Conflict Management and Peace Science

[DOI:10.1177/0738894211413066]
Vol 28(4): 377–401

cmps

Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918–2001

TODD S. SECHSER
University of Virginia

The study of military coercion is a central topic in international relations, and in recent years research on coercive threats has yielded a long list of important theoretical innovations. In 1960, Thomas Schelling drew a distinction between threats meant to *deter* and those designed to *compel*, but empirical research about coercion has paid much more attention to deterrence than compellence. This is problematic because deterrence and compellence are thought to operate according to different dynamics. This article introduces the Militarized Compellent Threats dataset, which is designed specifically to help test hypotheses about the use and effectiveness of compellent threats in international politics. I describe the rationale behind the dataset, present coding procedures and basic descriptive statistics, and offer comparisons to several related datasets.

KEYWORDS: bargaining; coercion; coercive diplomacy; compellence; crises; dataset; threats

The use and effectiveness of coercive military threats are key topics of interest in international relations scholarship. Coercive threats are interesting from a theoretical perspective because they represent efforts to achieve efficient (i.e. peaceful) resolutions to interstate disputes, yet they do not always work. Explaining why some threats succeed and others fail is therefore of central importance for scholars seeking to understand the causes of war and the conditions of peace. In addition, recent scholarship about threats has generated several important innovations for the broader study of international relations. Thanks in large part to research about military threats, we know a great deal more about the logic of costly signaling (e.g. Fearon, 1994b, 1997; Slantchev, 2005), audience costs in democracies and autocracies (e.g. Fearon, 1994a; Schultz, 2001; Ramsay, 2004; Weeks, 2008), reputations in international relations (e.g. Press, 2005; Sartori, 2005), cheap talk and diplomacy (e.g. Kurizaki, 2007; Trager, 2010), selection effects in empirical research (e.g. Morrow, 1989; Fearon, 2002), and a wide variety of other phenomena.

Half a century ago, Thomas Schelling's canonical work about military coercion, *The Strategy of Conflict* (1960), drew an important distinction between coercive threats based on the nature of their objective. He argued that one can distinguish between *deterrent* threats, which are designed to dissuade an opponent from undertaking some hypothetical course of action, and *compellent* threats, whose

goal is to frighten an opponent into relinquishing a valuable possession or altering its behavior.[1] In other words, Schelling held that there is a difference between a coercive threat intended to preserve the status quo and a "more active kind of threat" designed to change it.[2]

Since Schelling identified this distinction, however, Western scholarship about coercive diplomacy has focused almost exclusively on deterrence, in part due to the emphasis on containment in US foreign policy during the Cold War.[3] As a result, our understanding of deterrent threats has made great strides over the past several decades. In contrast, the study of the dynamics and effectiveness of compellent threats has lagged. Indeed, only a few scholars have taken up the challenge of explicitly evaluating theories about compellence.[4] As an illustration, a search of political science journals published between 1960 and 2006 using the JSTOR academic database retrieves 152 security studies articles containing the words "deterrence" or "deterrent" in the title, but just four containing "compellence" or "compellent". Moreover, the dominant datasets used in quantitative studies of threats and coercion—namely, the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) and International Crisis Behavior (ICB) datasets—do not distinguish between deterrent and compellent threats, making dedicated research about compellent threats difficult. The lack of explicit attention to compellence is surprising because much scholarship about threats, crisis bargaining, and the outbreak of war seems to be based—whether implicitly or explicitly—on a characterization of interstate crises that closely resembles compellence. A great deal of contemporary theoretical work about interstate conflict, for example, employs a variation of the canonical ultimatum game (Güth et al., 1982) in which the first move of the game resembles a compellent demand.[5] Data about compellent threats would be useful for testing these theoretical models.

The lack of an explicit empirical focus on compellent threats in international relations scholarship is also troubling because the dynamics of deterrence and

---

[1] Schelling elaborated further on this distinction in his later book, *Arms and Influence* (1966: 69–91).

[2] Somewhat confusingly, the term "coercion" is sometimes used interchangeably with "compellence" (e.g. Pape, 1996). Here I follow Schelling (1966: 71) in adopting a broad usage of "coercion" to encompass both deterrent and compellent objectives. Even deterrent threats, after all, are designed to coerce states into taking courses of action (or inaction) that they otherwise would rather avoid.

[3] Illustrative examples of the wide range of scholarship on deterrence include George and Smoke (1974); Huth (1988); and Powell (1990). For a comprehensive review of this literature, see Huth (1999).

[4] Major studies of compellence include Blechman and Kaplan (1978); Petersen (1986); George and Simons (1994); Jakobsen (1998); Freedman (1998); and Art and Cronin (2003).

[5] See, for instance, Fearon (1995); Schultz (2001); Reed (2003); Filson and Werner (2004); Langlois and Langlois (2006); Slantchev (2010).

compellence are widely believed to be very different. In particular, it is thought that compellence is "harder" than deterrence (Schelling, 1966; Art, 1980). Scholars have offered an abundance of reasons why this may be the case. For his part, Schelling (1966) suggested that the burden of the first move borne by challengers makes compellent threats less believable. Posen (1996) argued that acceding to a compellent threat invites future predation, whereas capitulating to a deterrent threat does not. A third possibility is that compellent threats are more likely to offend a target's sense of national honor: Art (2003: 362) asserts that "compellence more directly engages the passions of the target state than does deterrence because of the pain and humiliation inflicted upon it". Behavioral psychology offers a fourth explanation, suggesting that individuals' inherent aversion to losses may make them more resistant to compellent threats (Davis, 2000; Schaub, 2004). All of these reasons imply that we should not simply extrapolate from deterrence studies about the determinants of successful compellent threats. Dedicated research is needed.

This article introduces a dataset designed specifically to help test hypotheses about the use and effectiveness of compellent threats in international politics. The Militarized Compellent Threats (MCT) dataset, which covers the years 1918–2001, contains *interstate demands to change the status quo* which are *backed by the threat of military force*.[6] The following pages lay out the rationale for constructing this dataset and describe the characteristics of the dataset itself. First, I describe coding rules and procedures for the MCT dataset, including some of the more important coding choices made during its construction. Second, I present basic descriptive statistics about key items of interest in the data and evaluate several bivariate relationships. Third, I compare the MCT dataset with several other relevant datasets, including the MID and ICB datasets. The article concludes with a discussion of possible applications of the MCT dataset in empirical research.

Militarized Compellent Threats: Coding Rules and Procedures

Unit of Analysis and Rules for Case Inclusion

The Militarized Compellent Threats dataset contains 210 distinct interstate compellent threat episodes between the end of World War I and 2001.[7] Each compellent

[6] As discussed below, the focus of the dataset is on compellent *threats* rather than compellence writ large, the latter of which may also involve efforts to overturn the status quo through the outright use of brute physical force. Threats constitute only one of many classes of instruments with which compellence can be attempted, but the emphasis on them parallels the focus on explicit threats in recent empirical work about deterrence.

[7] Sources used to identify and research these cases include the two primary datasets used in quantitative scholarship about interstate conflict: the International Crisis Behavior (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997) and Militarized Interstate Dispute (Jones et al., 1996; Ghosn et al., 2004) datasets; various datasets or collections of case studies gathered by other scholars in studies about coercion and war (Lauren, 1972; Blechman and Kaplan, 1978; Karsten et al., 1984; Mandel, 1986; Petersen, 1986; Huth, 1988; George and Simons, 1994; Cable, 1994; Pape, 1996; Huth, 1996; Horowitz and Reiter, 2001; Art and Cronin, 2003; Lewis and Schultz, 2005);

threat—whether issued by one state or a group of states collectively—constitutes one episode in the dataset.

A militarized compellent threat is defined as an explicit demand by one state (the challenger) that another state (the target) alter the status quo in some material way, backed by a threat of military force if the target does not comply. As defined in the MCT dataset, compellent threats have three key features:

1. A compellent threat must contain a demand for a material change in the status quo. Demands for policy reversals are insufficient if the policy in question has not yet been implemented, or if the material effect of that policy is functionally nonexistent. An example of a threat disqualified on these grounds is Zhou Enlai's 1950 warning to the United States not to cross the 38th parallel into North Korea. While some scholars classify this as a compellent threat since the US decision to enter North Korea was approved before the threat was issued (Christensen, 1992), the fact that US forces had not actually entered North Korea at the time of China's warning excludes it from the dataset.

2. A compellent threat must involve an assurance of future military action if the demand is not met. Such an assurance may be transmitted through explicit verbal communication or through public military maneuvers or demonstrations that coincide with the demand. Threats transmitted among combatants during wartime, however, are not included in the dataset. If it is the case, as Schelling (1966) argues, that compellent threats face an inherent credibility problem because the "last clear chance" to avoid military conflict rests with the challenger, then threats made after war has already been initiated are likely to be qualitatively different from those initiated during peacetime.

3. A compellent threat must be made from one state to another. Threats against leaders of rebel organizations, terrorist groups, intergovernmental organizations, and other non-state actors are not included. At the same time, a demand need not be communicated among heads of state in order to be included in the dataset, so long as the target believes that the demand was authorized by the challenger's government. The most explicit US threat against the Soviet Union during the Cuban missile crisis, for instance, was made by Attorney General Robert Kennedy during a meeting with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Yet because the Soviets clearly believed that the threat had President John F. Kennedy's blessing, it is included in the dataset.

Each compellent threat "episode" contains one target state, but an episode may contain multiple challengers. A state is considered a challenger if it threatened to participate in the use of military force in support of the compellent demand. The vast majority of cases contain only one challenger, but a few—such as the 1998/99 NATO threat against Serbia—involve multiple challengers. When threats are made

---

and other encyclopedic histories of international conflict (Butterworth, 1976; Jessup, 1989; Allcock et al., 1992; Goldstein, 1992; Berkovitch and Jackson, 1997; Jessup, 1998; Stearns, 2001; Clodfelter, 2008; Sarkees and Wayman, 2009). Data about each case were then supplemented by additional sources as needed.

against multiple targets, however, each target denotes a separate episode. For example, the Soviet threat against Britain and France during the 1956 Suez crisis constitutes two separate episodes in the dataset. Single episodes, however, may contain multiple demands—indeed, many compellent threats in the dataset involve several demands issued simultaneously. Individual threats of force define an episode, so that multiple demands issued together are counted as one observation if a single threat of military force backed them. In contrast, a string of demands may constitute multiple observations if a new military threat was made each time. The reparations crises involving Germany after World War I, for instance, appear as several discrete episodes in the dataset, because Britain and France issued new threats of force each time they made new demands. But a long list of Japanese demands issued against China in 1936 is considered one episode, since Japan issued only one threat of military force in conjunction with the demands.

Several important issues deserve elaboration here. First, an important consequence of restricting compellent threats to demands for *material* changes is that the dataset excludes incidents in which a state delivering a compellent threat has already seized the item that it demanded. For example, a state might occupy a disputed piece of territory, demanding that the previous owner "renounce its claim" or some such thing. Similarly, a state might use military threats to persuade another state to recognize a separatist territory's independence. The view taken here is that these are typically acts of deterrence rather than compellence, since they aim to preserve the new status quo. To comply with demands of this sort, a target need do nothing at all, whereas compellent threats require an active response from the target. For instance, during the so-called "War of Flags" in 1996, Greece and Turkey took turns planting their national flags on the island of Imia (known in Turkey as Kardak), claiming it as national territory, and warning the other side to terminate its claim. These incidents are not considered compellent threats—and thus are excluded from the MCT dataset—because the seizures preceded the demands, rendering them *faits accomplis*. To comply with such demands, a target would simply need to do nothing.

The material-change criterion is useful because it helps address a thorny problem: namely, the fact that interstate crises are often characterized by disagreements about what constitutes the legitimate status quo, thus potentially blurring the line between deterrence and compellence. This issue has created some controversy in previous research about coercive threats. In their critique of Huth and Russett's (1984, 1988) quantitative work on extended deterrence, Lebow and Stein (1989) argued that many of the cases contained in Huth and Russett's deterrence dataset could be plausibly described as episodes of compellence. For example, in the view of Lebow and Stein, to classify US threats against China in the 1950s as deterrent would be to subscribe to the partisan American view that the threats were intended only to defend Taiwan. From the Chinese perspective, they argued, the threats were compellent, since they were issued "in the hope of forcing Beijing to accept an otherwise unnatural division of its country" (1989: 354). Likewise, Lebow and Stein held that the US threat to protect Panama from a Colombian invasion in 1903 was compellent rather than deterrent because it forced Colombia to recognize Panama's independence by refraining from crushing

the Panamanian revolt. The central point is that compellence and deterrence may be in the eye of the beholder: when there is disagreement about what the rightful status quo looks like, the same threat can appear deterrent to one participant but compellent to another.

The MCT dataset attempts to address this problem by establishing an objective material reference point for distinguishing deterrence and compellence. By the dataset's rules, compellent threats aim to alter the material status quo, whereas deterrent threats aim to preserve it. A threat designed to stop another state from returning to a recent status quo ante might be perceived as compellent, but such threats are excluded here to ensure that the cases in the dataset are based on a definition of the status quo that is as objective as possible.[8] Indeed, many deterrent threats could be potentially perceived as compellent, so an objective distinction is important if the conceptual difference between deterrence and compellence is to have any meaning operationally.

Second, these rules may seem excessively rigid in that they exclude many cases of what some might traditionally consider compellence. As defined by Schelling (1966), compellence is a strategy of coercion designed to induce a target state to change the status quo, and it may involve either coercive diplomacy (that is, words alone) or outright physical compulsion. In a strict technical sense, then, compellence can succeed even when a threat fails, so long as the challenger eventually forces the target to alter the status quo. But it is important to distinguish between *compellence* and *compellent threats*, since the logic of coercion may be distinct from the logic of military victory. Thus, the dataset I have collected includes only cases in which compellent threats were made; instances of outright physical coercion are included only if they were preceded by a demand.

In a similar vein, the dataset's rules consciously exclude threats which lack explicitly enumerated demands. The purpose of excluding such episodes is to ensure that the dataset contains only cases in which both sides agreed about the nature and extent of the challenger's threat. The inclusion of ambiguous or implicit compellent demands could undermine the dataset's ability to shed light on the causes of success and failure since such threats might fail simply because the target did not correctly understand them. Restricting the dataset's scope to episodes with clear demands helps minimize this problem.[9]

Third, it is important to note that a compellent demand need not include a specific deadline in order to be included in the MCT dataset. Some scholars assert that "compellence must have a deadline or it is pointless" (Dixit and Skeath, 2004:

[8] It is important to note that the definition of the status quo in the dataset is not meant to imply any sort of normative judgment about legitimacy or rightful ownership; the idea is simply to establish objective criteria that ensure a high level of consistency across cases.

[9] The problem of excluding implicit demands is much more serious in the study of deterrence, since some of the most important deterrent threats—"do not invade or I will attack you"—are effective without ever being stated outright. This problem is likely to be less severe with respect to compellent threats, however, since it is more difficult to insinuate demands when they call for specific actions.

330),[10] but a fixed time limit for action is not necessary for a threat to be compellent in nature. In fact, compellent threats rarely carry an explicit deadline (though one is sometimes implied), since leaders often prefer to retain policy flexibility in crises. One might conjecture that compellence is more likely to be effective when a firm deadline accompanies the threat, but this claim is better suited as empirical proposition to be tested rather than a definitional restriction.

Fourth, a natural question is whether threats that are not "serious" belong in the dataset. Non-serious threats could take at least three different forms. First, states might issue compellent threats without any intention of following through on them if they are defied. These threats might best be described as limited probes in which the challenger hopes for a cheap victory but holds out no real expectation of success. A second possibility is that compellent threats might be issued by leaders who plan to use military force whether or not the target complies. Some have described the 2003 US compellent threat against Iraq in this way, arguing that the Bush administration planned to invade irrespective of Iraq's reply.[11] Finally, it is possible that some challengers intentionally make excessively harsh compellent demands that they believe will be rejected, perhaps in hopes that the rejection will provide a pretext for war. Austria's ultimatum against Serbia in July 1914 seems to fit this description, in that Austrian leaders hoped that Serbia would refuse their harsh demands, thereby giving Austria a sufficient public justification for war. In each of these three types of cases, there is legitimate doubt about whether the compellent threat represented a sincere demand by the challenger.[12]

The MCT dataset includes even potentially insincere compellent threats because, while their insincerity is often obvious in retrospect, it is not necessarily so clear at the time a threat is made. It is dangerous to exclude cases based on information available only in hindsight, since this could remove cases that would be useful in helping determine when and why certain threats are seen as insincere bluffs, whereas others are not. To explain the outcomes of compellent threats, the focus must be on perceptions of credibility during crises rather than afterward, since *post hoc* judgments may be colored by information not known to decision-makers at the time.

Variables and Coding Rules

For each compellent threat episode, the dataset provides information about several variables related to the characteristics of the threat.[13]

---

[10] Indeed, Schelling (1966: 72) argues that compellent threats must have deadlines; George (1994: 18) and Lauren (1972: 137) similarly claim that an ultimatum must contain a "time limit for compliance."

[11] For example, Jervis (2005: 68–9).

[12] The sincerity of threats was a major point of contention in the debate in *World Politics* about Huth and Russett's extended-immediate deterrence data. See Lebow and Stein (1989); Huth and Russett (1990).

[13] See the appendix for a complete list of variables and descriptions.

Participants. The first set of variables identifies the challenger(s) and target using standard Correlates of War country codes, as well as the year the threat was initiated. Although several compellence episodes involve multiple challengers, the threatening coalitions in these cases tend to be spearheaded by one state. For these cases, the *primary challenger* is defined as the state likely to contribute the most military effort to executing the threat against the target. In almost all cases, identifying the primary challenger was straightforward, but a few episodes required a judgment based on historical evidence.

Issue type. The dataset also classifies each compellent threat according to the class of issue precipitating the threat. Five categories of issues are included. *Territorial possession* denotes demands for control over disputed land or ocean territory. Episodes in which the challenger demanded the withdrawal of opposing military forces from disputed areas are also considered territorial, since the issue relates to physical possession and control of land. *Policy* changes involve demands to reverse or implement national policies that are unrelated to the possession of disputed territory. Import tariff reductions, the treatment of particular ethnic groups, and the acceptance of international weapons inspectors all qualify as policy issues. *Reparations* incorporate demands for money or other concessions to compensate the challenger for perceived injustices. *Leadership* demands include all demands to remove or replace particular individuals within the target's government.[14] *Other* demands include those that do not fall naturally into one of the four preceding categories.

Demonstrations and uses of force. A third group of variables provides information about whether military force was used either for demonstrative or violent purposes during compellent threat episodes. These indicators are crucial for two reasons. First, demonstrations or shows of force may be useful as costly signals of a challenger's intent to execute a compellent threat; likewise, a challenger may employ limited levels of force to communicate its resolve. Second, the magnitude of force used during a dispute could serve as a useful indicator of the effectiveness of a compellent threat. A threat that induces compliance without the use of force naturally would be considered more successful than one in which the target complies only after a major military contest, even if the same objectives are ultimately achieved. The dataset thus contains variables indicating demonstrations of force, actual uses of force, and the target's level of fatalities resulting from uses of force by the challenger. The fatality variable is included in lieu of a judgment about whether the magnitude of force used in any given case was truly meaningful or merely symbolic. The damage that would be done to data replicability by the latter method is obvious; the use of

[14] Such demands need not be restricted to heads of state. There are three leadership-related demands in the dataset in which the leader in question was not a head of state: Germany's 1938 demand that specific individuals be appointed to key Austrian cabinet posts, and two Japanese demands for the resignations of Chinese mayors or provincial leaders during the 1930s.

a fatality threshold addresses this problem by providing objective data rather than a subjective appraisal.[15]

Compliance. A key variable of interest in the study of coercive threats, naturally, is whether the target complied voluntarily with the threat—that is, whether the target made modifications to the status quo in accordance with the challenger's demands. The dataset codes three levels of compliance. Targets that comply with the main substance of the challenger's demands are coded as complying in *full*. Episodes in which a target acquiesced to some but not all of the challenger's demands are considered cases of *partial* compliance. In all other cases, the episode is considered an instance of *non-compliance*.[16]

Compulsion. In many cases in the dataset, the challenger achieved its objectives, but only because it forcibly imposed them—not because the target complied with its demands. For example, although the US compellent threat against Iraq in 1990 was rejected by Saddam Hussein, the United States and its allies nonetheless expelled Iraqi forces from Kuwait and achieved their ultimate objectives by force. To help identify such cases, the compulsion variable measures the extent to which a challenger ultimately accomplished its objectives, given that it used military force against the target. The indicator thus helps differentiate cases of brute force from episodes of coercion. Its measurement scale is equivalent to the scale used to measure compliance: the challenger's objectives (represented by its compellent demands) may be achieved fully, partially, or not at all. This variable therefore helps to highlight cases in which a challenger employed raw force to seize its objective after a failed coercive threat. This distinction is perhaps most important in territorial disputes, in which a challenger may fail to coerce an adversary into peacefully relinquishing a territory but subsequently annex it by force.[17]

---

[15] Because precise fatality data are difficult to locate, the fatality variable indicates only whether the target suffered 100 or more total fatalities in military operations associated with the threat. While available information permits judgments about a 100-fatality threshold, fatality data for most crises are simply too rare and imprecise to make similar judgments about, say, a 50- or 25-fatality threshold. Future research may be able to supply more precise data.

[16] Demands that are not compellent in nature were not evaluated for the compliance measurement.

[17] Note that the compliance and compulsion variables do not register successful outcomes when a target alters its behavior for reasons other than the challenger's threat or use of force. This is an important condition since states sometimes reject compellent threats but later behave in ways consistent with the challenger's demands. For example, in 1979 Iran's revolutionary government rejected demands to release hostages that were taken during Iran's seizure of the American embassy. Iran eventually released the hostages in 1981, but the American threat to use force had dissipated by then. Although US objectives were perhaps achieved in a technical sense, neither the COMPLIANCE nor COMPULSION variable considers it a success since the outcome was clearly unrelated to American threats.

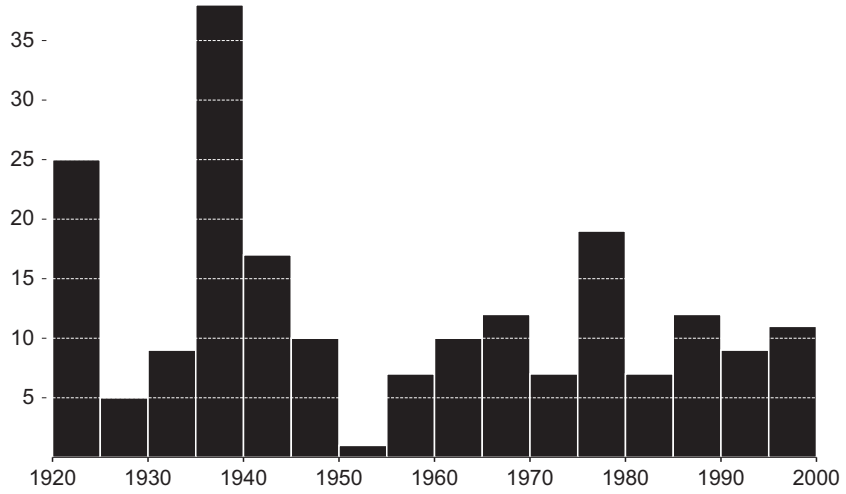

Figure 1. The Frequency of Compellent Threats, 1920–2000

Descriptive Statistics

The Militarized Compellent Threats dataset contains 210 distinct compellent threat episodes, representing a total of 242 challenger–target dyads.[18] The dataset begins after the World War I armistice in November 1918 and ends in 2001. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of threat episodes over time, presented in five-year intervals. On average, there were 2.5 compellence episodes per year—12.5 episodes per five-year period. Two periods exhibit unusually high frequencies of compellent threats. First, the period 1920–24 saw 25 separate compellence episodes, as Eastern European states tried to sort out a long list of competing territorial claims after the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian empire. This period also includes the reparations crises between France, Britain, and Germany in the years following World War I. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the interval with the greatest number of compellence episodes is the period 1935–39, during which both Germany and Japan embarked on aggressive campaigns of territorial expansion involving multiple compellent demands against states like Czechoslovakia, Poland, and China. The Soviet Union also made compellent threats in 1939 against Finland and the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. At the other end of the spectrum, both the late 1920s and early 1950s stand out as being particularly calm, with a total of just six compellent threats between the two periods.

Table 1 lists the ten most common challengers and targets in the dataset, according to the number of episodes in which they participated. As might be expected, states classified as major powers by the Correlates of War project constitute the majority of challengers in the dataset, appearing in 134 of the 242 dyads (55.4%). Indeed, of the eight states considered major powers during the

[18] Throughout this section I distinguish between "episodes," in which there may be multiple challengers (but only one target), and "dyads," which contain a single challenger. Overall, 24 of the 210 episodes (11.4%) in the dataset involve multiple challengers.

Table 1. The Ten Most Common Challengers and Targets in the MCT Dataset

Challengers	*Targets*
Japan (28)	China (24)
Soviet Union (26)	United Kingdom (10)
United Kingdom (26)	Soviet Union (9)
United States (21)	France (8)
France (14)	Hungary (7)
Turkey (13)	Czechoslovakia (6)
Germany (12)	Yugoslavia (6)
Iraq (7)	Iran (5)
South Africa (7)	Iraq (5)
Italy (6)	Lithuania (5)

Table 2. Power Status and Dyad Frequency in the MCT Dataset

Directed Dyad Type	*Frequency*	*Proportion*
Major–Major	20	8.3%
Major–Minor	114	47.1%
Minor–Major	16	6.6%
Minor–Minor	92	38.0%
Total	242	100.0%

period covered by the MCT dataset, only one—China—does not rank among the ten most frequent challengers.[19] Japan appears most frequently as a challenger in compellence dyads, largely as a consequence of its frequent threats against China, the Soviet Union, and Mongolia during the 1930s. Interestingly, great powers also top the list of the most common targets in the MCT dataset. At the top of the target list is China, owing again to Japan's demands against the Chinese government during the 1930s, followed by Britain, the Soviet Union, and France.

Major powers, however, tend not to target one another with their compellent threats. As Table 2 reports, major and minor powers target major powers with roughly the same frequency—a frequency that is far lower than the rate at which minor powers are targeted. Compellence episodes in which major powers were targeted include, among others, two crises in 1922 and 1923 in which Turkey sought to expel British, French, and Italian forces from territory it claimed from Greece; several Japanese demands against the Soviet Union in the 1930s, one of which erupted into the Changkufeng War; Germany's threats against Britain and France in 1939 regarding concessions in Poland; Soviet demands for Britain and France to terminate military operations at the Suez Canal in 1956; and US threats against the Soviet Union during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and the 1970 Cienfuegos crisis. Demands against minor powers are much more frequent, comprising a total of 206 dyads in the dataset (85.1%).

[19] The other major powers in the Correlates of War dataset include the United Kingdom, Soviet Union, Japan, United States, France, Germany, and Italy.

Table 3. Regime Type and Dyad Frequency in the MCT Dataset

Directed Dyad Type	*Frequency*	*Proportion*
Democracy–Democracy	20	8.3%
Democracy–Anocracy	14	5.8%
Democracy–Autocracy	54	22.3%
Democratic Challenger	*88*	*36.4%*
Anocracy–Democracy	16	6.6%
Anocracy–Anocracy	33	13.6%
Anocracy–Autocracy	18	7.4%
Anocratic Challenger	*67*	*27.6%*
Autocracy–Democracy	21	8.7%
Autocracy–Anocracy	17	7.0%
Autocracy–Autocracy	49	20.2%
Autocratic Challenger	*87*	*36.0%*
Total	242	100.0%

With respect to regime type, democracies are the most frequent challengers in the MCT dataset, comprising 36.4% of the 242 dyads (see Table 3).[20] This pattern is relevant to the ongoing debate in international relations scholarship about the conflict behavior of democratic states: do democracies behave less aggressively in general, vis-à-vis one another, or not at all? The frequency of democratic compellent threats seems to cast some doubt on the notion that democracies are less aggressive in general, since democracies comprise roughly 36% of compellent threat challengers in the dataset but only about 32% of all country-year observations during the period from 1918 to 2001. Likewise, while autocracies comprise a smaller proportion of challengers than do democracies, throughout the world autocracies in fact outnumbered democracies for 59 of the 84 years contained in the dataset.[21] These observations suggest that democracies probably are not less prone to make compellent threats overall, although a more thorough multivariate analysis would be preferable for evaluating this hypothesis in light of possible confounding factors.

Although democracies comprise the largest share of challengers in the dataset, they are the least likely type of regime to be the target of a compellent threat. In the 210 compellence episodes contained in the dataset, just 50 (23.8%) involved democratic targets, whereas 104 (49.5%) involved autocratic targets.

[20] Data on regime type are from the Polity IV dataset (Marshall and Jaggers, 2007). A state's Polity score is obtained by subtracting its autocracy score from its democracy score, both of which are reported on a 10-point scale. Democracies are defined as states with Polity scores from +6 to +10, whereas autocracies are defined as states with Polity scores ranging from −6 to −10.

[21] According to the Polity IV dataset, autocracies outnumbered democracies in this period for all but the years 1918–29, 1946, and 1990–2001.

Table 4. Military Capabilities and Compellent Threat Outcomes

	Higher Challenger Military Expenditures	*Lower Challenger Military Expenditures*
Threat Success	59 (36.2%)	28 (59.6%)
Threat Failure	104 (63.8%)	19 (40.4%)
Total	163 (100.0%)	47 (100.0%)

$\chi^2 = 8.217$ ($p = 0.004$).

Consistent with the common finding that territorial issues are strongly associated with the onset and escalation of militarized conflicts, 123 compellent threat episodes (58.8%) contain territorial demands.[22] Demands for policy changes were involved in 99 episodes (47.1%). Far less frequent are compellent demands for changes in leadership or regime, which appear in 23 episodes (11.0%), and demands for reparations (15 episodes, or 7.1%).[23]

Correlates of Successful Compellent Threats

Overall, challengers achieved full compliance in 87 of the 210 compellent threat episodes (41.4%) in the dataset. Although the aim of this article is not to conduct an extensive empirical analysis of the factors influencing compellent threat outcomes, it is nevertheless worthwhile to explore some of the bivariate associations between the characteristics and outcomes of compellent threats. These associations are no substitute for more rigorous multivariate models, but they can offer initial plausibility tests of key hypotheses and identify interesting patterns in the data that may merit further investigation.[24]

An immediate question is whether a challenger's material power is associated with successful compellent threats. As noted above, one of the most robust patterns in the dataset is the tendency for major powers to choose minor powers as compellence targets. Indeed, challengers enjoyed an advantage in material capabilities—measured by the widely-used Composite Indicator of National Capabilities (CINC) index[25]—in 67.6% of dyads in the dataset. Similarly, the challenger's military expenditures surpassed those of the target in 77.6% of dyads. But while compellence challengers tend to choose weaker targets, it does not appear that having an advantage in material capabilities is associated with higher rates of compellent threat success. Table 4 compares success rates for compellence challengers based on whether the challenger's military expenditures were higher

[22] For a good review of the literature on territorial disputes and conflict, see Huth (2000).

[23] These figures sum to greater than 100% because episodes often involve multiple issue types; indeed, 73 of the 210 episodes in the dataset (34.8%) fall into more than one issue category.

[24] "Success" is operationalized here as full compliance (COMPLIANCE = 2).

[25] The CINC index is contained in the Correlates of War project's National Material Capabilities dataset (Singer et al., 1972).

Table 5. Nuclear Weapons and Compellent Threat Outcomes

	Challenger Nuclear Advantage	*No Nuclear Advantage*
Threat Success	6 (18.2%)	81 (45.8%)
Threat Failure	27 (81.8%)	96 (54.2%)
Total	33 (100.0%)	177 (100.0%)

$\chi^2 = 8.720$ ($p = 0.003$).

than those of the target. If a favorable balance of military power is indeed associated with compellence success, then challengers with greater military spending ought to exhibit higher success rates. But in fact, the opposite appears to be true: challengers with higher military expenditures are considerably less likely to make effective threats. This pattern contrasts with the findings of several deterrence studies (e.g. Huth, 1988), which have found that the odds of a successful threat increase in tandem with the sender's military capabilities.

The possession of nuclear weapons also appears to be associated with failed compellent threats, reinforcing the curiously negative association between power and compellence success.[26] Specifically, Table 5 shows that compellent threats from nuclear challengers against non-nuclear opponents are much less likely to work when compared to threats issued by states without such a nuclear advantage.[27] Indeed, the MCT dataset contains only six successful threats from nuclear states against non-nuclear adversaries: Soviet threats against France during the Suez crisis in 1956 and against Czechoslovakia in 1968, the US removal of the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic in 1961, and successful US threats against Haiti, Yugoslavia, and Iraq during the 1990s. Moreover, of these six cases, only the Soviet threat in 1956 can plausibly be said to have invoked the possible use of nuclear weapons.[28] Challengers facing peers of identical nuclear (or non-nuclear) status, however, succeed more than twice as often as challengers enjoying nuclear asymmetry: 45.8% versus 18.2%. This appears inconsistent with the findings of Beardsley and Asal (2009), who argue in a sophisticated study that nuclear-superior states tend to win crises more often than other states. Further research could help uncover the reasons for these divergent results.[29]

[26] In other work I have argued that a challenger's military power paradoxically raises the reputational stakes of a crisis, thereby giving targets additional incentives to stand firm (Sechser, 2010). The correlations in Tables 4 and 5 seem consistent with this prediction.

[27] Nuclear capabilities data are from Jo and Gartzke (2007). Singh and Way (2004) disagree slightly about when Israel, India, and Pakistan crossed the nuclear threshold, but their data yield nearly identical results nonetheless. Note that a nuclear advantage is measured here only as a dichotomous variable and does not incorporate factors such as arsenal size, range, yield, or delivery mechanism.

[28] See the discussion in Betts (1987: 62–65).

[29] For a more thorough treatment of this question, see Sechser and Fuhrmann (2011).

Table 6. Challengers' Demonstrations of Military Force and Compellent Threat Outcomes

	Demonstration of Force	*No Demonstration*
Threat Success	81 (50.0%)	6 (12.5%)
Threat Failure	81 (50.0%)	42 (87.5%)
Total	162 (100.0%)	48 (100.0%)

$\chi^2 = 21.459$ ($p = 0.000$).

Table 7. Democracies and Compellent Threat Outcomes

	Democratic Challenger	*Non-Democratic Challenger*
Threat Success	26 (40.0%)	61 (42.1%)
Threat Failure	39 (60.0%)	84 (57.9%)
Total	65 (100.0%)	145 (100.0%)

$\chi^2 = 0.079$ ($p = 0.778$).

An equally pressing question in the study of coercive diplomacy addresses the effects of signaling during interstate crises. The MCT data can help evaluate the proposition that certain actions taken during crises can make threats more credible and more effective. Specifically, the dataset's DEMONSTRATION variable contains information about whether the challenger mobilized troops or conducted conspicuous military maneuvers after issuing a compellent threat; these actions are often cited as examples of signals of resolve that could improve the credibility of threats. Table 6 presents the correlation between such demonstrations of force and the success of compellent threats. The bivariate association seems to support the logic of costly signaling: threats accompanied by military signals succeed at a 50.0% rate, whereas threats without demonstrative signals succeed just 12.5% of the time.

One of the most intriguing propositions to emerge from the literature on signaling in crises is the notion that democracies tend to make more credible commitments due to the ability of democratic leaders to generate audience costs and the signaling effect of opposition parties (e.g. Fearon, 1994a; Schultz, 2001). If true, the logic would imply that compellent threats from democracies are more likely to succeed. However, as Table 7 indicates, this hypothesis is not strongly supported by the MCT data. Indeed, democracies' compellent threats actually appear to succeed at a somewhat lower rate—40.0% compared to 42.1% for non-democracies.[30] This seems to cast some doubt on the argument that democracies make more credible threats. Moreover, the statistical insignificance of this relationship, when compared to the apparent effectiveness of demonstrations of force, raises doubts about the proposition that "hand-tying" signals—such as

[30] Disaggregated further, the success rate for autocracies is 42.3%; for anocracies it is 41.0%.

public threats from democracies[31]—are superior to "sunk-cost" measures like military mobilizations (Fearon, 1997).

Comparison to Existing Datasets

This section assesses the extent to which the MCT dataset overlaps with three other international conflict datasets, all of which served as source material for the MCT dataset. Two of these datasets—the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) and International Crisis Behavior (ICB) datasets—were not actually designed for studying coercive threats, but because they are so often used for this purpose in empirical research, it is important to evaluate their similarities and differences with the MCT dataset. The third dataset—Petersen's (1986) dataset of compellent threats—was created specifically to test theories about the effectiveness of compellent threats and naturally overlaps to a greater extent with the MCT dataset. Table 8 reports the proportion of cases in each dataset that seem to correspond to episodes in the MCT dataset.[32] Below I briefly describe each of the three datasets and explain how the MCT project aims to correct some of their limitations with respect to the study of compellent threats.

Militarized Interstate Disputes, International Crisis Behavior

Undoubtedly, the two most widely used datasets in the quantitative study of interstate conflict are the MID and ICB datasets. The MID dataset focuses on militarized dispute episodes, defined as "united historical cases of conflict in which the threat, display or use of military force short of war by one member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state" (Jones et al., 1996: 168). A militarized interstate dispute (MID) is triggered by a militarized incident—that is, a threat, display, or use of force short of war—and may contain several interrelated such incidents. Crisis episodes in the ICB archive are defined by three conditions: a threat to a state's basic values; a finite time for responding to the threat; and a heightened probability of military hostilities (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997). Both projects arose from a belief that to understand the causes of conflict among nations, scholars must study not only

[31] As an indicator of the public visibility of the episodes in the MCT dataset, more than 90% of cases contain documentation from a contemporary public news source such as the *New York Times*.

[32] The figures in Table 8 reflect the use of inclusive criteria for identifying parallel cases. Many counterpart cases from other datasets are lengthy disputes and wars that happened to include a compellent threat at some point during the crisis; these cases were classified as "matches" even if the threat was not recognized in the other dataset. The ICB case descriptions, for example, often make no mention of compellent threats that occurred during the crises in the dataset, but I counted such cases as matches nevertheless. Likewise, the sender of a compellent threat is sometimes not listed as a participant in its nearest-match ICB counterpart, but these cases are classified as matches in Table 8 as well. A stricter rule requiring the dates, descriptions, and participants of matching cases to correspond more closely would likely exclude the vast majority of matches.

Table 8. Existing Datasets' Overlap with the Militarized Compellent Threats Dataset

Unit of Analysis	*Episodes from 1918–2001*	*Also in MCT*	*Pct.*
Militarized interstate disputes[a]	1,881	124	6.6%
Interstate military-security crises[b]	435	117	26.9%
Compellent threats[c]	26	14	53.8%

[a] Jones et al., 1996; [b] Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997; [c] Petersen, 1986.

major wars but also militarized encounters that do not escalate to war. Both datasets therefore explicitly aim to include disputes that carried the possibility of war, even if war did not actually occur.

The MID and ICB datasets are frequently used to evaluate hypotheses about the effectiveness of coercive threats, but it is important to note that they were not originally constructed for this purpose. The datasets were designed to provide information on dispute and conflict episodes, but many such episodes—particularly minor militarized encounters—do not involve coercive demands. Several scholars have already noted that the MID dataset contains trivial episodes such as airspace violations, exchanges of fire between border guards, troop exercises, and other skirmishes in which neither side's political authorities ever made a clear demand (e.g. Huth et al., 1993; Gleditsch and Hegre, 1997; Mitchell and Prins, 1999; Cohen and Weeks, 2009). While the episodes in the ICB dataset tend to be more significant, they include events ranging from non-military actions like the US provision of aid to Turkey and Greece in 1947 to large-scale surprise attacks like North Korea's invasion of South Korea in 1950, neither of which involved coercive demands. The MCT dataset aims to screen out these sorts of cases so that only cases involving coercive demands are included. Moreover, since the MID and ICB datasets exclude encounters that never lead to outright militarized action or a heightened probability of war, they may overlook some of the most successful compellent threats—which induce immediate, uncontested compliance—as well as threats that are simply ignored. Table 8 reports the degree to which the MID and ICB crisis listings overlap with the compellence episodes in the MCT dataset.[33]

Petersen: Compellent Threats

Petersen's (1986) analysis of deterrence and compellence was perhaps the first study that aimed explicitly to collect cross-national quantitative data on compellent threats. Petersen collected data for 58 compellence episodes (representing 67 challenger–target dyads between 1848 and 1973) wherein a challenger sought to alter the status quo by threatening a target into changing its behavior or relinquishing some possession. The MCT project aims to correct two important limitations of his dataset. First, Petersen's dataset assumes that all interstate wars represent failed

[33] Because the MID dataset does not provide case summaries for dispute episodes occurring prior to 1992, it is impossible to be certain about the degree of MID and MCT overlap between 1918 and 1991. I attempted to triangulate likely matches using data on crisis participants, dates, and issue type, all of which are provided by the MID dataset.

compellent threats, but in fact many wars involve no compellent threats at all. The 1973 surprise attacks against Israel, for example, were not preceded by compellent demands, but Egypt and Syria are nevertheless listed in Petersen's data as having initiated a (failed) compellent threat. In contrast, the MCT dataset excludes them. Counting all wars as compellence failures exaggerates the failure rate of legitimate compellent threats and undermines inferences about them that might emerge from the data.

Second, Petersen's data do not distinguish between compellent threats and *faits accomplis*. For instance, the Soviet Union is listed as the initiator of a compellent threat in the Cuban missile crisis because it sought to overturn the status quo by constructing missile launch sites in Cuba. This is a misleading characterization, however, because the Soviets issued no compellent threats at any point in the crisis; rather, they hoped to complete the missile sites before the United States could discover them, thereby leaving American leaders with no choice but to accept the revised status quo. *Faits accomplis* such as these are fundamentally distinct from compellent threats since they require no action from the target; indeed, for this reason they are best considered deterrent threats since they aim to coerce a target into passively accepting a newly revised status quo. The MCT dataset therefore excludes these episodes. At the same time, most of Petersen's post-1918 cases are included in the MCT dataset, suggesting that the rules for inclusion are nevertheless similar. The MCT dataset also builds significantly on Peterson's collection, adding 184 episodes that were not contained in his original archive.

Possible Applications

One could envision several ways in which the Militarized Compellent Threats dataset might be used to investigate important questions in international security using quantitative methods. First, and most broadly, the dataset could help evaluate general hypotheses about why coercive military threats succeed and fail. For example, as discussed above, the MCT data would be well-suited for testing the proposition that democracies make more credible threats in interstate crises. Scholars have already tested this argument in a variety of studies (e.g. Partell and Palmer, 1999; Schultz, 2001; Gelpi and Griesdorf, 2001), but these tests tend to rely on the MID and ICB datasets, which contain few cases of coercive threats.[34] This is problematic because theories that posit a relationship between regime type and credibility in crisis bargaining do not make clear predictions about minor incidents in which no discernible threat or coercive demand took place. Empirical tests based on such data therefore reveal little about the validity of hypotheses about coercive threats. The MCT dataset, which requires that each case contain a coercive demand, may therefore be more appropriate for evaluating these hypotheses empirically.

Indeed, in some ways, compellence data may be preferable to deterrence data for evaluating general hypotheses about coercion. One persistent challenge in studying coercion is the difficulty of apprehending the linkage between a coercive

[34] See the discussion in Downes and Sechser (2010).

threat and the target's behavior—in other words, it is often hard to know whether a target's compliant behavior was caused by a threat. This problem is particularly acute in deterrence cases, where the goal of the threat is to preserve a status quo that existed before the threat was even made: one can never be sure whether the recipient of the threat abandoned its plans in response to the threat or simply never intended to act in the first place. Lebow and Stein (1989) criticized Huth and Russett's (1984, 1988) work on deterrence on these grounds, suggesting that many of the deterrent threats in Huth and Russett's database were issued in response to ambiguous or nonexistent challenges, thereby artificially inflating the number of deterrence successes in the dataset. Yet this problem is likely to be less severe in compellence cases, in which compliance requires actively changing the status quo; it seems unlikely that a challenger would make a compellent demand for an item that the target already intended to relinquish.[35] Consequently, compared to deterrence datasets, the MCT data may provide a more reliable gauge of the effects of coercive threats.

A second class of hypotheses that might be testable with MCT data includes propositions about selection effects in interstate crises. Fearon (1994b, 2002) and others have argued that the process of strategic self-selection into (and out of) military crises generates unexpected and sometimes counterintuitive patterns in the population of crises that we actually observe. When applied to cases of extended-immediate deterrence, Fearon shows, the logic of selection effects generates the surprising conclusion that pre-crisis indicators of a defender's interest in a protégé (such as alliances) are likely to be associated with deterrence *failure*. Fearon's analysis is directed toward deterrence cases, but the broader theoretical point also relates to interstate crises and threats of force more generally. The compellent threat episodes contained in the MCT dataset offer a new source of data with which these sorts of propositions about selection effects can be tested.

Third, the MCT data may be useful for drawing comparisons between different types of coercive threats. As noted earlier, one of the most prevalent pieces of conventional wisdom about coercive diplomacy is that compellence is more "difficult" than deterrence. Yet the widespread acceptance of this assumption is curious because there is surprisingly little empirical research to support it.[36] In part this is due to a lack of suitable data: as noted earlier, the datasets most commonly used in quantitative studies of coercion—in particular, the MID and ICB datasets—do not distinguish between deterrence and compellence. The MCT

[35] At the very least, I am aware of no such cases in the MCT dataset.

[36] An exception is Petersen (1986), who collected data on both deterrence and compellence and found that deterrent threats are indeed more likely to succeed. As discussed earlier, however, his dataset of compellent threats is problematic for two reasons. First, it assumes that all interstate wars represent failed compellent threats, when in fact many wars involve no compellent threats at all. Second, it includes *faits accomplis*, which are more properly considered deterrent threats since they aim to coerce a target into accepting a newly-changed status quo. The study's comparison of deterrent and compellent threats may, therefore, be suspect.

dataset thus might be paired with existing deterrence datasets (e.g. Huth, 1988; Danilovic, 2002) to evaluate the two types of threats in comparative perspective—both in terms of their effectiveness and their precipitating conditions. Indeed, when compared to these datasets, compellent threats appear to succeed at a somewhat lower rate. Huth (1988), for instance, finds extended deterrent threats to be effective roughly 59% of the time. Danilovic (2002) is slightly more pessimistic, concluding (with different data) that extended deterrent threats among great powers succeed 50% of the time. In both of these studies, the estimated success rate of deterrence is higher than the 41.4% full-compliance rate for compellent threats in the MCT dataset. This seems to confirm the widely-held belief that compellent threats are less likely to work than deterrent threats. At the same time, this conclusion is only tentative: to properly evaluate this hypothesis, a more rigorous study would need to evaluate the conditions that prompt deterrent and compellent threats in order to correct for likely selection effects, as well as control for other factors that might cause divergence between the two success rates.

Finally, the MCT data might offer a useful indicator of the degree of hostility between states. For a variety of reasons, empirical studies often need to identify interstate relationships marked by a high level of animosity, either as a way of locating relevant cases or for use as a causal variable in empirical models. One common method for doing this uses prior militarized disputes or wars as indicators of hostility (Diehl and Goertz, 2000), but this method may overlook brewing disputes in which tensions are high but militarized encounters have not yet occurred. Another approach uses judgments about national threat perception to identify pairs of rival states (Thompson, 2001), but it excludes (by design) dyads experiencing high levels of hostility for only short periods of time. In the event that the limitations of these two approaches render them inappropriate for a particular study, compellent threats might serve as an alternative indicator of hostility among states that have experienced neither outright military confrontations nor extended periods of enmity.

Conclusion

The literature about coercive diplomacy has long focused on the use and effectiveness of deterrent threats, paying comparatively less attention to threats designed to compel adversaries to change their behavior. Yet, understanding the dynamics of compellent threats has become increasingly vital both for US foreign policy and for the study of international politics in general. This article has described the central features of the Militarized Compellent Threats dataset, which aims to contribute to such an understanding. Its objective is to provide scholars with the ability to test theories about compellence and coercive diplomacy using data collected explicitly for that purpose. Although the foregoing discussion has highlighted some of the differences between the MCT project and resources such as the MID and ICB datasets, it is worth emphasizing that the MCT project seeks to complement, not replace, existing conflict datasets. By providing a new resource for investigating the conditions under which compellent threats yield peaceful settlements to interstate

disputes, it is hoped that the data will prove useful to scholars studying a wide variety of questions about military threats, coercion, and conflict in international relations.

Acknowledgments

This article draws in part from the author's dissertation, "Winning without a fight: Power, reputation, and compellent threats in international crises" (Stanford University, 2007), which received the 2008 Walter Isard Award for the Best Dissertation in Peace Science from the Peace Science Society (International). For many helpful discussions I thank Robert Art, Coit Blacker, Jonathan Caverley, Alexander Downes, James Fearon, Matthew Fuhrmann, Christopher Gelpi, Stephen Gent, Michael Horowitz, Paul Huth, Jeffrey Lewis, Jason Lyall, Scott Sagan, Elizabeth Saunders, Kenneth Schultz, Allan Stam, Michael Tomz, Stephen Walt, and Jessica Weeks. Expert research assistance on this project was provided by Callum Ingram, Zuri Linetsky, Nicholas Meros, Hannah Moody, Jerome Moriarty, Jonathan Shoup-Mendizabal, Anant Shukla, and Brandon Yoder. I also wish to thank the Eisenhower Institute, Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation, Harvard University's Olin Institute for Strategic Studies and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and the Center for International Security Studies at Maryland for fellowships and research support that made this project possible. The Militarized Compellent Threats dataset is available on the website for the Dataverse Network: http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu.

Appendix: Variables in the MCT Dataset

1. CASE ID.
2. YEAR.
3. CHALLENGERS: Lists Correlates of War (COW) country codes for up to three challengers.
4. PRIMARY CHALLENGER: Lists the COW country code of the primary sender of the compellent threat.
5. TARGET: Lists the COW country code for the recipient of the threat.
6. ISSUE TYPE.
   1 Territory
   2 Policy
   3 Reparations
   4 Leadership
   5 Other
7. DEMONSTRATION: Dummy variable that denotes episodes in which the challenger employed demonstrations or shows of force, or conspicuous military mobilizations.
8. FORCE: Dummy variable indicating whether violent military force was used by the challenger at any point during the threat episode.
9. TARGET FATALITIES: Dummy variable indicating whether the target suffered 100 or more fatalities due to military action associated with the compellent threat.
10. COMPLIANCE: Denotes the target's level of voluntary (i.e. non-forcible) compliance with the challenger's demands.

0 No compliance
1 Partial compliance
2 Full compliance

11. COMPULSION: Denotes the extent to which the challenger achieved its ultimate objectives at the end of the episode, given that FORCE = 1.
0 No demands achieved
1 Demands partially achieved
2 Demands fully achieved

References

Allcock, John B., Guy Arnold, Alan J. Day, D. S. Lewis, Lorimer Poultney, Roland Rance, and D. J. Sagar. 1992. *Border and Territorial Disputes*, 3rd edn. Essex: Longman.

Art, Robert J. 1980. To what ends military power? *International Security* 4(4): 3–35.

Art, Robert J. 2003. Coercive diplomacy: What do we know? In *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, eds Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, pp. 359–420. Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace.

Art, Robert J., and Patrick M. Cronin, eds. 2003. *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace.

Beardsley, Kyle, and Victor Asal. 2009. Winning with the bomb. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(2): 278–301.

Bercovitch, Jacob, and Richard Jackson. 1997. *International Conflict: A Chronological Encyclopedia of Conflicts and Their Management, 1945–1995*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly.

Betts, Richard K. 1987. *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Blechman, Barry M., and Stephen S. Kaplan. 1978. *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Brecher, Michael, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld. 1997. *A Study of Crisis*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Butterworth, Robert L. 1976. *Managing Interstate Conflict, 1945–74: Data with Synopses*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Center for International Studies.

Cable, James. 1994. *Gunboat Diplomacy, 1919–1991: Political Applications of Limited Naval Force*. 3rd edn. New York: St. Martin's.

Christensen, Thomas J. 1992. Threats, assurances, and the last chance for peace: The lessons of Mao's Korean war telegrams. *International Security* 17(1): 122–154.

Clodfelter, Micheal. 2008. *Warfare and Armed Conflicts: A Statistical Encyclopedia of Casualty and Other Figures*, 1494–2007. 3rd edn. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Cohen, Dara Kay, and Jessica Lea Weeks. 2009. Red herrings? Fishing trawler disputes, regime type and interstate conflict. Presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, New York, 16 February.

Danilovic, Vesna. 2002. *When the Stakes Are High: Deterrence and Conflict among Major Powers*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Davis, James W., Jr. 2000. *Threats and Promises: The Pursuit of International Influence*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Diehl, Paul F., and Gary Goertz. 2000. *War and Peace in International Rivalry*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Dixit, Avinash K., and Susan Skeath. 2004. *Games of Strategy*. 2nd edn. New York: W. W. Norton.

Downes, Alexander B., and Todd S. Sechser. 2010. The illusion of democratic credibility. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, 2 September.

Fearon, James D. 1994a. Domestic political audiences and the escalation of international disputes. *American Political Science Review* 88(3): 577–592.

Fearon, James D. 1994b. Signaling versus the balance of power and interests: An empirical test of a crisis bargaining model. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 236–269.

Fearon, James D. 1995. Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization* 49(3): 379–414.

Fearon, James D. 1997. Signaling foreign policy interests: Tying hands versus sinking costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(1): 68–90.

Fearon, James D. 2002. Selection effects and deterrence. *International Interactions* 28(1): 5–29.

Filson, Darren, and Suzanne Werner. 2004. Bargaining and fighting: The impact of regime type on war onset, duration, and outcomes. *American Journal of Political Science* 48(2): 296–313.

Freedman, Lawrence. 1998. *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gelpi, Christopher, and Michael Griesdorf. 2001. Winners or losers? Democracies in international crisis. *American Political Science Review* 95(3): 633–647.

George, Alexander L. 1994. Theory and practice. In *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, eds Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, 2nd edn, pp. 13–22. Boulder, CO: Westview.

George, Alexander L., and William E. Simons. 1994. *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*. 2nd edn. Boulder, CO: Westview.

George, Alexander L., and Richard Smoke. 1974. *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ghosn, Faten, Glenn Palmer, and Stuart Bremer. 2004. The MID3 data set, 1993–2001: Procedures, coding rules, and description. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21(2): 133–154.

Gleditsch, Nils Petter, and Håvard Hegre. 1997. Peace and democracy: Three levels of analysis. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(2): 283–310.

Goldstein, Erik. 1992. *Wars and Peace Treaties, 1816–1991*. London: Routledge.

Güth, Werner, Rolf Schmittberger, and Bernd Schwarze. 1982. An experimental analysis of ultimatum bargaining. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 3(4): 367–388.

Horowitz, Michael, and Dan Reiter. 2001. When does aerial bombing work? Quantitative empirical tests, 1917–1999. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(2): 147–173.

Huth, Paul K. 1988. *Extended Deterrence and the Prevention of War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Huth, Paul K. 1996. *Standing Your Ground: Territorial Disputes and International Conflict*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Huth, Paul K. 1999. Deterrence and international conflict: Empirical findings and theoretical debates. *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 25–48.

Huth, Paul K. 2000. Territory: Why are territorial disputes between states a central cause of international conflict? In *What Do We Know About War?*, ed. John A. Vasquez, pp. 85–110. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Huth, Paul K., and Bruce Russett. 1984. What makes deterrence work? Cases from 1900 to 1980. *World Politics* 36(4): 496–526.

Huth, Paul K., and Bruce Russett. 1988. Deterrence failure and crisis escalation. *International Studies Quarterly* 32(1): 29–45.

Huth, Paul K., and Bruce Russett. 1990. Testing deterrence theory: Rigor makes a difference. *World Politics* 42(4): 466–501.

Huth, Paul K., Christopher Gelpi, and D. Scott Bennett. 1993. The escalation of great power militarized disputes: Testing rational deterrence theory and structural realism. *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 609–623.

Jakobsen, Peter Viggo. 1998. *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy After the Cold War: A Challenge for Theory and Practice*. New York: St. Martin's.

Jervis, Robert. 2005. *American Foreign Policy in a New Era*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Jessup, John E. 1989. *A Chronology of Conflict and Resolution, 1945–1985*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Jessup, John E. 1998. *An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Conflict and Conflict Resolution, 1945–1996*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Jo, Dong-Joon, and Erik Gartzke. 2007. Determinants of nuclear weapons proliferation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(1): 167–194.

Jones, Daniel M., Stuart A. Bremer, and J. David Singer. 1996. Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992: Rationale, coding rules, and empirical patterns. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 15(2): 163–213.

Karsten, Peter, Peter D. Howell, and Artis Frances Allen. 1984. *Military Threats: A Systematic Historical Analysis of the Determinants of Success*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Kurizaki, Shuhei. 2007. Efficient secrecy: Public versus private threats in crisis diplomacy. *American Political Science Review* 101(3): 543–558.

Langlois, Catherine C., and Jean-Pierre P. Langlois. 2006. When fully informed states make good the threat of war: Rational escalation and the failure of bargaining. *British Journal of Political Science* 36(4): 645–669.

Lauren, Paul Gordon. 1972. Ultimata and coercive diplomacy. *International Studies Quarterly* 16(2): 131–165.

Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein. 1989. Rational deterrence theory: I think, therefore I deter. *World Politics* 41(2): 208–224.

Lewis, Jeffrey B., and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2005. Estimating state preferences in international crises: Promise and limitations in fully structural estimation. Manuscript, Stanford University.

Mandel, Robert. 1986. The effectiveness of gunboat diplomacy. *International Studies Quarterly* 30(1): 59–76.

Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin, and Brandon C. Prins. 1999. Beyond territorial contiguity: Issues at stake in democratic militarized disputes. *International Studies Quarterly* 43(1): 169–183.

Morrow, James D. 1989. Capabilities, uncertainty, and resolve: A limited information model of crisis bargaining. *American Journal of Political Science* 33(4): 941–972.

Pape, Robert A. 1996. *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Partell, Peter J., and Glenn Palmer. 1999. Audience costs and interstate crises: An empirical assessment of Fearon's model of dispute outcomes. *International Studies Quarterly* 43(2): 389–406.

Petersen, Walter J. 1986. Deterrence and compellence: A critical assessment of conventional wisdom. *International Studies Quarterly* 30(3): 269–294.

Posen, Barry R. 1996. Military responses to refugee disasters. *International Security* 21(1): 72–111.

Powell, Robert. 1990. *Nuclear Deterrence Theory: The Search for Credibility*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Press, Daryl G. 2005. *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Ramsay, Kristopher W. 2004. Politics at the water's edge: Crisis bargaining and electoral competition. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(4): 459–486.

Reed, William. 2003. Information and economic interdependence. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47(1): 54–71.

Sarkees, Meredith Reid, and Frank Whelon Wayman. 2009. *Resort to War, 1816–2007*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly.

Sartori, Anne E. 2005. *Deterrence by Diplomacy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Schaub, Gary. 2004. Deterrence, compellence, and prospect theory. *Political Psychology* 25(3): 389–411.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schelling, Thomas C. 1966. *Arms and Influence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Schultz, Kenneth A. 2001. *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sechser, Todd S. 2007. Winning without a fight: Power, reputation, and compellent threats in international crises. PhD dissertation, Stanford University.

Sechser, Todd S. 2010. Goliath's curse: Coercive threats and asymmetric power. *International Organization* 64(4): 627–660.

Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. 2011. The coercive limits of nuclear weapons. Presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Seattle, 2 September.

Singer, J. David, Stuart A. Bremer, and John Stuckey. 1972. Capability distribution, uncertainty, and major power war. In *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce M. Russett, pp. 19–48. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Singh, Sonali, and Christopher R. Way. 2004. The correlates of nuclear proliferation: A quantitative test. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 859–885.

Slantchev, Branislav L. 2005. Military coercion in interstate crises. *American Political Science Review* 99(4): 533–547.

Slantchev, Branislav L. 2010. Feigning weakness. *International Organization* 64(3): 357–388.

Stearns, Peter N. 2001. *The Encyclopedia of World History*. 6th edn. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Thompson, William R. 2001. Identifying rivals and rivalries in world politics. *International Studies Quarterly* 45(4): 557–586.

Trager, Robert F. 2010. Diplomatic calculus in anarchy: How communication matters. *American Political Science Review* 104(2): 347–368.

Weeks, Jessica L. 2008. Autocratic audience costs: Regime type and signaling resolve. *International Organization* 62(1): 35–64.

TODD S. SECHSER is Assistant Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia. His research focuses on crisis bargaining, military strategy, and the causes of war. His work has appeared in *International Organization*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.