

Objectives: (1) to examine the logic of terrorism and counterterrorism, and (2) to examine how leader attributes and gender impact crisis bargaining

1 Key terms

- causal beliefs
- exposure
- valence
- selection bias

2 Key readings

- Nielsen, Counterterror targeting of Jihadi ideologues (2016)
- Post and Sen, Female leaders in crisis bargaining (2020)

3 Key ideas

Question: Do counterterrorism strikes affect the spread of jihadist writings?

Answer: On the one hand, killing an author ends the author's ability to proselytize their ideas, but on the other hand, killing the author may attract attention to the author's ideas. Nielsen (2016) finds that counterterror strikes against jihadist ideologues boost their popularity after being killed but only for a short window of time.

Question: How might combat experience impact leaders in crises?

Answer: Combat experience may increase a leader's risk aversion to conflict, since the leader has first-hand experiences with the risks of war. Thus, we predict that combat experience is associated with a decreases probability of conflict initiation.

Question: Why were queens in Europe between the 15th-20th centuries more prone to war than kings?

Answer: One theory is that queens were easy targets so got attacked more frequently. Dube and Harish (2020) instead argue that queens led politics with greater state capacity (thanks to alliances and division of labor), which enabled queens to undertake war more easily.

Question: How does the presence of a woman head-of-state affect bargaining?

Answer: Men leaders may discount threats issued by women heads-of-state. This may increase the probability of crisis escalation (Post and Sen 2020).

4 Additional review questions

- Is terrorism "rational" or "nonrational"? What view do Kydd and Walter (2006) take?
- How would you design a study to assess the impact of counterterror strikes on the valence of the writings of jihadist ideologues?
- What is the concern about selection bias in studies on the impact of woman leaders on conflict initiation? How do we address this threat to inference?