg. 148

My main argument, though, is that at the level of social policy the problem usually does not even arise. When promulgating policies, public officials must respond to typical conditions and common circumstances. Policies, by their nature, cannot be case-by-case affairs. In choosing general rules to govern a wide range of circumstances, it is extraordinarily unlikely that the greatest happiness can ever be realized by systematically violating people’s rights, liberties or integrity – or even, come to that, by systematically contravening the Ten Commandments. The rules that maximize utility over the long haul and over the broad range of applications are also rules that broadly conform to the deontologists’ demands.

This point is as old as the original utilitarian fathers who, while denying received moral rules any ultimate authority, nonetheless conceded that they might have derivative force in so far as they (or something very much like them) are sanctioned by the utility principle. In our own day, Richard Brandt has plausibly argued that the rules of war that we have inherited from the fundamentally deontological ‘just war’ tradition are all broadly in line with what rule-utilitarianism would recommend.

Util Good

Utilitarianism seeks same ends at deontology because policy makers must make general rules.

Robert Goodin, fellow in philosophy at Australian National Defense University, 1990. (The Utilitarian Response, ed. Lincoln Allison.) Pg. 149

In response to the challenge that utilitarianism asks too little of us, then, it can be said that – at least as regards public policy-makers – utilitarianism demands not only about as much but also virtually the same things as deontologists would require. If they are going to decide cases according to general rules, rather than on a case-by-case basis, then the rules that utilitarians would adopt are virtually identical to those that deontologists recommend. And public policy-makers will indeed decide matters according to rules rather than on a case-by-case basis, either because the utility costs of doing otherwise are too high or else because as a purely practical matter more fine-grained assessments are impossible to make or to act upon.

World cannot create definitive moral rule system – general consensus impossible.

James D. Wallace, Professor of Philosophy at University of Illinois, 1988. (Moral Relevance and Moral Conflict) Pg. 16

Attempts to articulate unexceptionable moral rules or systems of hard-and-fast moral principles ranked in order of precedence have not to date met with notable success. This by itself does not show that such programs are unfeasible. It is appropriate, however, to ask the proponents of such programs how we are to know when they have succeeded in producing correct (valid, true) formulations of unexceptionable moral principles. How is one to know that *this* particular set of principles, applied in an invariant order, will always, in every circumstance, prescribe exactly what one should do? If the principles in question are many and complicated, these questions will be especially troublesome. That a principle strikes one upon reflection as being in accord with one’s experience and one’s understanding of morality – that the principle accords with one’s intuitions (however ‘intuition’ is understood) – does not establish that the principle really is correct. Someone with lively sense of the complexity of practical affairs and an appreciation of his or her own fallibility in judgment will not confidently accept the claim that a certain set of complicated practical principles seem correct. It does not take much reflection on the extent and depth of disagreement among people on moral matters to convince us that there is no reasonable hope for a consensus that a given complicated set of moral principles invariably gives the correct result in concrete situations.

Utilitarianism provides good rationale for resolving conflicting morals.

James D. Wallace, Professor of Philosophy at University of Illinois, 1988. (Moral Relevance and Moral Conflict) Pg. 39-40

Utilitarianism, introduced by Sidgwick after his discussion of dogmatic intuitionism, seems by contrast a most attractive view. The morality of common sense appears to be a hodge-podge of vague and conflicting maxims whose claim upon our allegiance is puzzling. Such maxims cannot possibly provide the sort of guidance desired by a proponent of the passive conception. The utilitarian theory, by contrast, provides at once an account of the point of those maxims and explicit directions for their criticism and improvement. The view that the GHP is the sole ultimate practical principle and that the maxims of common-sense morality are secondary principles meant to promote the general happiness provides the rationale for a single method of resolving relevance and conflict problems. The method itself is intuitively plausible, apparently humane, and seems at least roughly consistent with actual practice in dealing with relevance and conflict problems. Some people doubt that the general happiness is the only consideration in properly resolving relevance and conflict problems, but the doctrine that it [GHP] is the only consideration is a strength of the utilitarian position. If there were other considerations relevant to the proper resolution of conflicts, these other considerations might conflict with one another and with the GHP in particular cases, reintroducing the possibility of conflicts that do no admit of resolution by rational means.

AT: Rights come first

Government does not need to secure all rights immediately – just work towards them.

Phillip Harvey, J.D. at Yale Law School, 2002 (Human Rights and Economic Policy Discourse: Taking Economic and Social Rights Seriously, Spring, Human Rights Law Review, 33 Colum., Human Rights L. Rev. 363: LexisNexis) Pg. 382

Fourth, the right can be asserted against governments, but the duty of governments to secure the right is perceived to be limited. They are not viewed as having an obligation to guarantee the right immediately, but only to adopt policies that will secure the right progressively over time.53 Although this qualification helps to explain why utility-maximization has been deemed to justify limiting the right to work, it would be a mistake to conclude that it nullifies right to work claims entirely. The standard of performance that governments are expected to meet in ensuring a particular human right has enormous practical importance, but that obligation speaks to the enforceability rather than the existence of the right.

Although extreme positivists take the position that a claim must be legally enforceable to be termed a right at all,54 such a restrictive definition would force one to conclude that Nazi Germany did not violate the human rights of Jews and that apartheid in South Africa did not violate the human rights of black South Africans. In fact, it is not at all unusual for a right to be recognized without providing for its complete or immediate protection. The holding of the Supreme Court of the United States in *Brown v. Board of Education* is an illustration.55 Even though the maintenance of segregated educational facilities was held to violate the constitutional rights of the plaintiff children in the case, the defendant school districts were not ordered to desegregate their schools at once. Instead, they were merely ordered to work towards that goal “with all deliberate speed.”56

Rather than concluding that the plaintiffs in *Brown* had no right to the relief they sought, it would be more reasonable to conclude that the right they asserted was indeed vindicated, but the Court was not prepared to order government agencies to secure it immediately. A compromise order of this sort is actually quite likely when a court recognizes that major institutional changes are needed to secure a newly recognized right. It is no more incongruous to declare that the human rights of unemployed workers are being violated by the failure of governments to secure their right to work, even though those governments are not deemed to have a duty to end the violation at once, but only over time.57

Conflicts between utility and rights artificial; due to narrow definition of utility maximization.

Phillip Harvey, J.D. at Yale Law School, 2002 (Human Rights and Economic Policy Discourse: Taking Economic and Social Rights Seriously, Spring, Human Rights Law Review, 33 Colum., Human Rights L. Rev. 363: LexisNexis) Pg. 408-09

Louis Kaplow and Steven Shavell argue that alleged conflicts between utility-maximization and human rights protection are largely an artifact of unjustifiably narrow definitions of the utility maximization standard.149 Describing their preferred normative goal as the maximization of human welfare,150 they argue that a long list of factors that welfare economists have been accused of ignoring can and should be included in the welfare maximizing calculus. These factors include the welfare effects of changes (or a lack of change) in the distribution of income;151 the fact that existing preferences may be based on imperfect information or mistaken assessments of available information;152 the fact that people may attach positive value to (i.e., have a taste for) fairness and other normative goals involving self-sacrifice;153 the fact that preferences are themselves shaped by social institutions, including the law;154 and the fact that human welfare may increase in the long run if policies are pursued for the purpose of changing preferences rather than for the purpose of merely satisfying existing preferences.155 Kaplow and Shavell also allow that the welfare of future generations, and even of non-human beings, may be considered relevant in assessing the aggregate welfare effects of particular policies,156 and they believe that welfare economics can and should account for variations in the intensity of the welfare effects that different individuals experience in assessing the aggregate welfare effects of particular public policies.157

 AT: Rights come first

Rights that take precedence before utility reduce human welfare.

Harvey, J.D. at Yale Law School, 2002 (Human Rights and Economic Policy Discourse: Taking Economic and Social Rights Seriously, Spring, Human Rights Law Review, 33 Colum., Human Rights L. Rev. 363: LexisNexis) Pg. 409-10

Kaplow and Shavell’s very broad definition of the utility-maximization standard allows them to argue that rights-based claims are superfluous in public policy analysis. Welfare economics, in their view, already takes into consideration everything that rights-based claims legitimately seek to achieve. The only time a rights-based analysis could possibly result in a different ranking of policy choices, according to Kaplow and Shavell, would be in instances where the rights-based choice would reduce people’s well-being.160 To argue that rights should prevail against utility-maximization as a social choice criterion in this context necessarily would imply that human welfare should be sacrificed to the rights-based principles being espoused.

**Utilitarianism upholds self-ownership and thus liberty.**

**Bailey, lecturer in politics at Princeton University, 1997** (James, “Utilitarianism, Institutions, and Justice”, *Oxford University Press*, p. 160)

I have also tried to show that attempts to subvert utilitarianism through appeals to formal properties about theories of justice—such as finality and publicity—do not work either. The finality of utilitarianism is unlikely to be in jeopardy in a world in which people cannot suffer horrible acts as patients or alienating acts as agents. The rules protecting self-ownership, which are necessary to prevent exploitation, also forbid the horrible acts and allow individuals the liberty to do much of what they see as with their lives. The question of utilitarianism's subversion in its finality by grossly, unfair distributive arrangements is answered by a set of institutions in which no deep suffering is allowed and a generous provision is made for educational opportunities for all.

**Utilitarianism is best – it protects rights while not totally rejecting all policies that might infringe.**

**Harvey, J.D. at Yale Law School, 2002** (Philip, “Human Rights and Economic Policy Discourse: Taking Economic and Social Rights Seriously”, Spring, *Human Rights Law Review*, 33 Colum., Human Rights L. Rev. 363, lexis)

Perhaps the clearest illustration of this compromise or balancing principle is the distinction drawn in constitutional jurisprudence between the standard of review applied by courts in deciding whether legislative enactments comply with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Laws that do not infringe on certain constitutionally protected rights will pass muster if there is a mere rational basis for their enactment, whereas laws that do infringe on such rights require more compelling justification, with the level of justification varying depending on the right at issue. 196 Human rights claims have bite precisely because they declare that certain actions may be improper, even if those actions are supported by a majority of the population, indeed, even if the actions in question would increase the total utility of the population as a whole. But it is not necessary to take the position that rights-based claims should always trump conflicting utility-maximizing purposes. 197 It should be possible to honor multiple goals in public policy decision-making.

AT: Rights come first

**Util protects rights in social and constitutional hierarchies.**

**Bailey, lecturer in politics at Princeton University, 1997** (James, “Utilitarianism, Institutions, and Justice”, *Oxford University Press*, p. 153-4)

Even in a world full of rules and institutions—like that of Imperfectia—there is still normative work for utilitarianism to do. The foundation for this work stems from an argument in chapter 1 that the work of utilitarianism is more likely a form of local rather than global maximizing, of making the best use of new information and opportunities on the margin rather than a complete revolution of social relations. In imperfect worlds, this work thus includes local maximization, constitutional change, and exceptional case guidance. In addition there is a kind of distinctive normative work specifically for utilitarians in venal oligarchies. To provide anything like a full theory of any of these things here would require an entire new book. What I do provide is merely a series of thumbnail sketches of the problems. The aim is to show that there is still plenty of value in a consciously held global theory of utilitarianism, and therefore we should not fall hack only on common sense and whatever reasonable institutions are lying about.

Dehumanization- Internal Links

U.S. military presence serves to dehumanize foreign Natives where we have troops stationed.

Zaid Jilani, “Where Are The Afghans In The Afghanistan Debate?”,True/Slant, 6/22/2010(<http://trueslant.com/zaidjilani/2010/06/22/where-are-the-afghans-in-the-afghanistan-debate> /Reporter/Blogger for ThinkProgres.org and The Progress Report at the Center for American Progress Action Fund. Zaid grew up in Kennesaw, GA, and holds a B.A. in international affairs with a minor in Arabic from the University of Georgia)

However, while the nation’s attention is refocused to America’s longest war (it [recently surpassed](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/afghanistan-americas-longest-war/story?id=10770029) Vietnam in length), there’s still one glaring gap in the coverage of the conflict. Namely, there still isn’t any real coverage of actual Afghans in the war.Watching television coverage of the McChrystal episode today, I saw all sorts of big names — Brooking’s Michael O’Hanlon, MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough, CNN’s Wolf Blitzer — dissect the news of McChrystal’s thoughts about Obama and the White House leadership team. Yet who I didn’t see on, and who I never see on the airwaves, is actual Afghans invited on to respond to the day’s news about the war in their country.

When you think about it, that’s a very disturbing absence. International forces have well over a hundred thousand troops fighting in a country with millions of people in it, and those millions of people don’t even seem to be important enough to mention in the debates in our nations’ capitals. This sort of marginalization of the people whose country we have a massive troop presence serves to dehumanize them. We’re always talking about what we’re going to do to them, or winning over their public opinion, or what we want from them. We never ask them to speak for themselves, to explain what they want in the country they were born in. Rather, we seem to obsess over the opinions of generals like McChrystal, foreign transplants who do not have the same organic roots and wisdom that being a native bestows.

U.S. Military forces use dehumanization as method of torture of Iraqi prisoners

Ehsan Ahrari, “**The dehumanizing nature of occupation”- Asia Times, May 4, 2004**

**(http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle\_East/FE04Ak01.html)[** *PhD, is an Alexandria, Virginia, US-based independent strategic analyst].*

If the United States invaded Iraq to liberate its people from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, recent reports of "systematic" inhumane treatment of Iraqi prisoners only underscore that the very nature of occupation of one country by another is such that it invariably leads to acts that dehumanize the occupied people in the name of security. The outcome: intense and incessant hostility, resentment, and anger of the occupied toward the occupiers.

Government Leaders endorse dehumanization as method of dealing with enemy, dehumanization bad in many ways.

 [**Ryannon** MacLeod](http://www.e-ir.info/?author=810) **on May 3, 20**10, “**Of Men, Monsters, and the Antithesis of the American Dream:** **The Use of Dehumanizing Rhetoric in the War on Terror”,**

[http://www.e-ir.info/?p=4017]

While little to no persuasion is required to garner support for defensive acts of war upon a nation’s invasion by foreign militant groups or armies, those governments seeking to engage in aggressive acts of war against other states face the ideological encumbrance of rallying public support for their cause. In these cases government leaders must rhetorically construct their enemies with dehumanizing language so as to exploit the ways in which the general masses perceive others. Such rhetorical construction of one’s enemies is “fundamental to a nation’s public support for war… Dehumanizing others renders the requisite horrors of war tolerable,” (Elliot 2004, 99) and ensures that “no moral relationship with the (enemy) inhibits the victimizer’s violent behavior” (Haslam 2006, 254). Through carefully crafted narratives, government leaders are able to sculpt and shape socially constructed realities in such a way so as to “allow or even demand (its) citizens to undertake acts that would be universally rejected if they were directed towards ‘true’ human beings” (Anderson 2006, 739).

Dehumanization Bad

Dehumanization is the root cause of genocide, war crimes, and rights violations.

##### Maiese, 03

[Michelle Maiese is a graduate student of Philosophy at the University of Colorado, Boulder and is a part of the research staff at the Conflict Research Consortium: Beyond Intractability The Beyond Intractability Project: Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Co-Directors and Editors. July 2003. Accessed 7/15/09.< http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/dehumanization/>]

Once certain groups are stigmatized as evil, morally inferior, and not fully human, the persecution of those groups becomes more psychologically acceptable. Restraints against aggression and violence begin to disappear. Not surprisingly, dehumanization increases the likelihood of violence and may cause a conflict to escalate out of control. Once a violence break over has occurred, it may seem even more acceptable for people to do things that they would have regarded as morally unthinkable before. Parties may come to believe that destruction of the other side is necessary, and pursue an overwhelming victory that will cause one's opponent to simply disappear. This sort of into-the-sea framing can cause lasting damage to relationships between the conflicting parties, making it more difficult to solve their underlying problems and leading to the loss of more innocent lives. Indeed, dehumanization often paves the way for human rights violations, war crimes, and genocide. For example, in WWII, the dehumanization of the Jews ultimately led to the destruction of millions of people.[9] Similar atrocities have occurred in Rwanda, Cambodia, and the former Yugoslavia. It is thought that the psychological process of dehumanization might be mitigated or reversed through humanization efforts, the development of empathy, the establishment of personal relationships between conflicting parties, and the pursuit of common goals.

More people are killed each year by dehumanization than war and homicides.

David **Livingstone Smith**: Psychology Of Violence**,** [Forbes India staff](http://search.forbes.com/search/colArchiveSearch?author=forbes+india+and+staff&aname=Forbes+India+staff), 06.15.10

**[**Ph.D**.**co-founder and director of the [New England Institute for Cognitive Science and Evolutionary Studies](http://www.une.edu/nei).]

http://www.forbes.com/2010/06/15/forbes-india-david-livingstone-smith-psychology-of-violence-opinions-ideas-10-smith.html

 I nominate taking dehumanization seriously as a key idea for the 21st century. Let me explain. There is a strange paradox at the heart of human nature. We humans are the most sociable creatures on earth, with a remarkable ability to cooperate with one another. This, combined with our equally remarkable intelligence, was responsible for the birth and development of civilization, and therefore for the scientific, technological and cultural innovations that have transformed our lives over the past 10,000 years. And yet, our species also displays a more ominous side. Human beings are also creatures of unparalleled ferocity. No other animal is capable of the horrors--the wars, genocides, torture and oppression--that we have regularly visited upon our fellow human beings.

This is all the more perplexing because killing does not come easily to us. In fact, in order to cooperate so effectively, our species has had to develop powerful inhibitions against committing lethal violence. This is why homicide is comparatively rare (in fact, each year far more people take their own lives than are killed in war and homicide combined).

Dehumanization transformers ordinary people into unjust beings.

Philip G. **Zimbardo**, First Dehumanization, then War, and then the Holocaust, 3/3/**08**

[Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Stanford University.]

http://noorslist.wordpress.com/2008/03/03/first-dehumanization-then-war-and-then-the-holocaust/

“At the core of evil is the process of dehumanization by which certain other people or collectives of them, are depicted as less than human, as non comparable in humanity or personal dignity to those who do the labeling. Prejudice employs negative stereotypes in images or verbally abusive terms to demean and degrade the objects of its narrow view of superiority over these allegedly inferior persons. Discrimination involves the actions taken against those others based on the beliefs and emotions generated by prejudiced perspectives.

[Dehumanization](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/dehumanization/) is one of the central processes in the transformation of ordinary, normal people into indifferent or even wanton perpetrators of evil. Dehumanization is like a “cortical cataract” that clouds one’s thinking and fosters the perception that other people are less than human. It makes some people come to see those others as enemies deserving of torment, torture, and even annihilation.

Realism

Realist oppose utopian theory- embrace ideas of relative peace absent war along with human rights

By Commander Hans Olav Stensli, “The Value of Political Realism”, 2003 [Stensli, commander of the Norwegian Naval Forces, 2003 (Olva, PACEM, <http://www.pacem.no/2003/1/debatt/stensli/>)]

Unfortunately, realists tell us, our first task is to secure relative peace (absence of war) and stability. Realists thus are sceptical against any thinker or politician who claims to have found a promising path towards a platform on which to build a universal approach to secure democracy, toleration, the rule of law, human rights and peace, all being the ultimate goals of both idealists and realists. But building peace is actually far more difficult than wishing it. This latter truism is a classical inspiration of political realism, since it leads the scholar into considering an ethics of responsibility and expected consequences rather than elaborate attempts at analysing universally applicable ethical norms. As mentioned, the central normative appeal in realism itself is that the survival of the polity is the precondition for thinking about foreign policy (including ethics) at all.

Realism is the most efficient way the view international politics- policy makers turn to this in time of crises

By Commander Hans Olav Stensli, “The Value of Political Realism”, 2003 [Stensli, commander of the Norwegian Naval Forces, 2003 (Olva, PACEM, <http://www.pacem.no/2003/1/debatt/stensli/>)]

The debate on political realism, a set of ontological assumptions about international politics, has been a central theme in international relations over the past 40 years. Many scholars and politicians have wrestled over the question of the limitations and insights of realism. Still, realism seems very much alive today, one reason perhaps being that the value of realism as an analytical tool seems to become more relevant to policymakers in times of crises. In turn, such changes cause further debate among realists and their critics.

Central Asian Conflict Likely

Central Asia is the most likely scenario for global nuclear war

Blank, Research Professional of National Security Affairs at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College, 2000

(Dr. Stephen J Blank, Research Professional of National Security Affairs at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College June, pg. http://www.milnet.com/pentagon/Russia-2000-assessment-SSI.pdf)

Central Asia’s physical infrastructure might charitably be called “Third World” and the region is highly diverse ethnically and politically. Thus we might quickly end up on the wrong side of a Central Asian ethnic conflict. In such a case we would also quite likely be opposed by one or more of the key neighboring states, China, Iran, or Russia, all of whom might find it easier to project and sustain power into the area (or use proxies for that purpose) than we could.

Central Asia is the most likely scenario for a global nuclear war

Stephen **Blank,,** Director of Strategic Studies Institute at US Army War College, 1**999** Central Asian Survey (18; 2), [“Every Shark East of Suez: Great Power Interests, Policies and Tactics in the Transcaspian Energy Wars”]

Thus many structural conditions for conventional war or protracted ethnic conflict where third parties intervene now exist in the Transcaucasus. And similarly many conditions exist for internal domestic strife if the leadership of any of these governments changes or if one of the many disaffected minority groups revolts. Many Third World conflicts generated by local structural factors have a great potential for unintended escalation. Big powers often feel obliged to rescue their proxies and protégés . One or another big power may fail to grasp the stakes for the other side since interests here are not as clear as in Europe. Hence commitments involving the use of nuclear weapons or perhaps even conventional war to prevent defeat of a client are not well established or clear as in Europe. For instance, in 1993 Turkish noises about intervening on behalf of Azerbaijan induced Russian leaders to threaten a nuclear war in that case. This episode tends to confirm the notion that `future wars involving Europe and America as allies will be fought either over resources in chaotic Third World locations or in ethnic upheavals on the southern fringe of Europe and Russia’ . 95 Sadly, many such causes for conflict prevail across the Transcaspian. Precisely because Turkey is a Nato members but probably could not prevail in a long war against Russia or if it could, would conceivably trigger a potential nuclear blow (not a small possibility given the erratic nature of Russia’ s declared nuclear strategies), the danger of major war is higher here than almost every-where else in the CIS or the so-called arc of crisis from the Balkans to China.

China-US Likely

US China war goes nuclear

Hadar, adjunct scholar at Cato, ‘96

(Louis Hadar , The Sweet and Sour Sino-American Relationship, 1/23/96, http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-248.html)

Some analysts, including Nicholas D. Kristof, former Beijing chief of the New York Times, have drawn a historical parallel between the rise of Germany as a world economic and military power at the end of the 19th century and China's rise in the last decade of the 20th century. They suggest that, given the similar authoritarian and insecure nature of the regimes in post-Bismarck Germany the post-Deng China, China could emerge as a leading anti-status quo player, challenging the dominant position of the United States, which like Great Britain in the 19th century occupies the leading economic and military position in the world. "The risk is that Deng's successor will be less talented and more aggressive--a Chinese version of Wilhelm II," writes Kristof. "Such a ruler unfortunately may be tempted to promote Chinese nationalism as a unifying force and ideology, to replace the carcass of communism." For all the differences between China and Wilhelmine Germany, "the latter's experience should remind us of the difficulty that the world has had accommodating newly powerful nations," warns Kristof, recalling that Germany's jockeying for a place in the front rank of nations resulted in World War I.(66) Charles Krauthammer echoes that point, contending that China is "like late 19th-century Germany, a country growing too big and too strong for the continent it finds itself on."(67) Since Krauthammer and other analysts use the term "containment" to describe the policy they urge Washington to adopt toward China, it is the Cold War with the Soviet Union that is apparently seen as the model for the future Sino- American relationship. Strategist Graham Fuller predicts, for example, that China is "predisposed to a role as leader of the dispossessed states" in a new cold war that would pit an American-led West against an anti-status quo Third World bloc.(68) Although Krauthammer admits that China lacks the ideological appeal that the Soviet Union possessed (at least in the early stages of the Cold War), he assumes that, like the confrontation with the Soviet Union but unlike the British-German rivalry, the contest between America and China will remain "cold" and not escalate into a "hot" war. That optimism is crucial. Advocates of containment may be able to persuade a large number of Americans to adopt an anti-China strategy if the model is the tense but manageable Soviet-American rivalry. However, not many Americans are likely to embrace containment if the probable outcome is a bloody rerun of World War I--only this time possibly with nuclear weapons.

Economic Collapse Likely

Economic decline leads to global nuclear war and totalitarian regimes

Cook, former analyst for the US Treasury Department, 2007

Richard Cook, Writer, Consultant, and Retired Federal Analyst – U.S. Treasury Department, 6/14/2k7 "It's Official: The Crash of the U.S. Economy has begun," Global Research, http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=5964

Times of economic crisis produce international tension and politicians tend to go to war rather than face the economic music. The classic example is the worldwide depression of the 1930s leading to World War II. Conditions in the coming years could be as bad as they were then. We could have a really big war if the U.S. decides once and for all to haul off and let China, or whomever, have it in the chops. If they don’t want our dollars or our debt any more, how about a few nukes? Maybe we’ll finally have a revolution either from the right or the center involving martial law, suspension of the Bill of Rights, etc., combined with some kind of military or forced-labor dictatorship. We’re halfway there anyway. Forget about a revolution from the left. They wouldn’t want to make anyone mad at them for being too radical.

India/Pakistan War Likely

India Pakistan War leads to extinction

Gertz, Staff Writer at the Washington Times, 2001

(Bill Gertz, Staff writer at the Washington Times 12/31/2001, *India, Pakistan prepare nukes, troops for war,* Lexis)

Pakistan and India are readying their military forces - including their ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons - for war, The Washington Times has learned. U.S. intelligence officials say Pakistani military moves include large-scale troop movements, the dispersal of fighter aircraft and preparations for the transportation of nuclear weapons from storage sites. India also is moving thousands of its troops near the border with Pakistan and has dispersed some aircraft to safer sites away from border airfields, say officials familiar with intelligence reports of the war moves. Pakistan is moving the equivalent of two armored brigades - several thousand troops and hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles - near the northern part of its border with India. Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged heavy mortar fire over their border in southern Kashmir today, Agence France-Presse reported. Five Indian soldiers were seriously injured in the heaviest shelling in four months, a senior Indian army official said. More than 1,000 villagers were evacuated from their homes overnight for the operation, according to the report. Officials say the most alarming signs are preparations in both states for the use of nuclear-tipped missiles. Intelligence agencies have learned of indications that India is getting its short-range Prithvi ballistic missiles ready for use. The missiles are within range of the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. Meanwhile, Pakistan is mobilizing its Chinese-made mobile M-11 missiles, also known as the Shaheen, which have been readied for movement from a base near Sargodha, Pakistan. Intelligence reports indicate that India will have all its forces ready to launch an attack as early as this week, with Thursday or Friday as possible dates. Pakistan could launch its forces before those dates in a pre-emptive strike. Disclosure of the war preparations comes as President Bush on Saturday telephoned leaders of both nations, urging them to calm tensions, a sign of administration concern over the military moves in the region. The administration also fears that a conflict between India and Pakistan would undermine U.S. efforts to find terrorists in Afghanistan. U.S. military forces are heavily reliant on Pakistani government permission to conduct overflights for bombing and other aircraft operations into Afghanistan, primarily from aircraft carriers located in the Arabian Sea. With tensions growing between the states, U.S. intelligence officials are divided over the ultimate meaning of the indicators of an impending conflict. The Pentagon's Joint Staff intelligence division, known as J-2, late last week had assessed the danger of conflict at "critical" levels. Other joint intelligence centers outside the Pentagon, including those supporting the U.S. military forces responsible for the Asia-Pacific region and for Southwest Asia, assess the danger of an India-Pakistan war as less than critical but still "serious." Intelligence officials are especially worried about Pakistan's nuclear arsenal because control over the weapons is decentralized. Even before the latest moves, regional commanders could order the use of the weapons, which are based on missiles or fighter-bombers.

Iraq Pullout Likely

 Iraq pullout causes Middle-Eastern nuclear war

Gerecht, resident fellow at American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2007

(Reuel, “The Consequences of Failure in Iraq”, Jan 15, http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.25407,filter.all/pub\_detail.asp)

If we leave Iraq any time soon, the battle for Baghdad will probably lead to a conflagration that consumes all of Arab Iraq, and quite possibly Kurdistan, too. Once the Shia become both badly bloodied and victorious, raw nationalist and religious passions will grow. A horrific fight with the Sunni Arabs will inevitably draw in support from the ferociously anti-Shiite Sunni religious establishments in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and on the Shiite side from Iran. It will probably destroy most of central Iraq and whet the appetite of Shiite Arab warlords, who will by then dominate their community, for a conflict with the Kurds. If the Americans stabilize Arab Iraq, which means occupying the Sunni triangle, this won't happen. A strong, aggressive American military presence in Iraq can probably halt the radicalization of the Shiite community. Imagine an Iraq modeled on the Lebanese Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps. The worst elements in the Iranian regime are heavily concentrated in the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps and the Ministry of Intelligence, the two organizations most active inside Iraq. The Lebanese Hezbollah is also present giving tutorials. These forces need increasing strife to prosper. Imagine Iraqi Shiites, battle-hardened in a vicious war with Iraq's Arab Sunnis, spiritually and operationally linking up with a revitalized and aggressive clerical dictatorship in Iran. Imagine the Iraqi Sunni Islamic militants, driven from Iraq, joining up with groups like al Qaeda, living to die killing Americans. Imagine the Hashemite monarchy of Jordan overwhelmed with hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Sunni Arab refugees. The Hashemites have been lucky and clever since World War II. They've escaped extinction several times. Does anyone want to take bets that the monarchy can survive the implantation of an army of militant, angry Iraqi Sunni Arabs? For those who believe that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is the epicenter of the Middle East, the mass migration of Iraq's Sunni Arabs into Jordan will bury what small chances remain that the Israelis and Palestinians will find an accommodation. With Jordan in trouble, overflowing with viciously anti-American and anti-Israeli Iraqis, peaceful Palestinian evolution on the West Bank of the Jordan river is about as likely as the discovery of the Holy Grail. The repercussions throughout the Middle East of the Sunni-Shiite clash in Iraq are potentially so large it's difficult to digest. Sunni Arabs in Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia will certainly view a hard-won and bloody Shiite triumph in Iraq as an enormous Iranian victory. The Egyptians or the Saudis or both will go for their own nukes. What little chance remains for the Americans and the Europeans to corral peacefully the clerical regime's nuclear-weapons aspirations will end with a Shiite-Sunni death struggle in Mesopotamia, which the Shia will inevitably win. The Israelis, who are increasingly likely to strike preemptively the major Iranian nuclear sites before the end of George Bush's presidency, will feel even more threatened, especially when the Iranian regime underscores its struggle against the Zionist enemy as a means of compensating for its support to the bloody Shiite conquest in Iraq. With America in full retreat from Iraq, the clerical regime, which has often viewed terrorism as a tool of statecraft, could well revert to the mentality and tactics that produced the bombing of Khobar Towers in 1996. If the Americans are retreating, hit them. That would not be just a radical Shiite view; it was the learned estimation of Osama bin Laden and his kind before 9/11. It's questionable to argue that the war in Iraq has advanced the radical Sunni holy war against the United States. There should be no question, however, that an American defeat in Mesopotamia would be the greatest psychological triumph ever for anti-American jihadists. Al Qaeda and its militant Iraqi allies could dominate western Iraq for years--it could take awhile for the Shiites to drive them out.

Iran Likely

Iran attack will cause a global nuclear war that leads to human extinction

Hirch Professor at the University og Califorina at San Diego 2008

(Seymour Hirsch, Professor of physics @ the University of California @ San Diego, 4/10/2k8 http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=HIR20060422&articleId=2317)

Iran is likely to respond to any US attack using its considerable missile arsenal against US forces in Iraq and elsewhere in the Persian Gulf. Israel may attempt to stay out of the conflict, it is not clear whether Iran would target Israel in a retaliatory strike but it is certainly possible. If the US attack includes nuclear weapons use against Iranian facilities, as I believe is very likely, rather than deterring Iran it will cause a much more violent response. Iranian military forces and militias are likely to storm into southern Iraq and the US may be forced to use nuclear weapons against them, causing large scale casualties and inflaming the Muslim world. There could be popular uprisings in other countries in the region like Pakistan, and of course a Shiite uprising in Iraq against American occupiers. Finally I would like to discuss the grave consequences to America and the world if the US uses nuclear weapons against Iran. First, the likelihood of terrorist attacks against Americans both on American soil and abroad will be enormously enhanced after these events. And terrorist's attempts to get hold of "loose nukes" and use them against Americans will be enormously incentivized after the US used nuclear weapons against Iran. , it will destroy America's position as the leader of the free world. The rest of the world rightly recognizes that nuclear weapons are qualitatively different from all other weapons, and that there is no sharp distinction between small and large nuclear weapons, or between nuclear weapons targeting facilities versus those targeting armies or civilians. It will not condone the breaking of the nuclear taboo in an unprovoked war of aggression against a non-nuclear country, and the US will become a pariah state. Third, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will cease to exist, and many of its 182 non-nuclear-weapon-country signatories will strive to acquire nuclear weapons as a deterrent to an attack by a nuclear nation. With no longer a taboo against the use of nuclear weapons, any regional conflict may go nuclear and expand into global nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are million-fold more powerful than any other weapon, and the existing nuclear arsenals can obliterate humanity many times over. In the past, global conflicts terminated when one side prevailed. In the next global conflict we will all be gone before anybody has prevailed.

US threat is animating Iran and the nuclear war

**Thestar.com** , April 12 20**10**, Iran slams Barack Obama's 'nuclear war' threat; Plans complaint to UN over U.S. president's 'intimidating' remark; http://www.thestar.com/news/world/iran/article/793755--iran-slams-barack-obama-s-nuclear-war-threat

"The recent statement by the U.S. president ... implicitly intimidates the Iranian nation with the deployment of nuclear arms," Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a televised meeting with military and security officials."This statement is very strange and the world should not ignore it, since in the 21st century, which is the era of support for human rights and campaigning against terrorism, the head of a country is threatening to use nuclear war."Foreign ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast told the semi-official Fars news agency Iran would lodge a formal complaint to the United Nations, a move backed by a letter signed by 255 of Iran's 290 members of parliament.

Obama is pressing other global powers to agree to a fourth round of UN sanctions against Iran over its refusal to halt nuclear work that the West suspects is aimed at making bombs, a charge Iran denies.Reflecting fears of attack on its nuclear sites from the United States or its closest Middle East ally, Israel, the defence ministry said Iran had started producing a prototype of an advanced anti-aircraft missile system. "The Mersad air defence system ... is able to destroy modern aircraft at low- and medium-range altitude," the ISNA news agency on Sunday quoted Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi as saying. "The mass production of this product has begun and in the course of the current year a large number of them will be delivered to the armed forces," he said. While Iran hopes the development of its own system will make it more self-sufficient in weapons defence, it is also urging Russia to resist Western pressure not to deliver the S-300 missile defence system it has ordered.

Japanese Relations (Spratly Islands) Likely

US-Japan alliance is key to prevent war over the Spratly Islands.

Okimoto President of Okamoto Associates and Special Adviser to the Cabinet and Chairman of the Japanese prime minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations 2002

[Yukio, “Japan and the United States: The Essential Alliance,” spring 2002, Vol. 25, No. 2, http://www.twq.com/02spring/okamoto.pdf]

The Japan-U.S. alliance also probably serves as a deterrent against any one nation seizing control of the Spratly Islands and, by extension, the sea lanes and resources of the South China Sea. Formally, the area is outside the Far East region that the United States and Japan agree is covered by Article 6 of the security treaty. For the countries vying for control of the sea, however, the proximity of two of the world’s great maritime forces must at least urge them to use caution as they pursue their competition.

Spratly Conflict goes nuclear

Nikkei 1995

[The Nikkei weekly, Developing *Asian nations should be allowed a grace period to allow their economies to grow before being subjected to trade liberalization demands, says Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad,* July 3, 1995, lexis]

Developing Asian nations should be allowed a grace period to allow their economies to grow before being subjected to trade liberalization demands, says Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. He dismisses an argument put forward by some industrialized countries that fair trade can be realized when trading conditions are the same for all countries. It is not fair when small developing countries are obliged to compete with Japan and the U.S. under the same conditions, the outspoken champion of Asian interests insists. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum originated as a loose discussion platform. But it has become an institution, and agendas are prepared ahead of meetings. However, Mahathir is dissatisfied with its management, because, he says, group policy is decided by a handful of leading nations. He is also resentful of some countries' opposition to the Malaysian-proposed East-Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC), aimed at promoting economic cooperation in the region. The EAEC, which the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defines as a part of APEC, doesn't stand in opposition to APEC, he says. "The EAEC and APEC can coexist," he says. The EAEC is just a conference, not a trade bloc like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAF-TA), he adds. Mahathir has gone to some lengths to bring Japan on board. Without the world's No. 2 economy, the EAEC will not be taken seriously by the international community, he says. Some have suggested also sending out invitations to Australia and New Zealand. But in order to join the EAEC, those two nations should not only just call themselves Asian countries, he says. They should also share values and culture with their Asian partners, he stresses, because the caucus is a group of Asian countries. Mahathir strongly opposes the use of weapons to settle international disputes. The prime minister hails the ASEAN Regional Forum as a means for civilized nations of achieving negotiated settlement of disputes. Many members of the forum, including Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Thailand, have problems with their neighbors, but they are trying to solve them through continued dialogue, he adds. Three scenarios Mahathir sees Asia developing in three possible ways in future. In his worst-case scenario, Asian countries would go to war against each other, possibly over disputes such as their conflicting claims on the Spratly Islands. China might then declare war on the U.S., leading to full-scale, even nuclear, war.

 Japanese Relations (Middle Eastern Conflict) Likely

US-Japan alliance is key to preventing war in the Middle East

Okimoto President of Okamoto Associates and Special Adviser to the Cabinet and Chairman of the Japanese prime minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations 2002

[Yukio, “Japan and the United States: The Essential Alliance,” spring 2002, Vol. 25, No. 2, http://www.twq.com/02spring/okamoto.pdf]

Recent events have focused international attention on relations between the United States and Islamic countries, which, with a few exceptions, are strained. Some have suggested that Japan can become a potential intermediary between the United States and the Muslim world because of Japan’s close relations with Arab governments, Muslim oil-producing states, and the nations of Central Asia; its relatively more flexible stance on human rights policies; and the absence of a strong tie to Israel. Japan can contribute to a U.S.-Islamic dialogue by asserting its view that vast disparities in income and an inconsistent U.S. commitment to human rights are impediments to the U.S. goal of stemming the rise of terrorism in the Islamic world. In recent years, the United States has drifted away from the consensus prevalent in most of the industrialized world that extreme poverty is a primary driver of terrorism and political violence. The United States also needs to explain its reluctance to confront the regimes of its friends in the Middle East with the same human rights standards as those applied to Myanmar, China, or Indonesia.

Japanese Relations (China/Taiwan Conflict) Likely

US-Japan alliance is key to preventing China Taiwan war

Okimoto President of Okamoto Associates and Special Adviser to the Cabinet and Chairman of the Japanese prime minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations 2002

[Yukio, “Japan and the United States: The Essential Alliance,” spring 2002, Vol. 25, No. 2, http://www.twq.com/02spring/okamoto.pdf]

Regardless of whether China’s development takes the bright path or the fearful one, however, reason for concern exists on one issue: the resolution of the status of Taiwan. Chinese citizens from all walks of life have an attachment to the reunification of Taiwan and the mainland that transcends reason. The U.S.-Japan alliance represents a significant hope for a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan problem. Both Japan and the United States have clearly stated that they oppose reunification by force. When China conducted provocative missile tests in the waters around Taiwan in 1996, the United States sent two aircraft carrier groups into nearby waters as a sign of its disapproval of China’s belligerent act. Japan seconded the U.S. action, raising in Chinese minds the possibility that Japan might offer logistical and other support to its ally in the event of hostilities. Even though intervention is only a possibility, a strong and close tie between Japanese and U.S. security interests guarantees that the Chinese leadership cannot afford to miscalculate the consequences of an unprovoked attack on Taiwan. The alliance backs up Japan’s basic stance that the two sides need to come to a negotiated solution.

Japanese Relations (Korea) Likely

US-Japan alliance is key to preventing North Korean War

Okimoto President of Okamoto Associates and Special Adviser to the Cabinet and Chairman of the Japanese prime minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations 2002

[Yukio, “Japan and the United States: The Essential Alliance,” spring 2002, Vol. 25, No. 2, http://www.twq.com/02spring/okamoto.pdf]

Despite its years of famine; its evaporating industrial and energy infrastructure; and its choking, inhumane society, the DPRK government still refuses to retreat to its place on the ash heap of history. Despite the poverty of the people, the North Korean military maintains an arsenal of thousands of rocket launchers and pieces of artillery—some of which are possibly loaded with chemical and biological warheads—awaiting the signal to wipe Seoul off the map. The DPRK’s immense stock of weapons includes large numbers of Nodong missiles capable of striking Japan’s western coastal regions and probably longer-range missiles capable of hitting every major Japanese city. The United States has two combat aircraft wings in the ROK, in Osan and Kunsan. In addition, some 30,000 U.S. Army troops are stationed near Seoul. Most military experts admit that the army troops serve a largely symbolic function; if an actual war were to erupt, a massive North Korean artillery bombardment could pin down both the U.S. Eighth Army and the ROK armed forces at the incipient stage. The firepower the USFJ can bring to bear upon the Korean Peninsula within a matter of hours makes the U.S.-Japan alliance the Damoclean sword hanging over the DPRK. The DPRK leaders are masters of deception and manipulation, but they know that launching a military strike against the ROK will expose them to a strong and final counterstrike from U.S. forces in Japan.

Japanese Relations (Sino-Russian Ties) Likely

A. Strengthening the US-Japan alliance is critical to loosen Sino-Russian ties and checking agression

Brookes, Senior Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, 5

(Peter Brooks, Senior Fellow at the heritage foundation, 8/15/05 “An Alarming Alliance: Sino Russian ties tightening” The Heritage Foundation, http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed081505a.cfm

The first- ever joint Chinese-Russian military exercises kick off Thursday in Northeast Asia. The exercises are small in scale — but huge in implication. They indicate a further warming of the "strategic partnership" that Moscow and Beijing struck back in 1996. More importantly, they signal the first real post-Cold War steps, beyond inflammatory rhetoric, by Russia and China to balance — and, ultimately, diminish — U.S. power across Asia. If America doesn't take strategic steps to counter these efforts, it will lose influence to Russia and China in an increasingly important part of the world. Unimaginable just a few years ago, the weeklong military exercises — dubbed "Peace Mission 2005" — will involve 10,000 troops on China and Russia's eastern coasts and in adjacent seas. This unmistakable example of Sino-Russian military muscle-flexing will also include Russia's advanced SU-27 fighters, strategic TU-95 and TU-22 bombers, submarines, amphibious and anti-submarine ships. The exercise's putative purpose is to "strengthen the capability of the two armed forces in jointly striking international terrorism, extremism and separatism," says China's Defense Ministry. But the Chinese defense minister was more frank in comments earlier this year. Gen. Cao Gangchuan said: "The exercise will exert both immediate and far-reaching impacts." This raised lots of eyebrows — especially in the United States, Taiwan and Japan. For instance, although Russia nixed the idea, the Chinese demanded the exercises be held 500 miles to the south — a move plainly aimed at intimidating Taiwan. Beijing clearly wanted to send a warning to Washington (and, perhaps, Tokyo) about its support for Taipei, and hint at the possibility that if there were a Taiwan Strait dust-up, Russia might stand with China. The exercise also gives Russia an opportunity to strut its military wares before its best customers — Chinese generals. Moscow is Beijing's largest arms supplier, to the tune of more than $2 billion a year for purchases that include subs, ships, missiles and fighters. Rumors abound that Moscow may finally be ready to sell strategic, cruise-missile-capable bombers such as the long-range TU-95 and supersonic TU-22 to Beijing — strengthening China's military hand against America and U.S. friends and allies in Asia. Russia and China are working together to oppose American influence all around their periphery. Both are upset by U.S. support for freedom in the region — notably in the recent Orange (Ukraine), Rose (Georgia) and Tulip (Kyrgyzstan) revolutions — all of which fell in what Moscow or Beijing deems its sphere of influence. In fact, at a recent meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (i.e., Russia, China and the four 'Stans'), Moscow and Beijing conspired to get Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to close U.S. airbases. As a result, Uzbekistan gave America 180 days to get out, despite the base's continued use in Afghanistan operations. (Quick diplomacy by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld saved the Kyrgyz base, but it remains on the ropes.) Moreover, it shouldn't be overlooked that the "Shanghai Six" have invited Iran, India and Pakistan to join the group as observers, expanding China and Russia's influence into South Asia and parts of the Middle East. What to do? First, the Pentagon must make sure the forthcoming Quadrennial Defense Review balances U.S. forces to address both the unconventional terrorist threat and the big-power challenge represented by a Russia-China strategic partnership. Second, the United States must continue to strengthen its relationship with its ally Japan to ensure a balance of power in Northeast Asia — and also encourage Tokyo to improve relations with Moscow in an effort to loosen Sino-Russian ties. Third, Washington must persevere in advancing its new relationship with (New) Delhi in order to balance Beijing's growing power in Asia and take advantage of India's longstanding, positive relationship with Russia. And be ready to deal. Russia has historically been wary of China. America must not ignore the possibilities of developing a long-term, favorable relationship with Russia — despite the challenges posed by Russian President Vladimir Putin's heavy-handed rule. These unprecedented military exercises don't make a formal Beijing-Moscow alliance inevitable. But they represent a new, more intimate phase in the Sino-Russian relationship. And China's growing political/economic clout mated with Russia's military would make for a potentially potent anti-American bloc. For the moment, Beijing and Moscow are committed to building a political order in Asia that doesn't include America atop the power pyramid. With issues from Islamic terrorism to North Korean nukes to a conflict in the Taiwan Strait, the stakes in Asia are huge. Washington and its friends must not waste any time in addressing the burgeoning Sino-Russian entente.

Middle East Likely

The Arms Race in the Middle East is creating a breeding ground for a chance of a nuclear war. Nuclear war is guaranteed if the status quo continues.

**Cirincione**, 8/21/20**07**

[Joseph, "The Middle East Nuclear Surge," <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/08/nuclear_surge.html>]

Iran is still probably five to 10 years away from gaining the ability to make nuclear fuel or nuclear bombs. But its program is already sending nuclear ripples through the Middle East. The race to match Iran's capabilities has begun. Almost a dozen Muslim nations have declared their interest in nuclear energy programs in the past year. This unprecedented demand for nuclear programs is all the more disturbing paired with the unseemly rush of nuclear salesman eager to supply the coveted technology. While U.S. officials were reaching a new nuclear agreement with India last month, President Nicolas Sarkozy of France signed a nuclear cooperation deal with Libya and agreed to help the United Arab Emirates launch its own civilian nuclear program. Indicating that this could be just the beginning of a major sale and supply effort, Sarkozy declared that the West should trust Arab states with nuclear technology. Sarkozy has a point: No one can deny Arab states access to nuclear technology, especially as they are acquiring it under existing international rules and agreeing to the inspection of International Atomic Energy Agency officials. But is this really about meeting demands for electric power and desalinization plants? There is only one nuclear power reactor in the entire Middle East—the one under construction in Busher, Iran. In all of Africa there are only two, both in South Africa. (Israel has a research reactor near Dimona, as do several other states.) Suddenly, after multiple energy crises over the 60 years of the nuclear age, these countries that control over one-fourth of the world's oil supplies are investing in nuclear power programs. This is not about energy; it is a nuclear hedge against Iran. King Adbdullah of Jordan admitted as much in a January 2007 interview when he said: "The rules have changed on the nuclear subject throughout the whole region. . . . After this summer everybody's going for nuclear programs." He was referring to the war in Lebanon last year between Israel and Hezbollah, perceived in the region as evidence of Iran's growing clout. Other leaders are not as frank in public, but confide similar sentiments in private conversations. Here is where the nuclear surge currently stands. Egypt and Turkey, two of Iran's main rivals, are in the lead. Both have flirted with nuclear weapons programs in the past and both have announced ambitious plans for the construction of new power reactors. Gamal Mubarak, son of the current Egyptian president and his likely successor, says the country will build four power reactors, with the first to be completed within the next 10 years. Turkey will build three new reactors, with the first beginning later this year. Not to be outdone, Saudi Arabia and the five other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates) at the end of 2006 "commissioned a joint study on the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes." Algeria and Russia quickly signed an agreement on nuclear development in January 2007, with France, South Korea, China, and the United States also jockeying for nuclear sales to this oil state. Jordan announced that it, too, wants nuclear power. King Abdullah met Canada's prime minister in July and discussed the purchase of heavy water Candu reactors. Morocco wants assistance from the atomic energy agency to acquire nuclear technology and in March sponsored an international conference on Physics and Technology of Nuclear Reactors. Finally, the Arab League has provided an overall umbrella for these initiatives when, at the end of its summit meeting in March, it "called on the Arab states to expand the use of peaceful nuclear technology in all domains serving continuous development." Perhaps these states are truly motivated to join the "nuclear renaissance" promoted by the nuclear power industry and a desire to counter global warming. But the main message to the West from these moderate Arab and Muslim leaders is political, not industrial. "We can't trust you," they are saying, "You are failing to contain Iran and we need to prepare." It is not too late to prove them wrong. Instead of seeing this nuclear surge as a new market, the countries with nuclear technology to sell have a moral and strategic obligation to ensure that their business does not result in the Middle East going from a region with one nuclear weapon state - Israel - to one with three, four, or five nuclear nations. **If the existing territorial, ethnic, and political disputes continue unresolved, this is a recipe for nuclear war.**

North Korea Likely

North Korean War goes nuclear

CNN 2003

[CNN, “N K. Warns of nuclear conflict,” 2/26/2003 , http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/02/25/nkorea.missile/index.html]

Pyongyang cites upcoming U.S.-South Korean joint military exercises scheduled to begin on March 4, as "reckless war moves" designed to "unleash a total war on the Korean peninsula with a pre-emptive nuclear strike". "The situation of the Korean Peninsula is reaching the brink of a nuclear war," the statement, issued by the official Korean Central News Agency, says. The North also called on South Koreans to "wage a nationwide anti-U.S. and anti-war struggle to frustrate the U.S. moves for a nuclear war." The United States denies it has any plans to attack North Korea, consistently saying it is seeking a diplomatic and political solution to the increasing tensions sparked by Pyongyang's decision to reactivate its nuclear program. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Tuesday wrapped up a four-day tour of Japan, China and South Korea during which he lobbied Asian leaders to support a multi-lateral approach to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. Powell repeated the U.S. position that it had no intention of invading North Korea and had no plans to impose fresh economic sanctions on the impoverished communist nation. While Japan and South Korea indicated they might support a regional initiative to sway Pyongyang, China -- a key ally and aid donor to the North -- appeared to remain unconvinced. China says the United States must deal with Pyongyang equally on a one-to-one basis. "We believe diplomatic, political pressure still has a role to play. And there are countries who have considerable influence with the North Koreans who will continue to apply pressure," Powell said Tuesday. "We also made it clear that if they begin reprocessing (nuclear material), it changes the entire political landscape. And we're making sure that is communicated to them in a number of channels." Powell would not be drawn on how would Washington react if Pyongyang did begin reprocessing but did say that the U.S. had "no intention of invading" North Korea. Tensions on the peninsula have been ratcheting up over the past few weeks with North Korea becoming increasingly provocative. On Monday, the North fired a short-range missile into the Sea of Japan, or East Sea, an act many believe was designed to upstage the inauguration of new South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun. ([Roh sworn in](http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/02/24/skorea.inauguration.reut/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)) Last week, a North Korean MiG-19 fighter briefly flew into South Korean air space. ([MiG incursion](http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/02/20/skorea.mig/index.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)) The North has also threatened to abandon the 1953 armistice that ended the fighting of the Korean War.

Pakistan Collapse Likely

Pakistan Collapse leads to nuclear war and nuclear terrorism

Brooks, Senior Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, 2007

Peter Brookes, Senior Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, 7/2/2007 (Peter, “BARACK'S BLUNDER

INVADE A NUCLEAR POWER?” http://www.nypost.com/seven/08022007/postopinion/opedcolumnists/baracks\_blunder\_opedcolumnists\_peter\_brookes.htm?page=2)

The fall of Musharraf's government might well lead to a takeover by pro-U.S. elements of the Pakistani military - but other possible outcomes are extremely unpleasant, including the ascendance of Islamist factions. The last thing we need is for Islamabad to fall to the extremists. That would exacerbate the problem of those terrorist safe havens that Obama apparently thinks he could invade. And it would also put Pakistan's nuclear arsenal into the wrong hands. That could lead to a number of nightmarish scenarios - a nuclear war with India over Kashmir, say, or the use of nuclear weapons by a terrorist group against any number of targets, including the United States.

Sino-Russian Conflict Likely

Sino Russian War leads to Extinction

Sharavin Head of the Institute for Political and military analysis 2001,

(Alexander Sharavin, head of the institute for political and military analysis, 10/1/2001 The Third Threat http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/5470.html)

Russia may face the "wonderful" prospect of combating the Chinese army, which, if full mobilization is called, is comparable in size with Russia's entire population, which also has nuclear weapons (even tactical weapons become strategic if states have common borders) and would be absolutely insensitive to losses (even a loss of a few million of the servicemen would be acceptable for China). Such a war would be more horrible than the World War II. It would require from our state maximal tension, universal mobilization and complete accumulation of the army military hardware, up to the last tank or a plane, in a single direction (we would have to forget such "trifles" like Talebs and Basaev, but this does not guarantee success either). Massive nuclear strikes on basic military forces and cities of China would finally be the only way out, what would exhaust Russia's armament completely. We have not got another set of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-based missiles, whereas the general forces would be extremely exhausted in the border combats. In the long run, even if the aggression would be stopped after the majority of the Chinese are killed, our country would be absolutely unprotected against the "Chechen" and the "Balkan" variants both, and even against the first frost of a possible nuclear winter.

Sunni/Shiite Conflict Likely

A war between Sunnis and Shiites would spill over resulting in extinction

Hutson Correspondent for Renew America 2007

(Warner Todd Huston, Correspondent for Renew America, recently appeared 1/24/2007, “Media: Bush’s ‘flawed’ portrayal of ‘the enemy’ in the State of the Union” http://www.renewamerica.us/columns/huston/070124)

Once again, a National U.S. paper "arguably" chooses sides with Europe's interests over that of America. Under Bush's rubric, a country such as Iran — which enjoys diplomatic representation and billions of dollars in trade wit major European countries — is lumped together with al-Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. "The Shia and Sunni extremists are different faces of the same totalitarian threat," Bush said, referring to the different branches of the Muslim religion. Trade? How is trade an assurance of the benevolence of any nation? Nations didn't stop trading with Nazi Germany even as Hitler was Blitzkrieging through Europe, for instance. Even the USA was still trading with the Confederacy after the Civil War had already begun. The fact that Europe is still trading with Iran as if everything is hunkeydorie does NOT say one word as to the Iranian regime's status as a bunch of nice guys. Trade is one of the last things that is affected by war. Business is business, after all. Further Bush did not "lump together" al-Qaeda and Iran as if they were indistinguishable, as the Post seems to be claiming. Here is what Bush actually said: In recent times, it has also become clear that we face an escalating danger from Shia extremists who are just as hostile to America, and are also determined to dominate the Middle East. Many are known to take direction from the regime in Iran, which is funding and arming terrorists like Hezbollah — a group second only to al Qaeda in the American lives it has taken. The president said that the Shia extremists in Iran are "second only to al Qaeda" among the enemies we face. He did not, however, say they were one and the same. The Post's simple-minded efforts to make Bush himself look simple minded only makes the Post out to be practicing partisan political demagogy. Bush's saying that Shia and Sunni extremism are only "different faces of the same totalitarian threat" is not to say they are wholly the same, only that they share a similar end game: total domination over the Middle East in the near term and the world in the long term. Using WWII as an example again, it would like saying that the Nazis and the Japanese were indistinguishable merely because they both wanted to rule the world. No one would make such an absurd claim. Yet both threatened our extinction. Just as both Shia and Sunni extremism today threatens our interests and our way of life. Unfortunately, the Post seems to see no threat from Iran in particular and Shia extremism in general. Perhaps no one let the Washington Post in on the badly kept secret that Iran has been sending weapons, manpower, advisors and thousands of IEDs into Iraq to attack us since the first day Saddam's hold over the country ended. Not to mention the constant threat and rhetoric against us emanating from the president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Russia-US Likely

**Russia-US conflict guarantees nuclear Armageddon – nuclear stockpiles**

Bostrom Professor of philosophy at Yale, 2002

(Nick, Professor of Philosophy at Yale. “Existential Risks: Analyzing Human Extinction Scenarios and Related Hazards,” 2002, www.transhumanist.com/volume9/risks.html)

A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that might have been persistent enough to qualify as global and terminal. There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that a nuclear Armageddon would occur and that it might annihilate our species or permanently destroy human civilization.[4] Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation, either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind’s potential permanently.

Taiwan/China War Likely

China Taiwan War would draw in the US and lead to extinction

Straits Times 2000

[The Straits Times, “No One Gains in War over Taiwan,” 6/25/00, Lexis]

THE high-intensity scenario postulates a cross-strait war escalating into a full-scale war between the US and China. If Washington were to conclude that splitting China would better serve its national interests, then a full-scale war becomes unavoidable. Conflict on such a scale would embroil other countries far and near and -horror of horrors -raise the possibility of a nuclear war. Beijing has already told the US and Japan privately that it considers any country providing bases and logistics support to any US forces attacking China as belligerent parties open to its retaliation. In the region, this means South Korea, Japan, the Philippines and, to a lesser extent, Singapore. If China were to retaliate, east Asia will be set on fire. And the conflagration may not end there as opportunistic powers elsewhere may try to overturn the existing world order. With the US distracted, Russia may seek to redefine Europe's political landscape. The balance of power in the Middle East may be similarly upset by the likes of Iraq. In south Asia, hostilities between India and Pakistan, each armed with its own nuclear arsenal, could enter a new and dangerous phase. Will a full-scale Sino-US war lead to a nuclear war? According to General Matthew Ridgeway, commander of the US Eighth Army which fought against the Chinese in the Korean War, the US had at the time thought of using nuclear weapons against China to save the US from military defeat. In his book The Korean War, a personal account of the military and political aspects of the conflict and its implications on future US foreign policy, Gen Ridgeway said that US was confronted with two choices in Korea -truce or a broadened war, which could have led to the use of nuclear weapons. If the US had to resort to nuclear weaponry to defeat China long before the latter acquired a similar capability, there is little hope of winning a war against China 50 years later, short of using nuclear weapons. The US estimates that China possesses about 20 nuclear warheads that can destroy major American cities. Beijing also seems prepared to go for the nuclear option. A Chinese military officer disclosed recently that Beijing was considering a review of its "non first use" principle regarding nuclear weapons. Major-General Pan Zhangqiang, president of the military-funded Institute for Strategic Studies, told a gathering at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington that although the government still abided by that principle, there were strong pressures from the military to drop it. He said military leaders considered the use of nuclear weapons mandatory if the country risked dismemberment as a result of foreign intervention. Gen Ridgeway said that should that come to pass, we would see the destruction of civilisation. There would be no victors in such a war. While the prospect of a nuclear Armaggedon over Taiwan might seem inconceivable, it cannot be ruled out entirely, for China puts sovereignty above everything else.

Taiwan Likely

Taiwan is the most probable scenario for nuclear war

Johnson President of the Japan Policy Research Institute, 2001

(Chalmers Johnson, President of the Japan Policy Research Institute, The Nation, 5/14/2k1 http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20010514&c=1&s=Johnson)

China is another matter. No sane figure in the Pentagon wants a war with China, and all serious US militarists know that China's minuscule nuclear capacity is not offensive but a deterrent against the overwhelming US power arrayed against it (twenty archaic Chinese warheads versus more than 7,000 US warheads). Taiwan, whose status constitutes the still incomplete last act of the Chinese civil war, remains the most dangerous place on earth. Much as the 1914 assassination of the Austrian crown prince in Sarajevo led to a war that no one wanted, a misstep in Taiwan by any side could bring the United States and China into a conflict that neither wants. Such a war would bankrupt the United States, deeply divide Japan and probably end in a Chinese victory, given that China is the world's most populous country and would be defending itself against a foreign aggressor. More seriously, it could easily escalate into a nuclear holocaust. Since any Taiwanese attempt to declare its independence formally would be viewed as a challenge to China's sovereignty, forward-deployed US forces on China's borders have virtually no deterrent effect. The United States uses satellites to observe changes in China's basic military capabilities. But the coastal surveillance flights by our twelve (now eleven) EP-3E Aries II spy planes, like the one that was forced down off Hainan Island, seek information that is useful only in an imminent battle. They are inherently provocative and inappropriate when used to monitor a country with which we are at peace. The United States itself maintains a 200-mile area off its coasts in which it intercepts any aircraft attempting similar reconnaissance. America's provocative military posture in East Asia makes war with China more likely because it legitimizes military strategies in both Beijing and Taipei as well as in Washington and Tokyo.

Terrorism → Nuclear Escalation Likely

Nuclear Terrorism leads to global nuclear war

Chesney, JD candidate at Harvard Law, 1997

 (Robert, Loyola of Los Angeles International & Comparative Law Journal, November)

The horrible truth is that the threat of nuclear terrorism is real, in light of the potential existence of a black market in fissile material. Nuclear terrorists might issue demands, but then again, they might not. Their target could be anything: a U.S. military base in a foreign land, a crowded U.S. city, or an empty stretch of desert highway. In one fell swoop, nuclear terrorists could decapitate the U.S. government or destroy its financial system. The human suffering resulting from a detonation would be beyond calculation, and in the aftermath, the remains of the nation would demand both revenge and protection. Constitutional liberties and values might never recover. When terrorists strike against societies already separated by fundamental social fault lines, such as in Northern Ireland or Israel, conventional weapons can exploit those fault lines to achieve significant gains. [n1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/frame.do?tokenKey=rsh-20.923397.6564759723&target=results_DocumentContent&reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1248188387888&returnToKey=20_T7002619888&parent=docview" \l "n1) In societies that lack such pre-existing fundamental divisions, however, conventional weapon attacks do not pose a top priority threat to national security, even though the pain and suffering inflicted can be substantial. The bedrock institutions of the United States will survive despite the destruction of federal offices; the vast majority of people will continue to support the Constitution despite the mass murder of innocent persons. The consequences of terrorists employing weapons of mass destruction, however, would be several orders of magnitude worse than a conventional weapons attack. Although this threat includes chemical and biological weapons, a nuclear weapon's devastating [\*32]  potential is in a class by itself. [n2](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/frame.do?tokenKey=rsh-20.923397.6564759723&target=results_DocumentContent&reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1248188387888&returnToKey=20_T7002619888&parent=docview" \l "n2) Nuclear terrorism thus poses a unique danger to the United States: through its sheer power to slay, destroy, and terrorize, a nuclear weapon would give terrorists the otherwise-unavailable ability to bring the United States to its knees. Therefore, preventing terrorists from obtaining nuclear weapons should be considered an unparalleled national security priority dominating other policy considerations.

Nuclear terrorism will cause global nuclear war, leading to extinction

Sid-Ahmed, Egyptian political analyst for the Al-Ahram newspaper, 2004:

(Mohamed Sid-Ahmed, Egyptian political analyst for the Al-Ahram newspaper, Al-Ahram online, August 26, 2004,http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/705/op5.htm)

A nuclear attack by terrorists will be much more critical than Hiroshima and Nagazaki, even if -- and this is far from certain -- the weapons used are less harmful than those used then, Japan, at the time, with no knowledge of nuclear technology, had no choice but to capitulate. Today, the technology is a secret for nobody. So far, except for the two bombs dropped on Japan, nuclear weapons have been used only to threaten. Now we are at a stage where they can be detonated. This completely changes the rules of the game. We have reached a point where anticipatory measures can determine the course of events. Allegations of a terrorist connection can be used to justify anticipatory measures, including the invasion of a sovereign state like Iraq. As it turned out, these allegations, as well as the allegation that Saddam was harbouring WMD, proved to be unfounded. What would be the consequences of a nuclear attack by terrorists? Even if it fails, it would further exacerbate the negative features of the new and frightening world in which we are now living. Societies would close in on themselves, police measures would be stepped up at the expense of human rights, tensions between civilisations and religions would rise and ethnic conflicts would proliferate. It would also speed up the arms race and develop the awareness that a different type of world order is imperative if humankind is to survive. But the still more critical scenario is if the attack succeeds. This could lead to a third world war, from which no one will emerge victorious. Unlike a conventional war which ends when one side triumphs over another, this war will be without winners and losers. When nuclear pollution infects the whole planet, we will all be losers.

 Terror = Extinction Likely

Terrorist attack risks extinction.

Alexander Prof and Director of Inter-University for Terrorism Studies 3

(Yonah, Terrorism Myths and Realities, Washington Times, Prof and Director of Inter-University

For Terrorism Studies)

Last week's brutal suicide bombings in Baghdad and Jerusalem have once again illustrated dramatically that the international community failed, thus far at least, to understand the magnitude and implications of the terrorist threats to the very survival of civilization itself. Even the United States and Israel have for decades tended to regard terrorism as a mere tactical nuisance or irritant rather than a critical strategic challenge to their national security concerns. It is not surprising, therefore, that on September 11, 2001, Americans were stunned by the unprecedented tragedy of 19 al Qaeda terrorists striking a devastating blow at the center of the nation's commercial and military powers. Likewise, Israel and its citizens, despite the collapse of the Oslo Agreements of 1993 and numerous acts of terrorism triggered by the second intifada that began almost three years ago, are still "shocked" by each suicide attack at a time of intensive diplomatic efforts to revive the moribund peace process through the now revoked cease-fire arrangements (hudna). Why are the United States and Israel, as well as scores of other countries affected by the universal nightmare of modern terrorism surprised by new terrorist "surprises"? There are many reasons, including misunderstanding of the manifold specific factors that contribute to terrorism's expansion, such as lack of a universal definition of terrorism, the religionization of politics, double standards of morality, weak punishment of terrorists, and the exploitation of the media by terrorist propaganda and psychological warfare. Unlike their historical counterparts, contemporary terrorists have introduced a new scale of violence in terms of conventional and unconventional threats and impact. The internationalization and brutalization of current and future terrorism make it clear we have entered an Age of Super Terrorism (e.g. biological, chemical, radiological, nuclear and cyber) with its serious implications concerning national, regional and global security concerns.

Nuke War Possible

Maintaining nuclear weapons will eventually lead to a nuclear war even as an accident

Eben **Harrell**, reporter of Times, Feb 20, 200**9**, The Nuclear Risk: How Long Will Our Luck Hold?

This is not a mere logic game. If there is a single "big idea" to have emerged in the first decade of the new millennium — from the September 11 attacks to the financial crash — it is the notion of the "black swan," the danger posed by difficult to predict, high-impact events. The short history of nuclear weapons is already scattered with unplanned and seemingly improbable incidents that suggest we feel more secure than we should. In 1995, a communication failure with the Russian Embassy led the Russian military to believe that a weather rocket launched off the coast of Norway was an incoming submarine-launched ballistic missile. In the 1980s, malfunctioning U.S. missile defense systems relayed information to U.S. officials of a massive incoming first strike — twice. As recently as 2007, a U.S. Air Force plane flew across the American heartland while unknowingly carrying several live warheads on board. At the time, all of these events were described as freak occurrences. The truth is they were freak occurrences. But they happened.(Read the Top 10 underreported stories of 2008.)

A day after the latest nuclear accident became public, an analyst from the Federation of American Scientists, a nonproliferation think tank, released U.S. Naval intelligence documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act that showed that the Russian Navy undertook more underwater ballistic missile submarine patrols in 2008 than it has in a decade. The Russian subs are joined in the word's oceans by nuclear-armed vessels from France, Britain, and China. Under the plains of the American West, and in similar silos in Russia, Air Force missile operators keep constant vigil, launch keys at the ready. Nuclear missiles have no self-destruct button; once launched, they cannot be called back. Twenty years after the end of the cold war, humanity still lives within 30 minutes of its own destruction. The price we pay for maintaining nuclear weapons is the gamble that the highly improbable will not lead to the unthinkable.

Great power wars are not obsolete and are still on the table

Professor John J. **Mearsheimer** (1998-99 Whitney H. Shepardson Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations; R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago) CFR February 25, 19**99** http://www.ciaonet.org/conf/cfr10/index.html

Now I think the central claim that’s on the table is wrong-headed, and let me tell you why. First of all, **there are a number of good reasons why great powers in the system will think seriously about going to war in the future**, and I’ll give you three of them and try and illustrate some cases. First, **states oftentimes compete for economic resources**. Is it hard to imagine a situation where a reconstituted Russia gets into a war with the United States and the Persian Gulf over Gulf oil? I don’t think that’s implausible. Is it hard to imagine Japan and China getting into a war in the South China Sea over economic resources? I don’t find that hard to imagine.

**A second reason that states go to war** which**,** of course, **is** dear to the heart of realists like me,and that’s **to enhance their security**. Take the United States out of Europe, put the Germans on their own; you got the Germans on one side and the Russians on the other, and in between a huge buffer zone called eastern or central Europe. Call it what you want. Is it impossible to imagine the Russians and the Germans getting into a fight over control of that vacuum? Highly likely, no, but feasible, for sure. Is it hard to imagine Japan and China getting into a war over the South China Sea, not for resource reasons but because Japanese sea-lines of communication run through there and a huge Chinese navy may threaten it? I don’t think it’s impossible to imagine that.

**What about nationalism, a third reason**? China, fighting in the United States over Taiwan? You think that’s impossible? I don’t think that’s impossible. **That’s a scenario that makes me very nervous.** I can figure out all sorts of ways, none of which are highly likely, that the Chinese and the Americans end up shooting at each other. It doesn’t necessarily have to be World War III, but it is great-power war. Chinese and Russians fighting each other over Siberia? As many of you know, there are huge numbers of Chinese going into Siberia. You start mixing ethnic populations in most areas of the world outside the United States and it’s usually a prescription for big trouble. Again, not highly likely, but possible. **I could go on and on, positing a lot of scenarios where great powers have good reasons to go to war against other great powers.**

Nuke War Possible

Mandlebaum flows neg – he concedes that great power war is still likely with Russia and China

Michael **Mandelbaum**, American foreign policy professor at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, 19**99** “Is Major War Obsolete?”, http://www.ciaonet.org/conf/cfr10/

Now **having made the case for the obsolescence of modern war, I must note that there are two major question marks hanging over it: Russia and China**. **These are great powers capable of initiating and waging major wars**, and in these two countries, the forces of warlessness that I have identified are far less powerful and pervasive than they are in the industrial West and in Japan. **These are countries, in political terms, in transition, and the political forms and political culture they eventually will have is unclear. Moreover, each harbors within its politics a potential cause of war** that goes with the grain of the post-Cold War period-with it, not against it-**a cause of war that enjoys a certain legitimacy even now;** namely, irredentism.

**War to reclaim lost or stolen territory has not been rendered obsolete in the way that the more traditional causes have**. China believes that Taiwan properly belongs to it. Russia could come to believe this about Ukraine, which means that the Taiwan Strait and the Russian-Ukrainian border are the most dangerous spots on the planet, the places where World War III could begin.

Nuke War Impact Calc

Nuclear war is results in millions of deaths on both side

**Lawrence S.** Wittner, **“Why We Need a World Free of Nuclear Weapons”,** [**Free Thought Manifesto**](http://freethoughtmanifesto.blogspot.com/)**, June 22, 20**09 [Professor of History at the State University of New York/Albany]

**http://freethoughtmanifesto.blogspot.com/2009/07/kicking-nuclear-habbit.html**

The second reason is that nuclear war is suicidal. A nuclear exchange between nations will kill millions of people on both sides of the conflict and leave the survivors living in a nuclear wasteland, in which—as has been suggested—the living might well envy the dead. Even if only one side in a conflict employed nuclear weapons, nuclear fallout would spread around the world, as would a lengthy nuclear winter, which would lower temperatures, destroy agriculture and the food supply, and wreck what little was left of civilization. As numerous observers have remarked, there will be no winners in a nuclear war.

Nuclear war resulting is the worst impact imaginable

**Lawrence S.** Wittner, **“Why We Need a World Free of Nuclear Weapons”,** [**Free Thought Manifesto**](http://freethoughtmanifesto.blogspot.com/)**, June 22, 20**09 [Professor of History at the State University of New York/Albany]

**http://freethoughtmanifesto.blogspot.com/2009/07/kicking-nuclear-habbit.html**

What, then, is holding us back from nuclear abolition? Certainly it is not the public, which poll after poll shows in favor of building a nuclear-free world. Even many government leaders now agree that getting rid of nuclear weapons is desirable. The real obstacle is the long-term habit of drawing upon the most powerful weapons available to resolve conflicts among hostile nations. This habit, though, has proved a deeply counter-productive, irrational one—worse than smoking, worse than drugs, worse than almost anything imaginable, for it places civilization on the brink of destruction. It is time to kick it—and create a nuclear-free world.

Extinction crime against future, duty of present generation to prevent extinction.

Jonathan Schell, policy analyst and proliferation expert, 1982 (The Fate of the Earth) Pg. 168

Yet we must insist, I think, that in fact extinction by nuclear arms would be the more profound oblivion, since then the very possibility of remembrance or renewal – of the existence of a Solzhenitsyn or Rousset to bear witness, or of an Arendt to reflect on their testimony, or of readers to ponder what happened and take it to heart – would be gone. In extinction, and only in extinction, the connections between the victims and the rest of humanity would really be severed forever, and the “masterpiece” of the mass murderers would be perfected, for the night would have “fallen on the future” once and for all. Of all the crimes against the future, extinction is the greatest. It is the murder of the future. And because this murder cancels all those who might recollect it even as it destroys its immediate victims the obligation to “never forget” is displaced back onto us, the living. It is we – the ones who will either commit this crime or prevent it – who must bear witness, must remember, and must arrive at the judgment.

Nuke War Impact Calc

Slight risk of nuclear extinction morally equivalent to certainty – same effect.

Jonathan Schell, policy analyst and proliferation expert, 1982 (The Fate of the Earth) Pg. 94-5

To say that human extinction is a certainty would, of course, be a misrepresentation – just as it would be a misrepresentation to say that extinction can be ruled out. To begin with, we know that a holocaust may not occur at all. If one does occur, the adversaries may not use all their weapons. If they do use all their weapons, the global effects, in the ozone and elsewhere, may be moderate. And if the effects are not moderate but extreme, the ecosphere may prove resilient enough to withstand them without breaking down catastrophically. These are all substantial reasons for supposing that mankind will not be extinguished in a nuclear holocaust, or even that extinction in a holocaust is unlikely, and they tend to calm our fear and to reduce our sense of urgency. Yet at the same time we are compelled to admit that there *may* be a holocaust, that the adversaries *may* use all their weapons, that the global effects, including effects of which we are as yet unaware, *may* be severe, that the ecosphere *may* suffer catastrophic breakdown, and that our species *may* be extinguished. We are left with uncertainty, and are forced to make our decisions in a state of uncertainty. If we wish to act to save our species, we have to muster our resolve in spite of our awareness that the life of the species may not now in fact be jeopardized. On the other hand, if we wish to ignore the peril, we have to admit that we do so in the knowledge that the species may be in danger of imminent self-destruction. When the existence of nuclear weapons was made know, thoughtful people everywhere in the world realized that if the great powers entered into a nuclear-arms race the human species would sooner or later face the possibility of extinction. They also realized that in the absence of international agreements preventing it an arms race would probably occur. They knew that the path of nuclear armament was a dead end for mankind. The discovery of the energy in mass – of “the basic power of the universe” – and of a means by which man could release that energy altered the relationship between man and the source of his life, the earth. In the shadow of this power, the earth became small and the life of the human species doubtful. In that sense, the question of human extinction has been on the political agenda of the world ever since the first nuclear weapon was detonated, and there was no need for the world to build up its present tremendous arsenals before starting to worry about it. At just what point the species crossed, or will have crossed, the boundary between merely having the technical knowledge to destroy itself and actually having the arsenals at hand, ready to be used at any second, is not precisely knowable. But it is clear that at present, with some twenty thousand megatons of nuclear explosive powder in existence, and with more being added every day, we have entered into the zone of uncertainty, which is to say the zone of risk of extinction. But the mere risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than, that of any other risk, and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account. Up to now, every risk has been contained within the frame of life, extinction would shatter that frame. It represents not the defeat of some purpose but an abyss in which all human purposes would be drowned for all time. We have no right to place the possibility of this limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risks that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history. To employ a mathematical analogy, we can say that although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is, humanly speaking, infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity. In other words, once we learn that a holocaust might lead to extinction we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance. Therefore, although, scientifically speaking, there is all the difference in the world between the mere possibility that a holocaust will bring about extinction and the certainty of it, morally they are the same, and we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species. In weighing the fate of the earth and, with it, our own fate, we stand before a mystery, and in tampering with the earth we tamper with a mystery. We are in deep ignorance. Our ignorance should dispose us to wonder, our wonder should make us humble, our humility should lead us to act without delay to withdraw the threat we now pose to the earth and to ourselves.

Nuke War Impact Calc

Human life is greater than anything humans might achieve; present generation responsible for future.

Jonathan Schell, policy analyst and proliferation expert, 1982 (The Fate of the Earth) Pg. 169-70

Because the unborn generations will never experience their cancellation by us, we have to look for the consequences of extinction before it occurs, in our own lives, where it takes the form of a spiritual sickness that corrupts life at the invisible, innermost starting points of our thoughts, moods, and actions. This emphasis on us, however, does not mean that our only reason for restraining ourselves from elimination of the future generations is to preserve them as auxiliaries to *our* needs – as the audience for our works of art, as the outstretched hands to receive our benefactions (and so to bring our otherwise frustrated charitable impulses to fulfillment), as the minds that will provide us with immortality by remembering our words and deeds, and as the successors who will justify us by carrying on with the tasks that we have started or advanced. To adopt such an expedient view of the future generations would be to repeat on a monumental scale the error of the philanthropist who looks on the needy only as a convenient prop with which he can develop and demonstrate his moral superiority, or the more familiar and more dangerous figure of the politician who looks on the public only as a ladder on which he can climb to power. It would also put us in the company of those who, in pursuit, very often, of visionary social goals, make the opposite but closely related error of regarding the *present* generations only as auxiliaries – as the expendable bricks and mortar to be used in the construction of a glorious palace in which the future generations will take up residence. (We have merely to remember how many people have been murdered so that “history” might “go forward” to be reminded how great the costs of this mistake have been.) Whether we were subordinating the living or the unborn generations, this reduction of human being to a supporting role in the completion of cross-generational tasks would suggest that we had come to place a higher value on the achievements of life than we did on life itself, as though we were so dazzled by the house man lives in that we had forgotten who lives there. But no human being, living or unborn, should be regarded as an auxiliary. Although human beings have their obligations to fulfill, they are not to be seen as beasts of burden whose purpose in existing is to carry on with enterprises that are supposedly grander and more splendid than they are. For in the last analysis these enterprises, which together make up the common world, are meant to serve life, not to be served by it. Life does not exist for the sake of the governments, the buildings, the books, and the paintings; all these exist for the sake of life. The works of man are great, but man himself is greater.

**One is morally obligated to divert to utilitarianism if the alternative is extinction.**

**Kateb, prof. of politics at Princeton University, 1992** (George, “The Inner Ocean: Individualism and Democratic Culture”, p. 12)

The main point, however, is that utilitarianism has a necessary pace in any democratic country's normal political deliberations. But its advocates must know its place, which ordinarily is only to help to decide what the theory of rights leaves alone. When may rights be overridden by government? I have two sorts of cases in mind: overriding a particular right of some persons for the sake of preserving the same right of others, and overriding the same right of everyone for the sake of what I will clumsily call "civilization values." An advocate of rights could countenance, perhaps must countenance, the state's overriding of rights for these two reasons. The subject is painful and liable to dispute every step of the way. For the state to override is, sacrifice—a right of some so that others may keep it. the situation must be desperate. I have in mind, say, circumstances in which the choice is between sacrificing a right of some and letting a right of all be lost. The state (or some other agent) may kill some (or allow them to he killed), if the only alternative is letting every-one die. It is the right to life which most prominently figures in thinking about desperate situations. I cannot see any resolution but to heed the precept that "numbers count." Just as one may prefer saving one's own life to saving that of another when both cannot be saved, so a third parry—let us say, the state—can (perhaps must) choose to save the greater number of lives and at the cost of the lesser number, when there is otherwise no hope for either group. That choice does not mean that those to be sacrificed are immoral if they resist being sacrificed. It follows, of course, that if a third party is right to risk or sacrifice the lives of the lesser for the lives of the greater number when the lesser would otherwise live, the lesser are also not wrong if they resist being sacrificed.

Nuke War Impact Calc

**Survival is a prerequisite to ethical considerations.**

**Stensli, commander of the Norwegian Naval Forces, 2003** (Olva, *PACEM*, http://www.pacem.no/2003/1/debatt/stensli/)

Political realism is certainly not incompatible with democracy, toleration, and the defence of human rights. But PR is not a theory about these phenomena as such! Rather, PR is a school of thought overwhelmingly preoccupied by how to protect these values. Morgenthau has never claimed to present a Theory of Ethics, simply because politics always is about the tension between ethics (including “ultimate aims”, in the words of Morgenthau) and feasible actions and outcomes (immediate aims). When political realism was constructed in the Western World in the 20th Century, it was implicitly in defence against appeasement as well as against what Kissinger called revolutionary powers. By revolutionary powers, Kissinger meant the powers that seek destruction of others in order to secure themselves. To avoid the destruction of its own polity clearly must be given priority in times of crises. Furthermore, there has never existed a modern democracy without a functioning state. And in modern history, the rule of law and respect for basic human rights has hardly existed outside of democracies. It is for these reasons political scientists have been so occupied with the study of the relations between states, state institutions and democratisation.

**The very risk of nuclear war outweighs any consideration – universal ethics demand our disad comes first.**

**Seeley, central committee for conscientious objectors, 1986** (Robert, “The Handbook of Non-Violence”, p. 269-70)

In moral reasoning prediction of consequences is nearly always impossible. One balances the risks of an action against its benefits; one also considers what known damage the action would do. Thus a surgeon in deciding whether to perform an operation weighs the known effects (the loss of some nerve function, for example) and risks (death) against the benefits, and weighs also the risks and benefits of not performing surgery. Morally, however, human extinction is unlike any other risk. No conceivable human good could be worth the extinction of the race, for in order to be a human good it must be experienced by human beings. Thus extinction is one result we dare not-may not-risk. Though not conclusively established, the risk of extinction is real enough to make nuclear war utterly impermissible under any sane moral code.

**Extraordinary circumstances demand utilitarianism.**

**Donnelly, prof. at the College of the Holy Cross, 1985** (Jack, “The Concept of Human Rights”, p. 58)

But suppose that the sacrifice of one innocent person would save not ten but a thousand, or a hundred thousand, or a million people. All things considered, trading one innocent life for a million, even if the victim resists most forcefully, would seem to be not merely justifiable but demanded. Exactly how do we balance rights (in the sense of 'having a right'), wrongs (in the sense of 'what is right') and interests? Do the numbers count? If so, why, and in what way? If not, why not? Ultimately the defender of human rights is forced back to human nature, the source of natural or human rights. For a natural rights theorist there are certain attributes, potentialities and holdings that are essential to the maintenance of a life worthy of a human being. These are given the special protection of natural rights; any ‘utility’ that might be served by their infringement or violation would be indefensible, literally inhuman — except in genuinely extraordinary circumstances, the possibility of which cannot be denied, but the probability of which should not be overestimated. Extraordinary circumstances do force us to admit that, at some point, however rare, the force of utilitarian considerations builds up until quality is transformed into quality.

Nuke War Not Likely

Nuclear war won’t escalate; the US could disarm any nuclear opponent before they could retaliate

Liber, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, and Press Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania 2006

(Keir Liber, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, and Press Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2006, International Security, *The End of Mad The Nuclear dimension of US Primacy* http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/isec.2006.30.4.7)

For nearly half a century, the world’s most powerful nuclear-armed countries have been locked in a military stalemate known as mutual assured destruction (MAD). By the early 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union possessed such large, welldispersed nuclear arsenals that neither state could entirely destroy the other’s nuclear forces in a ªrst strike. Whether the scenario was a preemptive strike during a crisis, or a bolt-from-the-blue surprise attack, the victim would always be able to retaliate and destroy the aggressor. Nuclear war was therefore tantamount to mutual suicide. Many scholars believe that the nuclear stalemate helped prevent conºict between the superpowers during the Cold War, and that it remains a powerful force for great power peace today.1 The age of MAD, however, is waning. Today the United States stands on the verge of attaining nuclear primacy vis-à-vis its plausible great power adversaries. For the frst time in decades, it could conceivably disarm the long-range nuclear arsenals of Russia or China with a nuclear first strike. A preemptive strike on an alerted Russian arsenal would still likely fail, but a surprise attack at peacetime alert levels would have a reasonable chance of success. Furthermore, the Chinese nuclear force is so vulnerable that it could be destroyed even if it were alerted during a crisis.

Nuke War Not Likely – US Russia

A US first strike would cripple Russia, retaliation would be impossible

Liber, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, and Press Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania 2006

(Keir Liber, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, and Press Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2006, International Security, *The End of Mad The Nuclear dimension of US Primacy* http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/isec.2006.30.4.7)

A critical issue for the outcome of a U.S. attack is the ability of Russia to launch on warning (i.e., quickly launch a retaliatory strike before its forces are destroyed). It is unlikely that Russia could do this. Russian commanders would need 7–13 minutes to carry out the technical steps involved in identifying a U.S. attack and launching their retaliatory forces. They would have to (1) confirm the sensor indications that an attack was under way; (2) convey the news to political leaders; (3) communicate launch authorization and launch codes to the nuclear forces; (4) execute launch sequences; and (5) allow the missiles to fly a safe distance from the silos.38 This timeline does not include the time required by Russian leaders to absorb the news that a nuclear attack is *The End of MAD? 21* under way and decide to authorize retaliation. Given that both Russian and U.S. early warning systems have had false alarms in the past, even a minimally prudent leader would need to think hard and ask tough questions before authorizing a catastrophic nuclear response.39 Because the technical steps require 7–13 minutes, it is hard to imagine that Russia could detect an attack, decide to retaliate, and launch missiles in less than 10–15 minutes. The Russian early warning system would probably not give Russia’s leaders the time they need to retaliate; in fact it is questionable whether it would give them any warning at all. Stealthy B-2 bombers could likely penetrate Russian air defenses without detection. Furthermore, low-flying B-52 bombers could fire stealthy nuclear-armed cruise missiles from outside Russian airspace; these missiles—small, radar-absorbing, and flying at very low altitude— would likely provide no warning before detonation. Finally, Russia’s vulnerability is compounded by the poor state of its early warning system. Russian satellites cannot reliably detect the launch of SLBMs; Russia relies on groundbased radar to detect those warheads.40 But there is a large east-facing hole in Russia’s radar network; Russian leaders might have no warning of an SLBM attack from the Pacific.41 Even if Russia plugged the east-facing hole in its radar network, its leaders would still have less than 10 minutes’ warning of a U.S. submarine attack from the Atlantic, and perhaps no time if the U.S. attack began with hundreds of stealthy cruise missiles and stealth bombers.

Nuke War Not Likely – Rising Costs

Major war is obsolete – nuclear weapons and rising cost check aggression

Michael **Mandelbaum**, American foreign policy professor at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, 19**99** “Is Major War Obsolete?”, [http://www.ciaonet.org/conf/cfr10/](http://www.ciaonet.org/conf/cfr10/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

My argument says, tacitly, that while this point of view, which was widely believed 100 years ago, was not true then, there are reasons to think that it is true now. What is that argument? It is that **major war is obsolete.** By major war, I mean war waged by the most powerful members of the international system, using all of their resources over a protracted period of time with revolutionary geopolitical consequences. There have been four such wars in the modern period: the wars of the French Revolution, World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. Few though they have been,their consequences have been monumental. They are, by far, the most influential events in modern history. Modern history which can, in fact, be seen as a series of aftershocks to these four earthquakes. So if I am right, then what has been the motor of political history for the last two centuries that has been turned off? This war, I argue, this kind of war, is obsolete; less than impossible, but more than unlikely. What do I mean by obsolete? If I may quote from the article on which this presentation is based, a copy of which you received when coming in, “ Major war is obsolete in a way that styles of dress are obsolete**. It is something that is out of fashion and, while it could be revived, there is no present demand for it.** Major war is obsolete in the way that slavery, dueling, or foot-binding are obsolete. It is a social practice that was once considered normal, useful, even desirable, but that now seems odious. It is obsolete in the way that the central planning of economic activity is obsolete. It is a practice once regarded as a plausible, indeed a superior, way of achieving a socially desirable goal, but that changing conditions have made ineffective at best, counterproductive at worst.” Why is this so? Most simply, **the costs have risen and the benefits of major war have shriveled. The costs of fighting such a war are extremely high because of the advent in the middle of this century of nuclear weapons, but they would have been high even had mankind never split the atom**. As for **the benefits**, these now **seem**, at least from the point of view of the major powers, modest to **non-existent**. The traditional motives for warfare are in retreat, if not extinct. War is no longer regarded by anyone, probably not even Saddam Hussein after his unhappy experience, as a paying proposition. And as for the ideas on behalf of which major wars have been waged in the past, these are in steep decline. Here the collapse of communism was an important milestone, for that ideology was inherently bellicose. This is not to say that the world has reached the end of ideology; quite the contrary. But the ideology that is now in the ascendant, our own, liberalism, tends to be pacific. Moreover, I would argue that **three post-Cold War developments have made major war even less likely**than it was after 1945. One of these is **the rise of democracy, for democracies,**I believe, **tend to be peaceful**. Now carried to its most extreme conclusion, this eventuates in an argument made by some prominent political scientists that democracies never go to war with one another. I wouldn’t go that far. I don’t believe that this is a law of history, like a law of nature, because I believe there are no such laws of history. But I do believe there is something in it. I believe there is a peaceful tendency inherent in democracy. Now it’s true that one important cause of war has not changed with the end of the Cold War. That is the structure of the international system, which is anarchic. And realists, to whom Fareed has referred and of whom John Mearsheimer and our guest Ken Waltz are perhaps the two most leading exponents in this country and the world at the moment, argue that that structure determines international activity, for it leads sovereign states to have to prepare to defend themselves, and those preparations sooner or later issue in war. I argue, however, that a post-Cold War innovation counteracts the effects of anarchy. This is what I have called in my 1996 book, The Dawn of Peace in Europe, common security. By common security I mean **a regime of negotiated arms limits that reduce the insecurity that anarchy inevitably produces by transparency-every state can know what weapons every other state has** and what it is doing with them-and through the principle of defense dominance, the reconfiguration through negotiations of military forces to **make them more suitable for defense and less for attack.** Some caveats are, indeed, in order where common security is concerned. It’s not universal. It exists only in Europe. And there it is certainly not irreversible. And I should add that what I have called common security is not a cause, but a consequence, of the major forces that have made war less likely. **States enter into common security arrangements when they have already, for other reasons, decided that they do not wish to go to war.** Well, the third feature of the post-Cold War international system that seems to me to lend itself to warlessness is the novel distinction between the periphery and the core, between the powerful states and the less powerful ones. This was previously a cause of conflict and now is far less important. To quote from the article again, “ While for much of recorded history local conflicts were absorbed into great-power conflicts, in the wake of the Cold War, with the industrial democracies debellicised and Russia and China preoccupied with internal affairs, there is no great-power conflict into which the many local conflicts that have erupted can be absorbed.

Nuke War Not Likely – Deterrence

Nuclear deterrence prevents great power

G John Ikenberry Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University “The Rise of China and the Future of the West” Foreign Affairs January/February 2008 [http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080101faessay87102/g-john-ikenberry/the-rise-of-china-and-the-future-of-the-west.html](http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080101faessay87102/g-john-ikenberry/the-rise-of-china-and-the-future-of-the-west.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

**The most important benefit of these features today is that they give the Western order a remarkable capacity to accommodate rising powers**. New entrants into the system have ways of gaining status and authority and opportunities to play a role in governing the order. **The fact that the United States, China, and other great powers have nuclear weapons** also **limits the ability of a rising power to overturn the existing order. In the age of nuclear deterrence, great-power war is**, thankfully, **no longer a mechanism of**historical **change. War-driven change has been abolished as a historical process**.

Nuke War Not Likely – International System

The international system prevents war—economic, military, and ideological trends have changed.

Christopher Fettweiss, April prof security studies – naval war college, Comparative Strategy 22.2 April 2003 p 109-129

Mackinder can be forgiven for failing to anticipate the titanic changes in the fundamental nature of the international system much more readily than can his successors. Indeed, Mackinder and his contemporaries a century ago would hardly recognize the rules by which **the world** is run **today**—most significantly, unlike their era, ours **is one in which the danger of major war has been removed**, where World War III is, in Michael Mandelbaum’s words, “somewhere between impossible and unlikely.”25 Geopolitical and geo-strategic analysis has not yet come to terms with what may be the central, most significant trend of international politics: **great power war, major war of the kind that pit the strongest states against each other, is now obsolete**.26 John Mueller has been the most visible, but by no means the only, analyst arguing that the chances of a World War III emerging in the next century are next to nil.27 Mueller and his contemporaries cite three major arguments supporting this revolutionary, and clearly controversial, claim.

First, and most obviously, **modern military technology has made major war too expensive to contemplate**. As John Keegan has argued, it is hard to see how nuclear war could be considered “an extension of politics by other means”—at the very least, nuclear weapons remove the possibility of victory from the calculations of the would-be aggressor.28 Their value as leverage in diplomacy has not been dramatic, at least in the last few decades, because nuclear threats are not credible in the kind of disagreements that arise between modern great powers. **It is unlikely that a game of nuclear “chicken” would lead to the outbreak of a major war.** Others have argued that, while nuclear weapons surely make war an irrational exercise, the destructive power of modern conventional weapons make today’s great powers shy away from direct conflict.29 The world wars dramatically reinforced Angell’s warnings, and today no one is eager to repeat those experiences, especially now that the casualty levels among both soldiers and civilians would be even higher. **Second, the shift from the industrial to the information age that seems to be gradually occurring in many advanced societies has been accompanied by a new definition of power, and a new system of incentives which all but remove the possibility that major war could ever be a cost-efficient exercise**. The rapid economic evolution that is sweeping much of the world, encapsulated in the “globalization” metaphor so fashionable in the media and business communities, has been accompanied by an evolution in the way national wealth is accumulated.30 For millennia, territory was the main object of war because it was directly related to national prestige and power. As early as 1986 Richard Rosecrance recognized that “two worlds of international relations” were emerging, divided over the question of the utility of territorial conquest.31 The intervening years have served only to strengthen the argument that the major industrial powers, quite unlike their less-developed neighbors, seem to have reached the revolutionary conclusion that territory is not directly related to their national wealth and prestige. For these states, wealth and power are more likely to derive from an increase in economic, rather than military, reach. National wealth and prestige, and therefore power, are no longer directly related to territorial control.32 **The economic incentives for war are therefore not as clear as they once may have been.** Increasingly, it seems that the most powerful states pursue prosperity rather than power. In Edward Luttwak’s terminology, geopolitics is slowly being replaced by “geoeconomics,” where “the methods of commerce are displacing military methods—with disposable capital in lieu of firepower, civilian innovation in lieu of military–technical advancement, and market penetration in lieu of garrisons and bases.”33 Just as advances in weaponry have increased the

cost of fighting, a socioeconomic evolution has reduced the rewards that a major war could possibly bring. Angell’s major error was one that has been repeated over and over again in the social sciences ever since—he overestimated the “rationality” of humanity. Angell recognized earlier than most that the industrialization of military technology and economic interdependence assured that the costs of a European war would certainly outweigh any potential benefits, but he was not able to convince his contemporaries who were not ready to give up the institution of war. The idea of war was still appealing—the normativecost/benefit analysis still tilted in the favor of fighting, and that proved to be the more important factor. Today, there is reason to believe that this normative calculation may have changed. After the war, Angell noted that the only things that could have prevented the war were “surrendering of certain dominations, a recasting of patriotic ideals, a revolution of ideas.”34 The third and final argument of Angell’s successors is that today such a revolution of ideas has occurred, that a normative evolution has caused a shift in the rules that govern state interaction. The revolutionary potential of ideas should not be underestimated. Beliefs, ideologies, and ideas are often, as Dahl notes, “a major independent variable,” which we ignore at our peril.35 “Ideas,” added John Mueller, are very often forces themselves, not flotsam on the tide of broader social or economic patterns . . . it does not seem wise in this area to ignore phenomena that cannot be easily measured, treated with crisp precision, or probed with deductive panache.36 The heart of this argument is the “**moral progress**” that **has “brought a change in attitudes about international war” among the great powers of the world**,37 **creating** for the first time, “**an almost universal sense that the deliberate launching of a war can no longer be justified**.”38 At times leaders of the past were compelled by the masses to defend the national honor, but today popular pressures push for peaceful resolutions to disputes between industrialized states. **This normative shift has rendered war between great powers “subrationally unthinkable**,” removed from the set of options for policy makers, just as dueling is no longer a part of the set of options for the same classes for which it was once central to the concept of masculinity and honor. As Mueller explained, Dueling, a form of violence famed and fabled for centuries, is avoided not merely because it has ceased to seem ‘necessary’, but because it has sunk from thought as a viable, conscious possibility. You can’t fight a duel if the idea of doing so never occurs to you or your opponent.39 By extension, states cannot fight wars if doing so does not occur to them or to their opponent. As Angell discovered, the fact that major war was futile was not enough to bring about its end—people had to believe that it was futile. Angell’s successors suggest that such a belief now exists in the industrial (and postindustrial) states of the world, and this “autonomous power of ideas,” to borrow Francis Fukuyama’s term, has brought about the end of major, great power war.40

Nuke War Not Likely – North Korea

North Korea wouldn’t Use a nuclear weapon, to many complications

Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, 2005

(George Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, Spring 2005, Naval War College Review, *If the Nuclear Taboo gets broken,*  https://portal.nwc.navy.mil/press/Naval%20War%20College%20Review/2005/Article%20by%20Quester%20Spring%202005.pdf)

Yet on the more positive note, the history of successful nuclear deterrence suggests that nations have indeed been in awe of nuclear weapons, have been deterred by the prospect of their use, even while they were intent on deterring their adversaries as well. Would the nations that have been so successfully deterred (sinceNagasaki) fromusing nuclear weapons not then be stopped in their tracks once deterrence had failed, once the anticipated horror of the nuclear destruction of even a single city had been realized?2 Another of the more probable scenarios has been a use of such weapons by North Korea, a state perhaps not quite as “undeterrable” as the suicidal pilots of 11 September 2001 but given to rational calculations that are often very difficult to sort out. This use could come in the form of a North Korean nuclear attack against Japan, South Korea, or even the United States.3 The nearest targets for a North Korean nuclearweaponwould be South Korea and Japan, but therewould be many complications should Pyongyang use such weapons against either.

Nuke War Not Likely – Pakistan

Nuclear Power plants have excellent security

CTC Sentinel, The Combating Terrorism Center is an independent educational and research institution based in the Department of Social Sciences at the West Point, 2009

(CTC Sentinel, The Combating Terrorism Center is an independent educational and research institution based in the Department of Social Sciences at the West Point, July 2009 http://www.ctc.usma.edu/sentinel/CTCSentinel-Vol2Iss7.pdf)

Pakistan has established a robust set of measures to assure the security of its nuclear weapons. These have been based on copying U.S. practices, procedures and technologies, and comprise: a) physical security; b) personnel reliability programs; c) technical and procedural safeguards; and d) deception and secrecy. These measures provide the Pakistan Army’s Strategic Plans Division (SPD)—which oversees nuclear weapons operations—a high degree of confidence in the safety and security of the country’s nuclear weapons.2 In terms of physical security, Pakistan operates a layered concept of concentric tiers of armed forces personnel to guard nuclear weapons facilities, the use of physical barriers and intrusion detectors to secure nuclear weapons facilities, the physical separation of warhead cores from their detonation components, and the storage of the components in protected underground sites. With respect to personnel reliability, the Pakistan Army conducts a tight selection process drawing almost exclusively on officers from Punjab Province who are considered to have fewer links with religious extremism or with the Pashtun areas of Pakistan from which groups such as the Pakistani Taliban mainly garner their support. Pakistan operates an analog to the U.S. Personnel Reliability Program (PRP) that screens individuals for Islamist sympathies, personality problems, drug use, inappropriate external affiliations, and sexual deviancy.3 The army uses staff rotation and also operates a “two-person” rule under which no action, decision, or activity involving a nuclear weapon can be undertaken by fewer than two persons.4 The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of collusion with terrorists and to prevent nuclear weapons technology getting transferred to the black market. In total, between 8,000 and 10,000 individuals from the SPD’s security division and from Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), Military Intelligence and Intelligence Bureau agencies are involved in the security clearance and monitoring of those with nuclear weapons duties.5 Despite formal command authority structures that cede a role to Pakistan’s civilian leadership, in practice the Pakistan Army has complete control over the country’s nuclear weapons. It imposes its executive authority over the weapons through the use of an authenticating code system down through the command chains that is intended to ensure that only authorized nuclear weapons activities and operations occur. It operates a tightly controlled identification system to assure the identity of those involved in the nuclear chain of command, and it also uses a rudimentary Permissive Action Link (PAL) type system to electronically lock its nuclear weapons. This system uses technology similar to the banking industry’s “chip and pin” to ensure that even if weapons fall into terrorist hands they cannot be detonated.6 Finally, Pakistan makes extensive use of secrecy and deception. Significant elements of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons infrastructure are kept a closely guarded secret. This includes the precise location of some of the storage facilities for nuclear core and detonation components, the location of preconfigured nuclear weapons crisis deployment sites, aspects of the nuclear command and control arrangements,7 and many aspects of the arrangements for nuclear safety and security (such as the numbers of those removed under personnel reliability programs, the reasons for their removal, and how often authenticating and enabling (PAL-type) codes are changed). In addition, Pakistan uses deception—such as dummy missiles—to complicate the calculus of adversaries and is likely to have extended this practice to its nuclear weapons infrastructure. Taken together, these measures provide confidence that the Pakistan Army can fully protect its nuclear weapons against the internal terrorist threat, against its main adversary India, and against the suggestion that its nuclear weapons could be either spirited out of the country by a third party (posited to be the United States) or destroyed in the event of a deteriorating situation or a state collapse in Pakistan.

No Nuclear Terror

Nuclear Power plants have excellent security

Heaberlin Head of the Nuclear Safety and Technology Applications Product Line at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, managed by Battelle 2004,

(Scott W. HeaberlinHead of the Nuclear Safety and Technology Applications Product Line at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, managed by Battelle, “A Case for Nuclear-Generated Electricity,”, Battelle Press, 2004)

 But, of course, airline crashes are not the only way for a terrorist to attack a nuclear power plant. Truck bombs and armed attacks are certainly something to consider. It turns out that nuclear power plants are one of the few facilities in our national infrastructure that does consider these things. Every U.S. nuclear power plant has a trained armed security force who is authorized to use deadly force to protect the plant. Not wanting to give any terrorists alternative ideas, but if I had a choice of going after a facility either totally unprotected or protected with only a night watchman versus a facility with a team of military capable troopers armed with automatic weapons, it would not be a tough choice. That is not to say these wackos are afraid to die. Clearly, they have demonstrated that they are not. However, one would assume that they do want to have a reasonable chance of successfully completing their vile mission. In that regard, a nuclear power plant would be a tough nut to crack.

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (1/6)

The Nuclear Taboo is to strong to break, the longer we wait for a nuclear war the less likely it becomes

Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, 2005

(George Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, Spring 2005, Naval War College Review, *If the Nuclear Taboo gets broken,*  https://portal.nwc.navy.mil/press/Naval%20War%20College%20Review/2005/Article%20by%20Quester%20Spring%202005.pdf)

One often hears references to a “taboo” on the use of nuclear weapons, but people usually have difficulty putting their finger on exactly what that means. A taboo surely is more than simply something we want to avoid, something we disapprove of, for we do not hear of taboos on bank robberies or on murder. A taboo, then, refers to something that we are not willing even to think about doing, something about which we do not weigh benefits and costs but that we simply reject. The best example in ordinary life is the taboo on incest. If a six-year-old girl asks whether she could marry her brother when they grow up, her parents typically do not reason with her, perhaps suggesting, “Your brother and you are always squabbling about your toys; surely you can find someone else more compatible to marry.”We instead respond simply,“No one marries their brother or sister!” The child quickly enough picks up the signal that this is something that is simply not done. Another such taboo is, of course, cannibalism. Air Force crews are briefed on hundreds of measures they can take to survive after a crash, but one subject never touched upon is that of avoiding starvation by consuming the body of a dead comrade. The entire question is just not thinkable. The taboo on nuclear weapons use that seems to have settled into place over the nearly sixty years sinceNagasaki may indeed have taken this form.We do not hear many discussions of the costs and benefits of a nuclear escalation, but a somewhat unthinking and unchallenged conclusion that such escalation is simply out of the question. Related, though hardly identical, is speculation as to whether a “customary international law” on the use of nuclear weapons may be said to have emerged, by which the battlefield application of such weapons has become illegal without any international treaties being signed or ratified, simply because they have gone so long unused.16 How such a custom or taboo is developed and what happens to it when violated will play an important part in our assessment of what the world would be like after a new nuclear attack. The fact that the nuclear taboo is not violated decade after decade, that nuclear weapons are not used again in anger, arguably strengthens the taboo, but there are also a few ways in which that state of affairs may endanger it. The reinforcement comes simply from the general sense that such an act must be unthinkable because no one has initiated one for so long; it is in this sense that “customary international law”is held to be settling into place by which the abstinence of other states presses our own state to abstain. People did not begin speaking about a “nuclear taboo” for a number of years after Nagasaki. It was only in the late 1950s, after more than a decade had passed without repetition of the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that the feeling arose that a barrier now existed to treating nuclear weapons as “just another weapon.”17 But in time there will be hardly anyone alive who was a victim of the 1945 attacks, hardly anyone who remembers seeing the first photographs of their victims or who recalls the nuclear testing programs of the 1950s and 1960s. Further, an unwelcome result of the bans on nuclear testing, intended to shield the environment and discourage horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation, is that some of the perceived horror of such weapons may be fading, so that ordinary human beings will be a little less primed to reject automatically the idea of such weapons being used again. The only fair test of the long-term viability of the nuclear taboo would, of course, be for the world to manage to keep that taboo observed and intact. The net trend, the net result, of a prolongation of non-use is most probably that such non-use will be strengthened and renewed thereby, just as it seems to have been over the decades of the Cold War and its aftermath. There have been parallel “taboos” in other areas of warfare, taboos that have indeed been violated in the last several decades. The world for many years sensed the development of such a taboo on chemical warfare; the effective prohibition was reinforced by the Geneva Protocol but observed even by states that had not yet ratified the protocol (the best example being the United States at its entry intoWorld War II). A similar taboolike aversion was thought to apply to biological warfare.18 The long period since naval forces have confronted each other on the high seas (broken only by the Argentine-British war over the Falklands) may have had some similar characteristics. The longer one goes without engaging in some form of warfare, the stranger and less manageable that kind of conflict will seem, and the more the public and others will regard it as simply not to be contemplated.

**[Continues on next page: No text omitted]**

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (2/6)

**[Continues from previous page: No text omitted]**

Similarly, the world’s resistance to the proliferation of nuclear weapons has at times seemed to be mobilizing a widespread popular feeling that a taboo or “customary international law”was developing on proliferation as well. Ordinary people and even military professionals in many countries were coming to assume that nuclear weapons were so horrible, and so different, that it simply made no sense to think of even acquiring them..

If a nuclear weapon was use countries would rally against the nation preventing retaliation

Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, 2005

(George Quester, Professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, Spring 2005, Naval War College Review, *If the Nuclear Taboo gets broken,*  https://portal.nwc.navy.mil/press/Naval%20War%20College%20Review/2005/Article%20by%20Quester%20Spring%202005.pdf)

This entire question might seem the more interesting at first to those who are pessimistic about future risks and who might thus regard speculation about an end to the nuclear taboo as overdue. Yet, to repeat, pessimism may not be necessary, since analysis of the likely consequences of nuclear escalation might stimulate governments and publics to head it off. The chances are as good as three out of five that no nuclear event will occur in the period up to the year 2045—that there is a better than even chance that the world will be commemorating a full century, since Nagasaki, of the non-use of such weapons. But analysts and ordinary citizens around the world to whom the author has put these odds typically dismiss themas too optimistic. Indeed, the response has often been a bit bizarre, essentially that “we have not been thinking at all about the next use of nuclear weapons, but we think that you are too optimistic about such use being avoided.” Such responses in Israel, Sweden, Japan, or the United States might support the worry that people around the world have simply been repressing an unpleasant reality, refusing to think about a very real danger. Yet the possibility remains that the relative inattention is not simply a repression of reality but rather a manifestation of the unthinkableness of nuclear weapons use One could also introduce another wedge of hope, that any such use of nuclear weapons between now and 2045 would be followed by reactions and consequences that reinforced rather than eroded the taboo. That would be the case if the world did not retreat in the face of such use but rallied to punish it, and as a result the perpetrator did not advance its interests by such an escalation but actually lost the battles and territories that were at issue.

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (3/6)

Tannenwald, Director of the International Relations Programs at Brown Unviersity, 2005

(Nina Tannenwald, Director of the International Relations Programs at Brown Unviersity, 2005, *Stigmatizing the Bomb*, International Security 29.4 (2005) 5-49, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international\_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html#authbio)

The nuclear taboo, however, also has an intersubjective or a phenomenological aspect: it is a taboo because people believe it to be. Political and military leaders themselves began using the term to refer to this normative perception starting in the early 1950s, even when, objectively, a tradition of nonuse hardly existed. If actors see the use of nuclear weapons as if it were a taboo, as their rhetoric suggests, then this could affect their choices and behavior. In the words of sociologists William and Dorothy Thomas, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."[18](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22FOOT18) This subjective (and intersubjective) sense of "taboo-ness" is one of the factors that makes the tradition of nuclear nonuse a taboo rather than simply a norm. Although one might be skeptical that this is just empty rhetoric, this belief is not entirely detached from reality. Evidence for the taboo lies in discourse, institutions, and behavior. The most obvious evidence lies in discourse—the way people talk and think about nuclear weapons—and how this has changed since 1945. This includes public opinion, the diplomatic statements of governments and leaders, the resolutions of international organizations, and the private moral concerns of individual decisionmakers. The discourse evidence is supplemented both by international law and agreements that restrict freedomof action with respect to nuclear weapons, and by the changing policies of states that downgrade the role of nuclear weapons (e.g., shifts in NATO policy, he denuclearization of the army and marines, and the buildup of conventional alternatives). As the inhibition on use has developed over time, it has taken on more taboo-like qualities—unthinkingness and taken-for-grantedness. As a systemic phenomenon, the taboo exists at the collective level of the international community (represented especially by the United Nations), but this need not mean that all countries have internalized it to the same degree. As noted earlier, the taboo is a de facto, not a legal, norm. There is no explicit international legal prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons such as exists for, say, chemical weapons. Although resolutions passed in the UN General Assembly and other international forums have repeatedly proclaimed the use of nuclear weapons as illegal, the United States and other nuclear powers have consistently voted against these. U.S. legal analyses have repeatedly defended the legality of use of nuclear weapons as long as it was for defensive and not aggressive purposes, as required by the UN charter.[19](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22FOOT19) As the 1996 World Court advisory opinion on the issue confirmed, although increasing agreement exists that many, if not most, uses of nuclear weapons are illegal under the traditional laws of armed conflict, there is by no means agreement that all uses of nuclear weapons are illegal.[20](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22FOOT20) Nevertheless, legal use has been gradually chipped away through incremental restrictions—an array of treaties and regimes that together circumscribe the realm of legitimate nuclear use and restrict freedom of action with respect to nuclear weapons. These agreements include nuclear weapons-free zones, bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements, and negative security assurances (i.e., political declarations by the nuclear powers that they will not use nuclear weapons against nonnuclear states that are members of the NPT). Together, these agreements enhance the normative presumption against nuclear use. By multiplying the number of forums where a decision to use nuclear weapons would have to be defended, they substantially increase the burden of proof for any such decision.[21](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22FOOT21) Many of these legal constraints have been incorporated into U.S. domestic practice, where they are reflected in constraints on deployments and targeting, proliferation, arms control, and use.[22](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/international_security/v029/29.4tannenwald.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22FOOT22) Thus, while the legality of nuclear weapons remains in dispute, the trend line of decreasing legitimacy and circumscribed legality is clear.

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (4/6)

Nuclear weapons won’t be used *even if* it’s in their best interest

Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, 1995

(T.V. Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, December 1995, *Nuclear Taboo and War Initiation in Regional* Conflicts, JOURNAL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, Vol. 39 No. 4)

These stringent definitions of social taboos may not be fully applicable in the nuclear context. However, the tradition of nonuse has been characterized by many scholars as equivalent to a taboo (e.g., Hoffmann 1966,99; Schelling 1980, 260). In this context, the term taboo is used in its figurative and loose sense-as an unwritten and uncodified prohibitionary norm against nuclear use. It is also used to the extent that both social and nuclear taboos are based on the fear of consequences of a given course of action. The latter arose as a response to a realization of the danger or the unforeseeable consequences involved in nuclear war. The analysis in this article elaborates on the moral, normative, legal, and rational constraints involved in the use of nuclear weapons and their possible role in the formation and evolution of the taboo U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles initially used the term taboo to describe the prohibition against the use of nuclear weapons. On October 7, 1953, he was reported to have said: "Somehow or other we must manage to remove the taboo from the use of these weapons" (quoted in Bundy 1988, 249). Dulles was in favor of developing usable nuclear weapons to obtain the battlefield military objectives of the United States. Schelling popularized the concept of a tradition of nonuse in his writings in the 1960s. In his words, what makes atomic weapons different is a powerful tradition for their nonuse, "a jointly recognized expectation that they may not be used in spite of declarations of readiness to use them, even in spite of tactical advantages in their use" (Schelling 1980, 260). A tradition in this respect is based on a habit or disposition that prevents the use of nuclear weapons as a serious option for consideration by decision makers.3 As Schelling (1994, 110) argued, the main reason for the uniqueness of nuclear weapons is the perception that they are unique and that once introduced into combat, they could not be "contained, restrained, confined, or limited." Although prolonged conventional war can also cause somewhat similar levels of destruction, the difference is in the perception of the impact. The swiftness with which destruction can take place is the distinguishing point in this respect.4 Clearly, the nuclear taboo has developed largely as a function of the awesome destructive power of atomic weapons. The potential for total destruction gives nuclear weapons an all-or-nothing characteristic unlike any other weapon invented so far, which, in turn, makes it imperative that the possessor will not use them against another state except as a last-resort weapon. This means a nuclear state may not use its ultimate capability unless a threshold is crossed (e.g., unless the survival of the state itself is threatened). Decision makers and the public at large in most nuclear-weapon states believe that great danger is involved in the use of nuclear weapons with respect to casualties and aftereffects, in both psychological and physical terms. Breaking the taboo could bring the revulsion of generations to come unless it were for an issue of extremely vital importance-a situation that thus far has failed to materialize. Not surprisingly, nuclear states, even when they could have received major tactical and strategic gains by using nuclear weapons, have desisted from their use.

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (5/6)

Super Powers recognize the importance of not breaking the nuclear taboo, even the cold war wasn’t enough to prompt their use

Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, 1995

(T.V. Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, December 1995, *Nuclear Taboo and War Initiation in Regional* Conflicts, JOURNAL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, Vol. 39 No. 4)

The taboo has been observed by all nuclear and opaque-nuclear states thus far. Nations with different ideological and political systems and military traditions-the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, and Israel-have found no occasion to use them, pointing toward the emergence of a global "recognition that nuclear weapons are unusable across much of the range of traditional military and political interests" (Russett 1989, 185). The American unwillingness to use them in Korea and Vietnam to obtain military victory and the Soviet refrain from using them to avert defeat in Afghanistan suggest the entrenchment of the taboo among the superpowers even during the peak of the cold war period.5 The Chinese aversion to using them against the Vietnamese to obtain victory in the 1979 war also point out that other nuclear powers have observed the taboo. In the United States, the taboo or the tradition of nonuse became well entrenched despite many urgings by military and political leaders to break it during times of intense crises. It was observed in the 1950s and 1960s when the United States could have gained major tactical and strategic objectives against its adversaries. Possibly, it began with the revulsion and the fear that the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks engendered in the consciousness of the public and political leadership. Although the fear of nuclear weapons had been somewhat removed by the end of the 1940s, with the Soviet attainment of nuclear and missile capability in the early 1960s, a sense of renewed vulnerability began to creep into the American public perception (Malcolm- son 1990, 8, 35; Weart 1988). This sense of vulnerability, arising from the awareness that effective defenses against a nuclear attack do not exist, may have contributed to the development of the nuclear taboo. The Vietnam War saw the entrenchment of the tradition of nonuse of nuclear weapons. In 1969, President Nixon "could not make the nuclear threat in Vietnam that he believed he had seen Eisenhower use successfully in Korea" (Bundy 1988, 587-8). Since then, each passing decade saw the strengthening of this tradition, and the experience of over four decades "has more firmly established a de facto norm of non-use" (Russett 1989, 185). The Cuban missile crisis further showed the perils of a crisis spilling over to a possible nuclear war. The crisis underlined the dangers of atomic posturing to the point of perma- nently discrediting this kind of atomic diplomacy (Bundy 1984, 50).6

No Escalation - Nuclear Taboo Won’t Be Broken (6/6)

A nuclear victory would have to many consequences for their use

Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, 1995

(T.V. Paul, Professor of international relations at McGill University and Director of University of Montreal-McGill Research Group in International Security, December 1995, *Nuclear Taboo and War Initiation in Regional* Conflicts, JOURNAL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, Vol. 39 No. 4)

The taboo was also likely to have been strengthened by a rational calculation that military victory following a nuclear attack may not be materially, politically, or psychologically worth obtaining if it involves the destruction of all or a sizable segment of an enemy's population and results in the contamination of a large portion of the territory with radio-active debris. Thus the tradition must have emerged largely from the realization by nuclear states that there are severe limits to what a state can accomplish by actually using a nuclear weapon (Gaddis 1992, 21). It also implies that after a certain point, the capacity to destroy may not be useful, as the relation between the power to harm and the power to modify the behavior of others is not linear (Jervis 1984, 23). Additionally, the effects of nuclear attack may be beyond the local area of attack but could have wider effects, spatially and temporally (Lee 1993, 18). There exists no guarantee that aftereffects such as the spread of radioactive debris could be confined to the target state's territory. Neighboring states that may be neutral or aligned with the nuclear state could be the victims of a nuclear attack as well. The fear that, once unleashed, nuclear terror could escape meaningful political and military control and physical limitation may have influenced decision makers' choices in this regard.

AT: Schell

Schell’s views on policy are flawed and impossible to achieve

Review: Freeze: The Literature of the Nuclear Weapons Debate

Author(s): Peter deLeon he Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Mar., 1983), pp. 181-189

http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/173847.pdf

Lastly, one turns to Jonathan Schell's The Fate of the Earth, probably the most pretentious (witness its title) and flawed of these books. But it is also the most important, for in many ways, it has served as the catalyst of the antinuclear movement. His examples of a thermonuclear holocaust are no more graphic- although better written-than are those of other authors, nor is his litany of secondary effects (e.g., the effects on the food chain and the possible depletion of the earth's ozone layer) any more convincing. But these are just preliminary groundwork to Schell's main thesis-that mankind's major obligation is to its future and the "fact" that nuclear war literally destroys whatever future may exist. No cause, he argues, can relieve us of that burden. Some (e.g., Kinsley, 1982) have claimed that Schell has no right to impose his set of values on the body politic. Perhaps, but few should contest Schell's sincerity in explicitly raising the profoundly moral issues that have too long been neglected in the ethically sterile discussions that have characterized mainstream nuclear doctrine. Whether Schell is right or wrong in assuming his high moral ground is the normative prerogative and judgment of the individual reader; at the very worst, however, Schell forces the reader to confront these issues directly. And this,

in spite of his grandiose style of writing, is why this book warrants careful attention. Schell probably does not expect to have his thesis accepted uncritically; he admits his data are open to wide variation and interpretation. But, given his "evidence" and logic, Schell has the courage of his conviction to realize where his positions will take him. He admits that the nuclear weapons demon cannot be put back in the bottle, that even with a nuclear disarmament treaty, the extant scientific knowledge would always allow a nation to reconstruct this ultimate weapon. Similarly, to rely on conventional weapons to preserve national sovereignty is to invite a nation to cheat, to build clandestine nuclear weapons and thus begin the nuclear arms race towards extinction once again. The fundamental culprit to Schell's way of thinking is not Zuckerman's dedicated nuclear engineer nor Ivan the Targeteer, but the nation-state itself. He openly acknowledges that "the task we face is to find a means of political action that will permit human beings to pursue any end for the rest of time. We are asked to replace the mechanism by which the political decisions, whatever they may be, are reached. In sum, the task is nothing less than to reinvent politics" (p. 226). Schell's proposal, past an immediate nuclear freeze, is some form of functioning world government, that is, the abandonment of national sovereignty and perhaps individual liberties as a means of retreating from the nuclear precipice, for any life, he avers, is better than no life. Schell does not actually say "better red than dead," but he surely could not disavow such a position.

AT: Schell

Schell’s rationality argument contradicts with human nature

Nevin, University of New Hampshire, 82

JOURNAL OF THE EXPERIMENTAL ANALYSIS OF BEHAVIOR ON RESISTING EXTINCTION: A REVIEW OF

JONATHAN SCHELL'S THE FATE OF THE EARTH' JOHN A. NEVIN

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE1982, 38, 349-353 NUMBER 3 (NOVEMBER)

Schell relies primarily on rational argument. A rational calculus suggests that although the probability of nuclear extinction may be small, its value-the termination of life -is minus infinity, and the product of any non- zero probability and minus infinity is minus infinity. In terms of relative expected utility, then, the choice is clear (Schell, p. 95). The choice correctly posed and evaluated by Schell is structurally identical to Pascal's wager on the existence of God, which has an expected utility of plus infinity despite the possibly infinitesimal probability that belief in God is necessary and sufficient for eternal life. But Pascal's rational argument never made converts-faith appears to derive from certain immediate experiences, even in his own case. Likewise, I fear that Schell's calculus will not make converts to disarmament-choice behavior depends not on rational calculation but on experienced events.One significant event that can be experienced by any reader is exposure to Schell's book itself. As a warning of imminent disaster and a motivator of action, it is supremely effective in arousing concern and activating behavior. The problem now is to identify events and contingencies that will foster sustained commitment, by the species, to the second alternative-survival. Laboratory work on commitment and self-control suggests that humans and animals will usually choose the smaller but more immediate of two rewards, or the larger but more delayed of two punishers, to their own long-term detriment. Our current choice, as a species, of the first alternative-continuation of the arms race-is therefore entirely consistent with laboratory data. Can knowledge from the laboratory help us switch over to the second alternative? One way in which animals can be trained to choose the larger, more delayed reward (or the lesser but more immediate punisher) is to adjust the delay values gradually, while giving repeated exposure to both outcomes; but of course this method is ruled out by the nature of the nuclear dilemma. Another method is to train the subjects to make an early "commitment" response that precludes access to one of the choices later. However, as Schell points out, we can never really preclude access to nuclear weapons, because the methods for making them are well known and cannot be unlearned; the commitment response must be continuous.

Perhaps the problem is best approached by invoking more immediate, smaller-scale, molecular events. For example, we can try to get a large audience for Schell's book, which (as noted above) is a strikingly potent stimulus.

We can also expose all people, everywhere, to stimuli correlated with nuclear warfare such as pictures of the burned and dying and dead at Hiroshima, and films showing the awesome power of nuclear test explosions, which bring at least some of the future aspects of the first alternative into the present. But this is not sufficient, because it might merely serve to generate numb passivity or avoidance of the entire issue. We need, in addition, to instigate and maintain behavior that is compatible with the second alternative, including open discussion, nonviolent protest, and political action that opposes the momentum of the arms race and leads to disarmament. Clearly, we have witnessed some of the requisite behavior during this year, as hundreds of thousands of people in many countries have rallied to demonstrate their opposition to the threat of nuclear war. Political support for disarmament is on the rise. However, such behavior must be rein- forced if it is to be maintained through the protracted negotiations and rearrangements of international politics that will be required; and it cannot be reinforced by the nonoccurrence of a nuclear holocaust, because that nonevent will always be equally well correlated

with pursuit of the arms race until the holocaust occurs. Much more immediate and local reinforcers such as societal approval, access to political office, and economic well-being will be necessary. of humankind is thereby placed in doubt. The entire system of sovereign nation-states is therefore a dangerous relic of pre-nuclear times and must be abandoned.

AT: Schell

Society won’t react to warning about nuclear war, disproving Schell’s argument

Nevin 82

JOURNAL OF THE EXPERIMENTAL ANALYSIS OF BEHAVIOR ON RESISTING EXTINCTION: A REVIEW OF

JONATHAN SCHELL'S THE FATE OF THE EARTH' JOHN A. NEVIN UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE1982, 38, 349-353 NUMBER 3 (NOVEMBER)

It is impossible not to acknowledge the power of Schell's presentation, but its very power may lead to two further problems. First, his account of Armageddon generates strong aversive emotional reactions, and we know from the study of negative reinforcement that such stimuli strengthen behavior that removes them. The orienting-response literature also suggests that organisms will orient away from cues that signal aversive events. We are, therefore, likely to turn away from warnings of nuclear warfare and engage in other activities. Second, the ultimate horror that Schell portrays is widely regarded as inevitable. The arms race is often said to possess a sort of impersonal momentum, like a massive object that rolls on inexorably, regardless of our actions; and certainly the recent history of negotiations to control the arms race, conducted by people who are well aware of its potential ultimate outcome, does nothing to reassure us. In the laboratory, uncontrollable aversive events have been shown to produce a state of inactivity termed helplessness. Taken together, the history of uncontrollability of the arms race, the aversiveness of our reactions to warnings of nuclear warfare, and the lack of correlation of such warnings with experienced events would seem to explain the absence of effective privateaction (thinking) to analyze the problem or overt behavior to effect disarmament. This combination of factors may be responsible for what Robert Jay Lifton has termed "psychic numbing," a refusal to confront the threat of universal death that hangs over our heads like an executioner's sword.

How can we approach the absence of relevant action-the refusal to look up at the sword and do something to blunt it or prevent it from falling-from a behavioral perspective? Consider an analogy. If we saw a person afflicted with a potentially fatal disease, taking daily doses of an addictive drug that gave temporary relief from distress but in addition exacerbated the disease, we would diagnose the behavior as maladaptive. Appealing to this person to exercise "self-control" would not be likely to have much effect. If this person became our client, we would immediately regulate access to the drug and take steps to eliminate its use, while at the same time arranging a program of behavioral therapy to maintain abstinence when treatment ended. Schell suggests that human society, living as it does under the constant threat of self-imposed termination while using its economic resources to build more instruments of universal death in the name of security, is like this client-"insane," in Schell's words. Immediate therapy is essential. However, our society is both client and therapist. Consequently, we are enmeshed in a problem, at the level of society and species, that parallels the problem of "self-control" at the level of the individual. Schell poses the choice facing humanity in terms very close to the laboratory study of self-

control:

Extinction Impossible

A nuclear war would only kill hundreds of thousands of people. It is defiantly survivable and the impact is not huge.

Brian Martin Formal training in physics, with a PhD from Sydney University, 2002

(“Activism after nuclear war,” <http://www.transnational.org/SAJT/forum/meet/2002/Martin_ActivismNuclearWar.html>)

In the event of nuclear war, as well as death and destruction there will be serious political consequences. Social activists should be prepared. The confrontation between Indian and Pakistani governments earlier this year showed that military use of nuclear weapons is quite possible. There are other plausible scenarios. A US military attack against Iraq could lead Saddam Hussein to release chemical or biological weapons, providing a trigger for a US nuclear strike. Israeli nuclear weapons might also be unleashed. Another possibility is accidental nuclear war. Paul Rogers in his book Losing Control says that the risk of nuclear war has increased due to proliferation, increased emphasis on nuclear war-fighting, reduced commitment to arms control (especially by the US government) and Russian reliance on nuclear arms as its conventional forces disintegrate. A major nuclear war could kill hundreds of millions of people. But less catastrophic outcomes are possible. A limited exchange might kill "only" tens or hundreds of thousands of people. Use of nuclear "bunker-busters" might lead to an immediate death toll in the thousands or less.

Humanity is resilient: extinction is highly unlikely.

Bruce **Tonn**, Futures Studies Department, Corvinus University of Budapest, 20**05**, “Human Extinction Scenarios,” [www.budapestfutures.org/](http://www.budapestfutures.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) downloads/abstracts/Bruce% 20Tonn%20-%20Abstract.pdf)

The **human species faces numerous threats** to its existence. **These include global climate change, collisions with near-earth objects, nuclear war, and pandemics**. While these threats are indeed serious, taken separately **they fail to describe exactly how humans could become extinct**. For example, **nuclear war by itself would most likely fail to kill everyone on the planet**, as strikes would probably be concentrated in the northern hemisphere and the Middle East, leaving populations in South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand some hope of survival. **It is highly unlikely that any uncontrollable nanotechnology could ever be produced** but even it if were, it is likely that **humans could develop** effective, if costly, **countermeasures**, such as producing the technologies in space or destroying sites of runaway nanotechnologies with nuclear weapons. **Viruses could indeed kill many people but effective quarantine of a healthy people could be accomplished** to save large numbers of people. **Humans appear to be resilient to extinction** with respect to single events.

Impacts Exaggerated (1/2)

The threat of huge impacts is often exaggerated

Rescher, Prof. of Philosophy, 83

Nicholas Rescher, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Philosophy, “Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the Theory of Risk Evaluation and Management” 1983

But while there is room for (perfectly legitimate) differences from person to person, **it is clear** **that** when these go too far **there** also **arises a significant prospect of impropriety and exaggeration.** **People** frequently tend to **inflate “extreme” outcomes -- exaggerating the badness of the bad** and the goodness of the good. **The tendency to overestimate the dramatic comes into play with outcome-evaluation. Our psychological capacity for imagination may run riot.** **We** tend to **overrate the** positivity of imagination-projected boons and **negativity of imagination-projected hazards**: anticipated tragedies often do not prove to be all that awful. **And such psychological tendencies** as are involved with familiarity, understanding, dread, etc. **can all foster unrealism in appraising negativities.**

 The *perceived*value of an outcome may prove to be widely off the mark of any realistic estimate of its *actual*value. **Our perception of the magnitude of risks tends to be distorted by the structure of our anxieties.** **Hazards involving threats that are particularly striking or dramatic** **--**leading to death, say, rather than mere debility, or likely to take more rather then fewer lives **-- tend to be overestimated, while risks of a commonplace, undramatic nature whose eventuations are no less serious tend to be underestimated**. ~

Impacts Exaggerated (2/2)

Low probability scenarios are often exaggerated as important high probability scenarios are forgotten

Rescher, Prof. of Philosophy, 83

Nicholas Rescher, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Philosophy, “Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the Theory of Risk Evaluation and Management” 1983

In risk assessment one is often inclined **--**or even constrained to resort to subjective probabilities. These can sometimes be checked against the objectively measurable facts, and when this is done, **certain common fallacies come to light.** ***38***In particular, **people** tend *to* ***overestimate*systematically the relative probability of certain sorts of eventuations** -- as for example:

-- **striking or dramatic** or particularly dreaded outcomes (large gains or losses)

-- **relatively rare** events -- **particularly those that have actually occurred in past experience in some memorable way** (the “once bitten, twice shy syndrome'').39

-- probabilistically multiplicative events (i.e., **those whose eventuation involves the complex concatenation of many circumstances**)

-- chance events **that have failed to occur for a long time** (the MQnte Carlo Fallacy)

The first of these phenomena is particularly significant. **Even in the best of circumstances, it is difficult to convince oneself that a particularly feared disaster may be extremely unlikely**. Then too there is the tendency to exaggerate the likelihood of wished-for consummations, mocked by Adam Smith when he spoke of “that majority activated by the absurd presumption in their own good fortunes.''4°

  The other side of the coin is that people **tend to *underestimate*systematically the relative probability of**

-- **humdrum, undramatic (though** often inherently **important events**)

-- **relatively frequent or familiar events**

-**probabilistically additive events** (i.e., those whose eventuation can be realized along various different routes)

**The operation of such principles mea**ns, among other things, **that people** incline to underestimate the eventuation of high-probability events, and to **overestimate the eventuation of low-probability events**.4'

Interesting misjudgments come to light through these data. For example, accidents were judged to cause as many deaths as diseases, whereas diseases actually take about fifteen times as many lives. Homicides were incorrectly thought to be more frequent than diabetes and stomach cancer. Homicides were also judged to be about as frequent as stroke, although the latter actually claims about 11 times as many lives. The incidence of death from botulism, tornadoes, and pregnancy (including childbirth and abortion) was also greatly over-estimated. Indeed a systematic bias emerges -- *to*overestimate the more unusual and dramatic low-frequency causes of death and to underestimate *the*more commonplace. **Any discussion or consideration of possible disasters** -- **even** reassuring **statements** by technical experts **designed to establish their improbability** -- **appears to** have the effect of **increasing their preceived likelihood** by enchancing the apprehension of their reality. This unrealism greatly hampers profitable discussion of low-probability hazards.

# Prob. Evaluated First (1/2)

Probability should be evaluated before magnitude

**Rescher**, Prof. of Philosophy, **83**

Nicholas Rescher, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Philosophy, “Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the Theory of Risk Evaluation and Management” 1983

A probability is a number between zero and one. Now numbers between zero and one can get to be very small indeed: As N gets bigger, 1/N will grow very, very small. What, then, is one to do about extremely small probabilities **in the rational management of risks**? On this issue there is a systemic disagreement between probabilists working in mathematics or natural science and decision theorists who work on issues relating to human affairs. The former take the line that small numbers are small numbers and must be taken into account as such. The latter tend to take the view that **small probabilities represent extremely remote prospects and can be written off**. (De minimis non curat lex, as the old precept has it: **there is no need to bother with trifles**.) When something is about as probable as it is that a thousand fair dice when tossed a thousand times will all come up sixes, then, so it is held, we can pretty well forget about it as worthy of concern.

**The "worst possible case fixation" is one of the most damaging modes of unrealism**in deliberations about risk in real-life situations. Preoccupation about what might happen "if worst comes to worst" is counterproductive whenever we proceed without recognizing that, often as not, **these worst possible outcomes are wildly improbable (and** sometimes **do not deserve to be viewed as real possibilities at all**). The crux in risk deliberations is not the issue of loss "if worst comes to worst" but the potential acceptability of this prospect within the wider framework of the risk situation, where we may well be prepared "to take our chances," considering the possible advantages that beckon along this route. The worst threat is certainly something to be borne in mind and taken into account, but it is emphatically not a satisfactory index of the overall seriousness or gravity of a situation of hazard.

Any action could potentially have devastating impacts, but we don’t evaluate them because of the low probability

**Stern**, Fellow at CFR, **99**

Jessica Stern, Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and former National Security Council Member “The Ultimate Terrorists” 1999 http://www.hup.harvard.edu/features/steult/excerpt.html

Poisons have always been seen as unacceptably cruel. Livy called poisonings of enemies "secret crimes." Cicero referred to poisoning as "an atrocity." But why do poisons evoke such dread? This question has long puzzled political scientists and historians. One answer is that people's perceptions of risk often do not match reality: that what we dread most is often not what actually threatens us most. When you got up this morning, you were exposed to serious risks at nearly every stage of your progression from bed to the office. Even lying in bed exposed you to serious hazards: 1 in 400 Americans is injured each year while doing nothing but lying in bed or sitting in a chair--because the headboard collapses, the frame gives way, or another such failure occurs. Your risk of suffering a lethal accident in your bathtub or shower was one in a million. Your breakfast increased your risk of cancer, heart attack, obesity, or malnutrition, depending on what you ate. Although both margarine and butter appear to contribute to heart disease, a new theory suggests that low-fat diets make you fat. If you breakfasted on grains (even organic ones), you exposed yourself to dangerous toxins: plants produce their own natural pesticides to fight off fungi and herbivores, and many of these are more harmful than synthetic pesticide residues. Your cereal with milk may have been contaminated by mold toxins, including the deadly aflatoxin found in peanuts, corn, and milk. And your eggs may have contained benzene, another known carcinogen. Your cup of coffee included twenty-six compounds known to be mutagenic: if coffee were synthesized in the laboratory, the FDA would probably ban it as a cancer-causing substance. Most people are more worried about the risks of nuclear power plants than the risks of driving to work, and more alarmed by the prospect of terrorists with chemical weapons than by swimming in a pool. Experts tend to focus on probabilities and outcomes, but public perception of risk seems to depend on other variables: there is little correlation between objective risk and public dread. Examining possible reasons for this discrepancy will help us understand why the thought of terrorists with access to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons fills us with dread. People tend to exaggerate the likelihood of events that are easy to imagine or recall. Disasters and catastrophes stay disproportionately rooted in the public consciousness, and evoke disproportionate fear. A picture of a mushroom cloud probably stays long in viewers' consciousness as an image of fear.

Prob. Evaluated First (2/2)

Catering to minute risks based on higher magnitude creates policy paralysis, making their impacts inevitable

**Rescher**, Prof. of Philosophy, **83**

Nicholas Rescher, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Philosophy, “Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the Theory of Risk Evaluation and Management” 1983

The stakes are high, the potential benefits enormous. (And so are the costs - for instance cancer research and, in particular, the multi-million dollar gamble on interferon.) But there is no turning back the clock. The processes at issue are irreversible. Only through the shrewd deployment of science and technology can we resolve the problems that science and technology themselves have brought upon us. America seems to have backed off from its traditional entrepreneurial spirit and become a risk-aversive, slow investing economy whose (real-resource) support for technological and scientific innovation has been declining for some time. **In** our **yearning for the risk-free society we may** well **create a social system that makes risk-taking** innovation next to **impossible**. The critical thing is to have a policy that strikes a proper balance between malfunctions and missed opportunities - a balance whose "propriety" must be geared to a realistic appraisal of the hazards and opportunities at issue. Man is a creature condemned to live in a twilight zone of risk and opportunity. And so we are led back to Aaron Wildavski's thesis that **flight from risk is the greatest risk of all**, **"because a total avoidance of risks means that society will become paralyzed, depleting its resources** in preventive action, and denying future generations opportunities and technologies needed for improving the quality of life. By all means let us calculate our risks with painstaking care, and by all means let us manage them with prudent conservatism. But in life as in warfare there is truth in H. H. Frost's maxim that "every mistake in war is excusable except inactivity and refusal to take risks" (though, obviously, it is needful to discriminate between a good risk and a bad one). **The price of absolute security is absolute stultification.**

Prob Before Mag Ext

Probability of a scenario is evaluated before all else, regardless of the impact

Rescher, Prof. of Philosophy, 83

Nicholas Rescher, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Philosophy, “Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the Theory of Risk Evaluation and Management” 1983

T**he rational management of risk calls for adherence to** three**cardinal rules**:  (I) Maximize Expected Values! (II) **Avoid Catastrophes!** (III) **Dismiss** *Extremely*Remote (''**Unrealistic**'') **Possibilities**!   The first of these is a matter of using the expected-value of the various alternative choices --computed in the stardard way -- as index of their relative preferability. In particular, that alternative whose expected value is maximal is thereby to be viewed as maxipreferable.  Rule (II) is to be applied subject to an “insofar as possible” condition. It can ordinarily be implemented by setting the value of a catastrophe at --in the context of expected-value calculation. This, of course, will fail to resolve the matter if it should happen that *every*alternative leads to possible catastrophe, in which case-- that of a dilemma --special precautions will be necessary. (They are described on pp. 87-88.)  **Rule (III) calls on us to implement the idea of ''effectively zero probabilities” by setting the probability of ''extremely remote” possibilities at zero. It calls on us to dismiss highly improbable possibilities as ''unrealistic**.'' Note that rules (II) and (III) enjoin us to view the choice-situation in a guise different from the actual facts. An element of “as if” is involved in both cases. With (II) we are to identify a certain “level of catastrophe” and take the stance that a negativity whose magnitude exceeds this level is to be seen as having value -- ~. Again, with (III) we are to identify a certain level of “effective zerohood” for probabilities, treating as zero whatever probabilities fall short of this threshold value. Thus in assessing risks by way of expected-value appraisals, we are in each case not to view the situation as it actually stands, but to replace the actual situation by its *policy transform*through a change of the form *V--~--°°*orp~0.   The application of all three of these rules calls for essentially judgmental, subjective inputs. With (I) we are involved in negativity-eval~uation. With (II) we must fix on a threshold of ''catastrophe.'' **With (III) we must decide at what level of improbability effective zerohood sets in and possibilities cease to be real.** None of these evaluative resolutions at issue is dictated by the objective circumstances and imprinted in the nature of things. They are instruments of human devising contrived for human purpose in the effective management of affairs.  **To**begin with, note that rules (I) and (II) can clash, as per Figure 1. Here the top alternative enjoys the greater expected value. Nevertheless, it is intuitively clear that the bottom alter native is far preferable (and would continue to be so even if the 60C loss were increased to some other “ordinary” negativity.) The clear lesson is that rule (II) takes priority over (I) in such cases where catastrophes loom. We are to ignore the ruling of a straightforward calculation of expected values and insist on valuing catastrophes at --~, so as to avoid them at any (ordinary) cost. (Recall the discussion of the rationale of insurance on pp. 79-80 above.) Moreover rules (I) and (III) can also clash. This is shown by those cases where an expected-value calculation rules in favor of an alternative whose probability is too small to qualify it as a “real possibility.” (Recall the Vacationer's Dilemma of p. 40.) **Unless we are prepared to dismiss *extremely*remote possibilities as having a probability of “effectively zero” -- and thus not counting as *real*possibilities at all -- we shall find our actions systematically stultified to a degree which we are unwilling to accept in ''real life” situations**. It is thus clear that rule (III) takes priority over (I). Finally, it is clear that rules(II)and (III) can also conflict. For consider the situation of Figure 2. Note that a refusal to see the situation in terms of a *=*0 keeps the catastrophe in the picture, so As these deliberations indicate, **the** three **cardinal principles of risk management stand in a relation of preferential rank-order so that:** **(Ill) *takes precedence over*(II),** *which in turn takes precedence over*(I).  We have here a sequential priority-ordering of the several principles**, which fixes an automatic process for one's overriding another in those cases where their rulings conflict.**  This precedence ordering entails certain limitations to the reach of classical decision theory, which proceeds on the basis of the unmodified and unadulterated use of expected-value appraisals. **A deployment of the concepts of catastrophe-avoidance and of “effectively zero'' probabilities modifies this policy in two directions**. **First, catastrophe is seen to represent an unacceptable risk**, when ''the game's not worth the candle'' because the potential negative outcomes, unlikely though their realization may be, are simply too massive for the stakes otherwise at issue. **But, secondly, this principle itself needs to be curtailed, when it becomes *too*conservative in its operation and leads to a stultification of action. Just this rationale motivates the recourse to ''effectively zero'' probabilities.**

Systemic Impacts First

Err on the side of systemic impacts – it’s the biggest consequence in the long term

Machan, Professor of Philosophy, 03

Tibor Machan, prof. emeritus of philosophy at Auburn University, 2003 “Passion for Liberty”

All in all, then, I support the principled or rights-based ap­proach. In normal contexts, honesty is the best policy, even if at times it does not achieve the desired good results; so is respect for every individual's rights to life, liberty, and property. All in all, this is what will ensure the best consequences—in the long run and as a rule. Therefore, one need not be very concerned about the most recent estimate of the consequences of banning or not banning guns, breaking up or not breaking up Microsoft, or any other public policy, for that matter. It is enough to know that violating the rights of individuals to bear arms is a bad idea, and that history and analysis support our understanding of principle. To violate rights has always produced greater damage than good, so let's not do it, even when we are terri­bly tempted to do so, Let's not do it precisely because to do so would violate the fundamental requirements of human na­ture. It is those requirements that should be our guide, not some recent empirical data that have no staying power (ac­cording to their very own theoretical terms). Finally, you will ask, isn't this being dogmatic? Haven't we learned not to bank too much on what we've learned so far, when we also know that learning can always be improved, mod­ified, even revised? Isn't progress in the sciences and technology proof that past knowledge always gets overthrown a bit later? As in science and engineering, so in morality and politics: We must go with what we know but be open to change— provided that the change is warranted. Simply because some additional gun controls or regulations might save lives (some lives, perhaps at the expense of other lives) and simply because breaking up Microsoft might improve the satisfaction of con­sumers (some consumers, perhaps at the expense of the satis­faction of other consumers) are no reasons to violate basic rights. Only if and when there are solid, demonstrable reasons to do so should we throw out the old principles and bring on the new principles. Any such reasons would have to speak to the same level of fundamentally and relevance as that incor­porated by the theory of individual rights itself. Those defending consequentialism, like Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, have argued the opposite thesis: Unless one can prove, beyond a doubt, that violating rights in a particular instance is necessarily wrong in the eyes of a "rational and fair man," the state may go ahead and "accept the natural outcome of dominant opinion" and violate those rights.1 Such is now the leading jurisprudence

Probability Evaluation Key

The probability of each element of an argument chain must be evaluated

**Alemi**, Professor of Risk Analysis, **06**

[Farrokh Alemi, Ph.D](http://gunston.gmu.edu/healthscience/riskanalysis/Instructors.htm%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in Decision Analysis, Professor of Risk at George Mason University, Lecture on the Probability of Rare Events, October 4, 2006 <http://gunston.gmu.edu/healthscience/riskanalysis/ProbabilityRareEvent.asp>

**The concept of fault trees and reliability trees has a long history** in space and nuclear industry.  Several books (Krouwer, 2004) and papers describe this tool (Marx and Slonim, 2003).  **The first step** in conducting fault **trees is to identify the sentinel adverse event that should be analyzed**.  **Then all** possible ways **in which the** sentinel **event may occur is listed.**  **It is possible that several events must co-occur before the sentinel event may occur.**  For example, in assessing the probability of an employee providing information to outsiders, several events must co-occur.  First the employee must be disgruntled.  Second, information must be available to the employee.  Third, outsiders must have contact with the employee.  Fourth, the employee must have a method of transferring the data.  **All of these events must co-occur** before hospital data is sold to an outside party.  **None of these events are sufficient to cause the sentinel event.**  In a fault tree, when several events must co-occur, we use an "And" gate to show it.  Each of these events can, in part, depend on other factors.  For example, there may be several ways to transfer the data:  on paper, electronically by email, or electronically on disk.  Any one of these events can lead to transfer of data.  In fault tree when any one of a series of events may be sufficient by themselves to cause the next event to occur, we show this by an "Or" gate.  Fault tree is a collection of events connected to each other by "and" and "Or" gates.  **Each event depends on a series of other related events**, providing for a complex web of relationships.  A fault tree suggests a robust work process when several events must co-occur before the catastrophic failure occurs.  The more "And" gates are in the tree structure, the more robust the work process modeled.  In contrast, it is also possible for several events by themselves to lead to catastrophic failure.  The more "Or" gates in the path to failure, the less robust the work process. **The second step is to estimate probabilities** for the fault tree.  **Since the catastrophic failure is rare, it is difficult to asses this probability directly**.  **Instead, the probability of various events leading to this failure are assessed.**  For example, the probability of a finding a disgruntled employee can be assessed.  The probability of an employee having access to large data sets can be assessed by counting employees who have such access during the course of their work.  The probability of an employee being approached by someone to sell data can be assessed by providing an expert data on frequency of reported crimes and asking him/her to estimate the additional unreported rate.  In short, through objective data or subjective opinions of experts various probabilities in the fault tree can be assessed.   **The fault tree can then be used to assess the probability of the catastrophic and rare event** using the following formula:

AT: Rescher

**Rescher’s theories are flawed- using predictions for data is key**

**Eggleston 02**

Ben Eggleston January 12, 2002 Department of Philosophy University of Kansa

Practical Equilibrium: A New Approach to Moral Theory Selection

<http://web.ku.edu/~utile/unpub/pe.pdf>

The language of “data” to be accounted for recurs even more frequently in papers published in the wake of Rawls’s book. Singer writes that “The reflective equilibrium conception of moral philosophy . . . lead[s] us to think of our particular moral judgmentsas data against which moral theories are to be tested” (1974, p. 517; cf. 1998, p. vi), and **Nicholas Rescher writes that our intuitions “are the data . . . which the theoretician must weave into a smooth fabric” and that “The process is closely analogous with the systematization of the ‘data’ of various levels in natural science”** (1979, p. 155). Others have offered similar characterizations.13 So the notion of accounting for the data is often regarded as providing support for reflective equilibrium. I wish to argue, though, that **the notion of accounting for the data can be seen to provide such support only when clouded by a pair of misunderstandings, and that when these two misunderstandings are removed, the notion of accounting for the data actually lends support to practical equilibrium. The two misunderstandings concern what the *data* to be accounted for actually are, and how a moral theory *accounts* for whatever data it accounts for.**

First, consider what the data actually are. When it comes to our moral intuitions, we might think that our data are that acts of certain kinds, such as acts of punishing the innocent, are never justified. But actually this overstates our data: **in fact our data are just our observations of our own intuitions, such as our observation that it seems to us that punishing the innocent is never justified.** It is a further claim, *not* among the data to be accounted for, that these intuitions that we are aware of having are *correct*. The data do not include that certain acts are wrong; the data include only our regarding certain acts as wrong—for this latter phenomenon, our own judgment of the matter, is all that we can really detect in any instance of moral appraisal.14 So the first error in reflective equilibrium’s use of the notion of accounting for the data lies in its holding theories responsible for accounting for things that are not actually among the data. It says that a moral theory must explain the truth of the intuitions that we have, when actually the only data there are are that we *have* those intuitions.

Now at this point it may appear that I am arguing that what the notion of accounting for the data means in the case of a moral theory is not that the theory explains the truth of the intuitions that we have, but that the theory explains the fact that we have those intuitions. For this interpretation of accounting for the data would accommodate the interpretation of what the data actually are that I have just been arguing for. But Imaintain that we need to make a second adjustment in order to arrive at a sound interpretation of the notion of accounting for the data in the case of a moral theory.

Whereas the first adjustment had to do with what the *data* are, this one has to do with

what it means for a moral theory to *account* for data. What I have in mind is that **we need**

**to say that what a moral theory is supposed to do, as far as its accounting for anything is concerned, is not to *explain* our having certain intuitions, but to *endorse* our having those intuitions.**

**The reason for this adjustment is simple: moral theories differ from scientific ones in that they are not in the business of predicting or explaining anything: they are in the**

**business of prescribing, or giving instructions**. Normally, the instructions we’re interested in are those that concern specific situations in which we might engage in some conduct or regard to the intuitions we should have

Predictions Bad - Policymaking

**Ejecting low probability internal link chains is key to rational policymaking - accumulated experience proves that appeals to the possibility of catastrophic causal chains should not influence decision-making**

Hansson, Department of Philosophy and the History of Technology, 05

Sven Ove Hansson ["The Epistemology of Technological Risk," Techne: research in philosophy and Technology, Volume 9, Number 2, Winter 2005 [http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ ejournals/SPT/v9n2/hansson. html](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/v9n2/hansson.html)]

However, it would not be feasible to take such possibilities into account in all decisions that we make. In a sense, any decision may have catastrophic unforeseen consequences. If far-reaching indirect effects are taken into account, then – given the unpredictable nature of actual causation – almost any decision may lead to a disaster. In order to be able to decide and act, we therefore have to disregard many of the more remote possibilities. Cases can also easily be found in which it was an advantage that far-fetched dangers were not taken seriously. One case in point is the false alarm on so-called polywater, an alleged polymeric form of water. In 1969, the prestigious scientific journal *Nature* printed a letter that warned against producing polywater. The substance might "grow at the expense of normal water under any conditions found in the environment," thus replacing all natural water on earth and destroying all life on this planet. ([Donahoe 1969](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/v9n2/hansson.html#donahoe) ) Soon afterwards, it was shown that polywater is a non-existent entity. If the warning had been heeded, then no attempts would had been made to replicate the polywater experiments, and we might still not have known that polywater does not exist. In cases like this, appeals to the possibility of unknown dangers may stop investigations and thus prevent scientific and technological progress.We therefore need criteria to determine when the possibility of unknown dangers should be taken seriously and when it can be neglected. This problem cannot be solved with probability calculus or other exact mathematical methods. The best that we can hope for is a set of informal criteria that can be used to support intuitive judgement. The following list of four criteria has been proposed for this purpose. ([Hansson 1996](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/v9n2/hansson.html#hansson)) *Asymmetry of uncertainty*: Possibly, a decision to build a second bridge between Sweden and Denmark will lead through some unforeseeable causal chain to a nuclear war. Possibly, it is the other way around so that a decision not to build such a bridge will lead to a nuclear war. We have no reason why one or the other of these two causal chains should be more probable, or otherwise more worthy of our attention, than the other. On the other hand, the introduction of a new species of earthworm is connected with much more uncertainty than the option not to introduce the new species. Such asymmetry is a necessary but insufficient condition for taking the issue of unknown dangers into serious consideration. *2. Novelty*: Unknown dangers come mainly from new and untested phenomena. The emission of a new substance into the stratosphere constitutes a qualitative novelty, whereas the construction of a new bridge does not. An interesting example of the novelty factor can be found in particle physics. Before new and more powerful particle accelerators have been built, physicists have sometimes feared that the new levels of energy might generate a new phase of matter that accretes every atom of the earth. The decision to regard these and similar fears as groundless has been based on observations showing that the earth is already under constant bombardment from outer space of particles with the same or higher energies. ([Ruthen 1993](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/v9n2/hansson.html#ruthen)) *3. Spatial and temporal limitations*: If the effects of a proposed measure are known to be limited in space or time, then these limitations reduce the urgency of the possible unknown effects associated with the measure. The absence of such limitations contributes to the severity of many ecological problems, such as global emissions and the spread of chemically stable pesticides. *4. Interference with complex systems in balance*: Complex systems such as ecosystems and the atmospheric system are known to have reached some type of balance, which may be impossible to restore after a major disturbance. Due to this irreversibility, uncontrolled interference with such systems is connected with a high degree of uncertainty. (Arguably, the same can be said of uncontrolled interference with economic systems; this is an argument for piecemeal rather than drastic economic reforms.) It might be argued that we do not know that these systems can resist even minor perturbations. If causation is chaotic, then for all that we know, a minor modification of the liturgy of the Church of England may trigger a major ecological disaster in Africa. If we assume that all cause-effect relationships are chaotic, then the very idea of planning and taking precautions seems to lose its meaning. However, such a world-view would leave us entirely without guidance, even in situations when we consider ourselves well-informed. Fortunately, experience does not bear out this pessimistic worldview. Accumulated experience and theoretical reflection strongly indicate that certain types of influences on ecological systems can be withstood, whereas others cannot. The same applies to technological, economic, social, and political systems, although our knowledge about their resilience towards various disturbances has not been sufficiently systematized.

Predictions Bad – Background Beliefs

**Risk assessment irrationally exaggerates low probability impacts. Objective risk analysis is impossible because our decisions are always tainted by our background beliefs- vote affirmative in the face of the undeniable impact of detention**

Teuber, Professor of Philosophy at Brandeis University, 1990,

Andreas Teuber"JUSTIFYING RISK," Daedalus, Volume 119 – Number 4, Fall, 1990 <http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html>

Even if the practical difficulties of obtaining people's consent could be overcome, it is widely reported that people are notoriously poor judges of risks. People's perceptions frequently fail to match up with the actual dangers risks pose and few people have a "feel" for what a chance of dying, say a chance of one in a million, really means. Research by psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman has shown that we are regularly led astray in our assessments of probabilities by rules of thumb. Faced with a judgment that requires even a minimal familiarity with statistics, we frequently avoid the statistical information and rely instead on a description or heuristic which feels less strange. [8](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n8) We tend to overemphasize low probabilities and underestimate large ones. We have to struggle to resist the gambler's fallacy: the belief that after a series of losses the odds must favor a win. We are also poor judges of outcomes. We appear to be more concerned to avoid a loss than to receive an equivalent gain, and this asymmetry can be exploited in the way choices are presented.[9](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n9) Retailers, for example, know enough about our suceptibility to the way options are framed to represent a surcharge for credit card customers as a discount to those who are willing to pay cash.[10](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n10) The influence of framing on judgments about risk is systematic and pervasive, and shows up at all levels of education. Health care professionals are no less susceptible to the effects of framing than their patients who have less experience and lack their expertise. The following hypothetical case was put to a group of physicians: Imagine that you have operable lung cancer and must choose between two treatments: surgery and radiation therapy. Of 100 people having surgery, 10 die during the operation, 32 are dead after one year, and 66 after five years. Of 100 people having radiation therapy, none die during treatment, 23 are deadafter one year, and 78 after five years. Which treatment do you prefer?[11](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n11) Given these options, fifty percent of the physicians said they preferred radiation treatment. However when the same options were presented in terms of survival rates rather than mortality rates, 84% said they would prefer surgery. It is perhaps not completely surprising to learn that people are poor judges of probabilities, but "we want to give [people] credit for at least knowing their own minds," as one report puts it, "when it comes to assigning values to the outcomes of their choices."[12](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n12) Apparently, very little credit is due, as experiment after experiment reveals: Imagine that the United States is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual flu epidemic which is expected to kill 600 people, unless action is taken. Two alternative programs to combat the disease are proposed If program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved. If program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that 600 will be saved and a 2/3 probability that no one will be saved When the alternatives were posed in these terms in a test survey, 72 percent of the respondents opted for program A, only 28 percent for program B. A second group was given the same options, but re-described (re-framed) in this way: If program A is adopted, 400 people will die; if program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that nobody will die, and a 2/3 probability that 600 people will die This time only 22 percent opted for the first program, while 78 percent opted for the second.[13](http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/paperrisk.html#n13) It is generally believed that consistency in judgments is a minimal condition of rationality. Since our judgments about risk are apparently inconsistent, it is hard not to draw the conclusion that our attitudes towards risk are also irrational. These findings have disturbing implications for public policy, especially in a society like our own which relies on a democratic process. If we are irrational in our judgments about risk, the policies we enact will reflect a similar bias. Given our untrustworthy attitudes, a consent-based approach to legitimating risk-imposing activities can only lead to irrational public policies.

Predictions Bad – Irresponsibility

The production of risk enacts a system of organized irresponsibility that relies on obsolete political ideologies. The aff challenges the current epistemology of risk- it’s not sufficient to respond to risk as a purely material event.

Elliott, Foundation Director of the Centre for Critical Theory at the University of the West of England, 2002

Anthony Elliot “Beck’s sociology of Risk: A Critical Assessment,” Sociology, Sociology, Vol. 36, No. 2, 2002

It is the autonomous, compulsive dynamic of advanced or reﬂexive modernization that, according to Beck, propels modern men and women into ‘self-confrontation’ with the consequences of risk that cannot adequately be addressed, measured, controlled or overcome, at least according to the standards of industrial society. Modernity’s blindness to the risks and dangers produced by modernization – all of which happens automatically and unreﬂectingly, according to

Beck – leads to societal self-confrontation: that is, the questioning of division between centres of political activity and the decision-making capacity of society itself. Society, in effect, seeks to reclaim ‘the political’ from its modernist relegation to the institutional sphere, and this, says Beck, is achieved primarily through sub-political means – that is, locating the politics of risk at the heart of forms of social and cultural life. ‘Within the horizon of the opposition between old routine and new awareness of consequences and dangers’, writes Beck, ‘society becomes self-critical’ (1999b: 81). The prospects for arresting the dark sides of industrial progress and advanced modernization through reﬂexivity are routinely short-circuited, according to Beck, by the insidious inﬂuence of ‘organized irresponsibility’. Irresponsibility, as Beck uses the term, refers to a political contradiction of the self-jeopardization and self-endangerment of risk society. This is a contradiction between an emerging public awareness of risks produced by and within the

social-institutional system on the one hand, and the lack of attribution of systemic risks to this system on the other. There is, in Beck’s reckoning, a constant denial of the suicidal tendency of risk society – ‘the system of organized irresponsibility’ – which manifests itself in, say, technically orientated legal procedures designed to satisfy rigorous causal proof of individual liability and guilt.

This self-created dead end, in which culpability is passed off on to individuals and thus collectively denied, is maintained through political ideologies of industrial fatalism: faith in progress, dependence on rationality and the rule of expert

opinion.

Predictions Bad - Monkeys

Expert predictions are less accurate than dart throwing monkeys

**Menand**, Harvard Professor, **05**

Louis Menand 2005 PhD Colombia and Robert M. and Anne T. Bass Professor of English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University., The New Yorker, 12-05-2005, [http://www.newyorker.com/critics/con...205crbo\_books1](http://www.newyorker.com/critics/content/articles/051205crbo_books1%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

It is the somewhat gratifying lesson of Philip Tetlock’s new book, “Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?” (Princeton; $35), that **people who make prediction their business**—**people who appear as experts** on television, get quoted in newspaper articles, advise governments and businesses, and participate in punditry roundtables—**are no better than the rest of us.** **When they’re wrong**, **they’re rarely held accountable, and** **they rarely admit it,** either. **They** insist that they were just off on timing, or blindsided by an improbable event, or almost right, or wrong for the right reasons. They have the same repertoire of self-justifications that everyone has, and **are no more inclined than anyone else to revise their beliefs about the way the world works, or ought to work, just because they made a mistake**. No one is paying you for your gratuitous opinions about other people, but the experts are being paid, and Tetlock claims that **the better known and more frequently quoted they are, the less reliable their guesses** about the future **are** likely to be. **The accuracy of an expert’s predictions actually has an inverse relationship to** his or her self-confidence, renown, and, beyond a certain point, **depth of knowledge**. People who follow current events by reading the papers and newsmagazines regularly can guess what is likely to happen about as accurately as the specialists whom the papers quote. Our system of expertise is completely inside out: it rewards bad judgments over good ones.
“Expert Political Judgment” is not a work of media criticism. **Tetlock is a psychologist—he teaches at Berkeley—and his conclusions are based on a long-term study that he began twenty years ago.** He picked two hundred and eighty-four people who made their living “commenting or offering advice on political and economic trends,” and he started asking them to assess the probability that various things would or would not come to pass, both in the areas of the world in which they specialized and in areas about which they were not expert. Would there be a nonviolent end to apartheid in South Africa? Would Gorbachev be ousted in a coup? Would the United States go to war in the Persian Gulf? Would Canada disintegrate? (Many experts believed that it would, on the ground that Quebec would succeed in seceding.) And so on. By the end of the study, in 2003, the experts had made 82,361 forecasts. Tetlock also asked questions designed to determine how they reached their judgments, how they reacted when their predictions proved to be wrong, how they evaluated new information that did not support their views, and how they assessed the probability that rival theories and predictions were accurate.
Tetlock got a statistical handle on his task by putting most of the forecasting questions into a “three possible futures” form. The respondents were asked to rate the probability of three alternative outcomes: the persistence of the status quo, more of something (political freedom, economic growth), or less of something (repression, recession). And he measured his experts on two dimensions: how good they were at guessing probabilities (did all the things they said had an x per cent chance of happening happen x per cent of the time?), and how accurate they were at predicting specific outcomes. **The results were unimpressive**. On the first scale, the **experts performed worse than they would have if they had simply assigned an equal probability to all three outcomes**—if they had given each possible future a thirty-three-per-cent chance of occurring. **Human beings who spend their lives studying the state of the world, in other words, are poorer forecasters than dart-throwing monkeys**, who would have distributed their picks evenly over the three choices.

Predictions Bad – Decisionmaking Spillover

Refusing their method is critical to move away from this bad form of risk - rejection within the laboratory of debate spills over to policy making

Herbeck, Prof at Boston College, 92

Dale A. Herbeck, Professor of Communication and Director of the Fulton Debating Society at Boston College, and John P. Katsulas, Debate Coach at Boston College, "The Use and Abuse of Risk Analysis in Polcy Debate," Paper Presented at the 78th Annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association (Chicago, IL), October 29th-November 1st 1992, Available Online via ERIC Number ED354559, p. 10-12

It is sometimes argued that debate is a laboratory for testing argumentation. Critics of the laboratory metaphor have argued that we have failed as scientists, for we have produced little of consequence in our lab. Perhaps our experience with risk analysis in debate can inform our understanding of the crisis rhetoric which we confront on an almost daily basis. The best check on such preposterous claims, it seems to us, is an appreciation of nature of risk analysis and how it functions in argumentation. If we understand this tool, we will be well-armed in our battle with the bogeyman of our age

AT: Monkeys

Menand bases his claims off flawed principals in “Expert Political Judgement”

Davies, staff for STMI Consulting, 07

Adrian Davies, 15 July 2007. St Andrews Management Institute, Book Review: “Expert Politial Judgement”. <http://www.samiconsulting.co.uk/4bookrev26.html>

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt in your philosophy”. This was Hamlet’s admission that he was confused by complexity and had difficulty in coming to judgment. Hamlet’s solution was inexpert and created a new set of political problems.

“Expert Political Judgment” is an attempt to identify the characteristics of individuals who have the ability to analyse situations in depth and with accurate foresight so that their decisions are informed by expert political judgment. The author is a psychologist but has worked for many years with a range of specialists in different disciplines in order to distil the quintessence of expert political judgment, not only for the immediate need but sustainable into the longer term. The main focus of the book is on forecasting outcomes of particular situations and on identifying the specific techniques and mental attitudes which do so most successfully. Luck is recognised as a factor but is set aside as exogenous. The quest is for the mindset and toolkit which will optimise forecasting by “quantifying the unquantifiable”. For the mindset contrasts are drawn between “radical sceptics”, who expect nothing and “meliorists” who are open to seeking improved outcomes. Another facet of mindset is Isiah Berlin’s contrast between “hedgehogs” who “know one big thing” and “foxes” who “know many little things”. In the context of the book “hedgehogs” emerge as having fixed views, seeing issues as “black or white” and supremely self-confident. By contrast “foxes” are open-minded, flexible and self-critical. One key finding of the book is that “foxes” emerge as winners of most of the tests, yet “hedgehogs” are more focussed and willing to make tough decisions. In times of increasing uncertainty it would seem that fox-like characteristics are at a premium over those of “hedgehogs” in evaluation, though “hedgehog” confidence is needed to take action.

The book draws to a conclusion with a challenge: “Are we open-minded enough to acknowledge the limits of open-mindedness?” This chapter is a critique of scenario planning which the author sees as advising only that “anything is possible”. Too often those involved are over absorbed in inward looking details to build their stories, while an outside view is needed to provide a reality check. Tetlock fails to realise that scenario planning should be used as a means of guiding action not engendering endless debate.

Judgment seems to involve a metacognitive trade off between theory driven and imagination driven modes of thinking. Theory offers certainty and imagination helps to cope with uncertainty. The author sees the best long term predictor of good judgment to be a Socratic commitment by protagonists to thinking about how they think.

Predictions Good (1/3)

**We should make predictions even if they aren’t perfect**

Fuyuki Kurasawa, Associate Professor of Sociology at York University, **‘4** (Constellations, Vol. 11, No. 4)

When engaging in the labor of preventive foresight, the first obstacle that one is likely to encounter from some intellectual circles is a deep-seated skepticism about the very value of the exercise. A radically postmodern line of thinking, for instance, would lead us to believe that it is pointless, perhaps even harmful, to strive for farsightedness in light of the aforementioned crisis of conventional paradigms of historical analysis. If, contra teleological models, history has no intrinsic meaning, direction, or endpoint to be discovered through human reason, and if, contra scientistic futurism, prospective trends cannot be predicted without error, then the abyss of chronological inscrutability supposedly opens up at our feet. The future appears to be unknowable, an outcome of chance. Therefore, rather than embarking upon grandiose speculation about what may occur, we should adopt a pragmatism that abandons itself to the twists and turns of history; let us be content to formulate ad hoc responses to emergencies as they arise. While this argument has the merit of underscoring the fallibilistic nature of all predictive schemes, it conflates the necessary recognition of the contingency of history with unwarranted assertions about the latter’s total opacity and indeterminacy. Acknowledging the fact that the future cannot be known with absolute certainty does not imply abandoning the task of trying to understand what is brewing on the horizon and to prepare for crises already coming into their own. In fact, the incorporation of the principle of fallibility into the work of prevention means that we must be ever more vigilant for warning signs of disaster and for responses that provoke unintended or unexpected consequences (a point to which I will return in the final section of this paper). In addition, from a normative point of view, the acceptance of historical contingency and of the self-limiting character of farsightedness places the duty of preventing catastrophe squarely on the shoulders of present generations. The future no longer appears to be a metaphysical creature of destiny or of the cunning of reason, nor can it be sloughed off to pure randomness. It becomes, instead, a result of human action shaped by decisions in the present – including, of course, trying to anticipate and prepare for possible and avoidable sources of harm to our successors.

Predictions Good (2/3)

**Their Menand evidence doesn’t apply – it doesn’t say that all predictions are bad, just that predictions without evidence are bad**

**Menand**, Harvard Professor, **05**

Louis Menand 2005 PhD Colombia and Robert M. and Anne T. Bass Professor of English and American Literature and Language at Harvard University The New Yorker, 10/5/2005, lexis

It was no news to Tetlock, therefore, that experts got beaten by formulas. But he does believe that he discovered something about why some people make better forecasters than other people. It has to do not with what the experts believe but with the way they think. Tetlock uses Isaiah Berlin's metaphor from Archilochus, from his essay on Tolstoy, "The Hedgehog and the Fox," to illustrate the difference. He says: Low scorers look like hedgehogs: thinkers who "know one big thing," aggressively extend the explanatory reach of that one big thing into new domains, display bristly impatience with those who "do not get it," and express considerable confidence that they are already pretty proficient forecasters, at least in the long term. High scorers look like foxes: thinkers who know many small things (tricks of their trade), are skeptical of grand schemes, see explanation and prediction not as deductive exercises but rather as exercises in flexible "ad hocery" that require stitching together diverse sources of information, and are rather diffident about their own forecasting prowess. A hedgehog is a person who sees international affairs to be ultimately determined by a single bottom-line force: balance-of-power considerations, or the clash of civilizations, or globalization and the spread of free markets. A hedgehog is the kind of person who holds a great-man theory of history, according to which the Cold War does not end if there is no Ronald Reagan. Or he or she might adhere to the "actor-dispensability thesis," according to which Soviet Communism was doomed no matter what. Whatever it is, the big idea, and that idea alone, dictates the probable outcome of events. For the hedgehog, therefore, predictions that fail are only "off on timing," or are "almost right," derailed by an unforeseeable accident. There are always little swerves in the short run, but the long run irons them out. Foxes, on the other hand, don't see a single determining explanation in history. They tend, Tetlock says, "to see the world as a shifting mixture of self-fulfilling and self-negating prophecies: self-fulfilling ones in which success breeds success, and failure, failure but only up to a point, and then self-negating prophecies kick in as people recognize that things have gone too far." Tetlock did not find, in his sample, any significant correlation between how experts think and what their politics are. His hedgehogs were liberal as well as conservative, and the same with his foxes. (Hedgehogs were, of course, more likely to be extreme politically, whether rightist or leftist.) He also did not find that his foxes scored higher because they were more cautious-that their appreciation of complexity made them less likely to offer firm predictions. Unlike hedgehogs, who actually performed worse in areas in which they specialized, foxes enjoyed a modest benefit from expertise. Hedgehogs routinely over-predicted: twenty per cent of the outcomes that hedgehogs claimed were impossible or nearly impossible came to pass, versus ten per cent for the foxes. More than thirty per cent of the outcomes that hedgehogs thought were sure or near-sure did not, against twenty per cent for foxes. The upside of being a hedgehog, though, is that when you're right you can be really and spectacularly right. Great scientists, for example, are often hedgehogs. They value parsimony, the simpler solution over the more complex. In world affairs, parsimony may be a liability-but, even there, there can be traps in the kind of highly integrative thinking that is characteristic of foxes. Elsewhere, Tetlock has published an analysis of the political reasoning of Winston Churchill. Churchill was not a man who let contradictory information interfere with his idees fixes. This led him to make the wrong prediction about Indian independence, which he opposed. But it led him to be right about Hitler. He was never distracted by the contingencies that might combine to make the elimination of Hitler unnecessary. Tetlock also has an unscientific point to make, which is that "we as a society would be better off if participants in policy debates stated their beliefs in testable forms"-that is, as probabilities-"monitored their forecasting performance, and honored their reputational bets." He thinks that we're suffering from our primitive attraction to deterministic, overconfident hedgehogs. It's true that the only thing the electronic media like better than a hedgehog is two hedgehogs who don't agree. Tetlock notes, sadly, a point that Richard Posner has made about these kinds of public intellectuals, which is that most of them are dealing in "solidarity" goods, not "credence" goods. Their analyses and predictions are tailored to make their ideological brethren feel good-more white swans for the white-swan camp. A prediction, in this context, is just an exclamation point added to an analysis. Liberals want to hear that whatever conservatives are up to is bound to go badly; when the argument gets more nuanced, they change the channel. On radio and television and the editorial page, the line between expertise and advocacy is very blurry, and pundits behave exactly the way Tetlock says they will. Bush Administration loyalists say that their predictions about postwar Iraq were correct, just a little off on timing; pro-invasion liberals who are now trying to dissociate themselves from an adventure gone bad insist that though they may have sounded a false alarm, they erred "in the right direction"-not really a mistake at all.

Predictions Good (3/3)

The study Menand cites is out of context – it just says that we need to examine the evidence behind predictions.

**Tetlock**, psychologist, **05**

Philip Tetlock (psychologist) 2005 Expert Political Judgement, <http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/chapters/s7959.html>)

 Chapters 2 and 3 explore correspondence indicators. Drawing on the literature on judgmental accuracy, I divide the guiding hypotheses into two categories: those rooted in radical skepticism, which equates good political judgment with good luck, and those rooted in meliorism, which maintains that the quest for predictors of good judgment, and ways to improve ourselves, is not quixotic and there are better and worse ways of thinking that translate into better and worse judgments. Chapter 2 introduces us to the radical skeptics and their varied reasons for embracing their counterintuitive creed. Their guiding precept is that, although we often talk ourselves into believing we live in a predictable world, we delude ourselves: history is ultimately one damned thing after another, a random walk with upward and downward blips but devoid of thematic continuity. Politics is no more predictable than other games of chance. On any given spin of the roulette wheel of history, crackpots will claim vindication for superstitious schemes that posit patterns in randomness. But these schemes will fail in cross-validation. What works today will disappoint tomorrow.34 Here is a doctrine that runs against the grain of human nature, our shared need to believe that we live in a comprehensible world that we can master if we apply ourselves.35 Undiluted radical skepticism requires us to believe, really believe, that when the time comes to choose among controversial policy options--to support Chinese entry into the World Trade Organization or to bomb Baghdad or Belgrade or to build a ballistic missile defense--we could do as well by tossing coins as by consulting experts.36 Chapter 2 presents evidence from regional forecasting exercises consistent with this debunking perspective. It tracks the accuracy of hundreds of experts for dozens of countries on topics as disparate as transitions to democracy and capitalism, economic growth, interstate violence, and nuclear proliferation. When we pit experts against minimalist performance benchmarks--dilettantes, dart-throwing chimps, and assorted extrapolation algorithms--we find few signs that expertise translates into greater ability to make either "well-calibrated" or "discriminating" forecasts. Radical skeptics welcomed these results, but they start squirming when we start finding patterns of consistency in who got what right. Radical skepticism tells us to expect nothing (with the caveat that if we toss enough coins, expect some streakiness). But the data revealed more consistency in forecasters' track records than could be ascribed to chance. Meliorists seize on these findings to argue that crude human-versus-chimp comparisons mask systematic individual differences in good judgment. Although meliorists agree that skeptics go too far in portraying good judgment as illusory, they agree on little else. Cognitive-content meliorists identify good judgment with a particular outlook but squabble over which points of view represent movement toward or away from the truth. Cognitive-style meliorists identify good judgment not with what one thinks, but with how one thinks. But they squabble over which styles of reasoning--quick and decisive versus balanced and thoughtful--enhance or degrade judgment. Chapter 3 tests a multitude of meliorist hypotheses--most of which bite the dust. Who experts were--professional background, status, and so on--made scarcely an iota of difference to accuracy. Nor did what experts thought--whether they were liberals or conservatives, realists or institutionalists, optimists or pessimists. But the search bore fruit. How experts thought--their style of reasoning--did matter. Chapter 3 demonstrates the usefulness of classifying experts along a rough cognitive-style continuum anchored at one end by Isaiah Berlin's prototypical hedgehog and at the other by his prototypical fox.37 The intellectually aggressive hedgehogs knew one big thing and sought, under the banner of parsimony, to expand the explanatory power of that big thing to "cover" new cases; the more eclectic foxes knew many little things and were content to improvise ad hoc solutions to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. Treating the regional forecasting studies as a decathlon between rival strategies of making sense of the world, the foxes consistently edge out the hedgehogs but enjoy their most decisive victories in long-term exercises inside their domains of expertise. Analysis of explanations for their predictions sheds light on how foxes pulled off this cognitive-stylistic coup. The foxes' self-critical, point-counterpoint style of thinking prevented them from building up the sorts of excessive enthusiasm for their predictions that hedgehogs, especially well-informed ones, displayed for theirs. Foxes were more sensitive to how contradictory forces can yield stable equilibria and, as a result, "overpredicted" fewer departures, good or bad, from the status quo. But foxes did not mindlessly predict the past. They recognized the precariousness of many equilibria and hedged their bets by rarely ruling out anything as "impossible." These results favor meliorism over skepticism--and they favor the pro-complexity branch of meliorism, which proclaims the adaptive superiority of the tentative, balanced modes of thinking favored by foxes,38 over the pro-simplicity branch, which proclaims the superiority of the confident, decisive modes of thinking favored by hedgehogs.39 These results also domesticate radical skepticism, with its wild-eyed implication that experts have nothing useful to tell us about the future beyond what we could have learned from tossing coins or inspecting goat entrails. This tamer brand of skepticism--skeptical meliorism--still warns of the dangers of hubris, but it allows for how a self-critical, dialectical style of reasoning can spare experts the big mistakes that hammer down the accuracy of their more intellectually exuberant colleagues.

Mag. Evaluated First(1/3)

Nuclear war and extinction outweighs all impacts – a fraction of infinity is still infinity

**Schell**, Visiting Fellow at the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, **82**

Jonathan Schell, Fate of the Earth, pp. 93-96 1982

On the other hand, **if we wish to ignore the peril, we have to admit that we do so in the knowledge that the species may be in danger of imminent self-destruction**. When the existence of nuclear weapons was made known, thoughtful people everywhere in the world realized that if the great powers entered into a nuclear-arms race the human species would sooner or later face the possibility of extinction. They also realized that in the absence of international agreements preventing it an arms race would probably occur. They knew that the path of nuclear armament was a dead end for mankind. The discovery of the energy in mass – of "the basic power of the universe" – and of a means by which man could release that energy altered the relationship between man and the source of his life, the earth. In the shadow of this power, the earth became small and the life of the human species doubtful. In that sense, the question of human extinction has been on the political agenda of the world ever since the first nuclear weapon was detonated, and there was no need for the world to build up its present tremendous arsenals before starting to worry about it. At just what point the species crossed, or will have crossed, the boundary between merely having the technical knowledge to destroy itself and actually having the arsenals at hand, ready to be used at any second, is not precisely knowable. But it is clear that at present, with some twenty thousand megatons of nuclear explosive power in existence, and with more being added every day, we have entered into the zone of uncertainty, which is to say the zone of risk of extinction. But **the mere risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than that of any other risk and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account.** Up to now, every risk has been contained within the framework of life; extinction would shatter the frame**. It represents not the defeat of some purpose but an abyss in which all human purpose would be drowned for all time.** We have no right to place the possibility of this limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risk that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history.To employ a mathematician's analogy, we can say that **although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is, humanly speaking, infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity.** In other words, **once we learn that a holocaust might lead to extinction we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance.** Therefore, although, scientifically speaking, there is all the difference in the world between the mere possibility that a holocaust will bring about extinction and the certainty of it, morally they are the same, and **we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species.**In weighing the fate of the earth and, with it, our own fate, we stand before a mystery, and in tampering with the earth we tamper with a mystery. We are in deep ignorance. Our ignorance should dispose us to wonder, our wonder should make us humble, our humility should inspire us to reverence and caution, and our reverence and caution should lead us to act without delay to withdraw the threat we now post to the world and to ourselves.

Mag. Evaluated First(2/3)

National leaders don’t have the Luxury of ignoring large impacts

**Zeihan**, IR expert for Stratfor, **08**

Peter Zeihan, expert on international relations and Asian Politics, Vice President of global analysis for Stratfor April 23, 2008

**Fear is a powerful motivator**, **even getting results when the threat is exceedingly remote**. It makes us cross at crosswalks even when traffic is thin, pay more over time for fire insurance than our homes are worth, and shy away from snakes even when signs clearly inform us they are not poisonous. Humans instinctively take steps to prevent negative outcomes, oftentimes regardless of how likely — or more to the point, unlikely — those unpleasant outcomes are.

**As with individuals, the same is true for countries.** **Anyone can blithely say** Cuba or **Serbia would not dare ignore the will of their more powerful neighbors**,**or that**Brazil’s or **Egypt’s nuclear programs are** so **inconsequential** as not to impact the international balance of power**. But such opinions — even if they truly are near-certainties — cannot form the foundation of state  power**. **National leaders do not have the luxury of ignoring the plethora of coulds, mights and maybes that pepper their radar screens every day.** An analyst can dismiss a dark possibility as dubious, but **a national leader cannot gamble with the lives of his countrymen and the existence of his state. They must evaluate even improbable threats against the potential damage to their respective national interests.**

**Many of the standing policies we take for granted have grown from such evaluations**. While the likelihood of Israel bombing the Aswan High Dam is rather remote, Egypt cannot afford to risk the possibility, which contributed to Cairo’s burying-of-the-hatchet with Israel. Worrying about continental European countries sublimating their national differences, uniting into a federated super state and invading the United Kingdom may seem to flirt with lunacy, but within that lingering concern lies the root of the Anglo-American alliance. Similarly, worrying about China using the archipelagos of Southeast Asia as a staging point for an invasion of Australia may seem ludicrous, but that fear dominates military planning in Canberra.

Mag. Evaluated First(3/3)

Some impacts warrant extra attention.

**Rescher**, Prof. of Philosophy, **83**

Nicholas Rescher (Department of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh) 1983 Risk: A Philosophical Introduction to the theory of risk evaluation, p. 67

In such situations we are dealing with hazards that are just not in the same league. Certain hazards are simply unacceptable because they involve a relatively unacceptable threat—things may go wrong so badly that, relative to the alternatives, it’s just not worthwhile to “run the risk,” even in the face of a favorable balance of probabilities. The rational man is not willing to trade off against one another by juggling probabilities such outcomes as the loss of one hair and the loss of his health or his freedom. The imbalance or disparity between risks is just too great to be restored by probablistic readjustments. They are (probablistically) incommersuable: confronted with such “incomparable” hazards, we do not bother to weigh this “balance of probabilities” at all, but simply dismiss one alternative as involving risks that are, in the circumstances, **“**unacceptable”.

Role of Ballot = Magnitude

**The ballot should prefer the advocacy that avoids the fastest and most probable internal link to extinction**

Bostrom Prof at Oxford, 02

Nick Bostrom, PhD and Professor at Oxford University, March, 2002 [Journal of Evolution and Technology, vol 9] <http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html>

Previous sections have argued that the combined probability of the existential risks is very substantial. Although there is still a fairly broad range of differing estimates that responsible thinkers could make, it is nonetheless arguable that because the negative utility of an existential disaster is so enormous, the objective of reducing existential risks should be a dominant consideration when acting out of concern for humankind as a whole. It may be useful to adopt the following rule of thumb for moral action; we can call it Maxipok: Maximize the probability of an okay outcome, where an “okay outcome” is any outcome that avoids existential disaster. At best, this is a rule of thumb, a prima facie suggestion, rather than a principle of absolute validity, since there clearly are other moral objectives than preventing terminal global disaster. Its usefulness consists in helping us to get our priorities straight. Moral action is always at risk to diffuse its efficacy on feel-good projects[[24]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn24#_ftn24" \o ") rather on serious work that has the best chance of fixing the worst ills. The cleft between the feel-good projects and what really has the greatest potential for good is likely to be especially great in regard to existential risk. Since the goal is somewhat abstract and since existential risks don’t currently cause suffering in any living creature[[25]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn25#_ftn25" \o "), there is less of a feel-good dividend to be derived from efforts that seek to reduce them. This suggests an offshoot moral project, namely to reshape the popular moral perception so as to give more credit and social approbation to those who devote their time and resources to benefiting humankind via global safety compared to other philanthropies. Maxipok, a kind of satisficing rule, is different from Maximin (“Choose the action that has the best worst-case outcome.”)[[26]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn26#_ftn26" \o "). Since we cannot completely eliminate existential risks (at any moment we could be sent into the dustbin of cosmic history by the advancing front of a vacuum phase transition triggered in a remote galaxy a billion years ago) using maximin in the present context has the consequence that we should choose the act that has the greatest benefits under the assumption of impending extinction. In other words, maximin implies that we should all start partying as if there were no tomorrow. While that option is indisputably attractive, it seems best to acknowledge that there just might be a tomorrow, especially if we play our cards right.