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WHEN IS COERCION SUCCESSFUL?

And Why Can't We Agree on It?

Patrick C. Bratton

When is coercion successful? How is success to be defined? Coercion, broadly speaking, is *the use of threats to influence another's behavior*.¹ Although there is a substantial and growing literature on coercion, there is little consensus within that literature as to what qualifies as a successful example of coercion. Different authors formulate their own definitions of "success" and apply them to case studies, often with contrasting findings within the same cases.² That is because the literature lacks a clear conceptual framework to analyze coercion. This absence of a shared framework limits the usefulness of the concept, even though much has been written about coercion since the seminal work of Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, was published in 1966. There are several deficiencies in the coercion literature, deficiencies that often lead authors to separate coercion from its actual context within foreign policy. Rather than judging the relative merits of coercive tools—different types of air power or the effectiveness of economic sanctions—or the short-term success of a coercive strategy, theorists should look at how and when coercion actually assists policy makers achieve their greater foreign policy goals.

Two principal weaknesses result from the lack of a conceptual framework: the absence of agreed definitions of what coercion is and who the coercer and target

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are; and disagreement on how to determine success. At this stage, it is useful to assess the coercion literature to see why these deficiencies exist and what can be done in future studies to deal with them. This article, then, is less an empirical study of coercion than a reflective essay attempting to assess where we currently stand and to explain why there is so little agreement as

to when coercion is successful.³ Coercion needs to be placed within the larger field of foreign policies of the relevant actors in order to see how it meets the needs, concerns, and options of policy makers.⁴

COERCION: WHAT IS IT, AND WHO DOES IT?

In the almost forty years that have passed since Schelling’s work, the coercion literature has proved to be less rich and less cumulative than that of its strategic counterpart, deterrence. Although authors generally agree on what is at the core of coercion—the use of threats to influence another’s behavior—the coercion literature suffers from a lack of conceptual clarity as each author seeks to build his or her own concept rather than refine the work of others.⁵ This is evident from the various terms used more or less interchangeably as synonyms for coercion: compellence, coercive diplomacy, military coercion, coercive military strategy, and strategic coercion.⁶ This proliferation of terminology has complicated the study of what makes coercion successful, since writers have their own criteria in mind and studies of even the same cases can lead to opposite conclusions.⁷ Depending on the author and the term used, the qualities imputed to the coercive process can vary in three principal ways: the types of threats that are included within coercion, the role of the use of force as compared to the threat of the use of force in coercion, and who the actors are.

What Types of Threats Are Involved?

Coercion is the use of threats to influence the behavior of another (usually a target state but occasionally a nonstate actor) by making it *choose* to comply rather than directly forcing it to comply (i.e., by brute force).⁸ Some authors separate *compellent* threats, made to cause an opponent to *stop* a current action or to *undertake* another, from *deterrent* threats, made to cause an opponent to *not take* a certain action, and on that basis discuss compellent threats as if the same as coercion.⁹ Others include both deterrent and compellent threats as two types of coercion.¹⁰ (Please refer to table 1—which, like the tables that follow, is intended not as a comprehensive list but as a visual aid.)

Thomas Schelling, in *Arms and Influence* and his other influential book *The Strategy of Conflict*, distinguished two types of coercive threats, deterrent and compellent.¹¹ As Schelling explains, deterrence and compellence are merely two types of coercive threats, the difference being that “the threat that compels rather than deters

**TABLE 1
WHAT TYPES OF THREATS ARE INVOLVED IN COERCION?**

Only compellent threats (i.e., coercion is different from deterrence)	Alexander George, Janice Gross Stein, Robert Pape
Both compellent and deterrent threats (deterrence and compellence are both types of coercion)	Thomas Schelling, Daniel Ellsberg, Wallace Thies, Lawrence Freedman, Daniel Byman, and Matthew Waxman

compellent.¹¹ As Schelling explains, deterrence and compellence are merely two types of coercive threats, the difference being that “the threat that compels rather than deters

often requires that the punishment be administered *until* the other acts, rather than *if* he acts.”¹² Deterrence, the better known of the two, is the threat to use force in retaliation if the opponent takes a certain action. In the words of Robert Art, “its purpose is to prevent something undesirable from happening.”¹³

Compellence is the use of threats to make a target stop an action it has already undertaken, or to take an action that the coercer wants. Schelling elaborates that the difference between the two types of threats is the “difference between inducing inaction [deterrence] and making someone perform [compellence].”¹⁴ It is generally assumed that compellence should be more difficult to achieve than deterrence.¹⁵ Deterrence requires only that target states maintain the status quo, that they do nothing; they can claim that inaction is their free choice. In contrast, compellence involves an obvious change in behavior, acquiescence to the demands of the coercer, that could be costly in terms of prestige and domestic and international legitimacy.

Clearly, deterrence and compellence are two types of coercion, or two sides of the same coin. Both concepts depend on risk, threats, and choice. The coercer, whether seeking to deter or compel, is exploiting the potential risks the opponent faces in resisting the coercer’s threats. The coercer bases coercion “on the exploitation of threats, of *latent* violence,” what is yet to come unless the target complies.¹⁶ In both deterrence and compellence, the target chooses to comply. Writers on compellence generally assume that the target chooses rather than is forced to comply, and deterrence writers sometimes forget that “the deterree has to agree to be deterred.”¹⁷ In both cases, in fact, the choice of action versus inaction thus lies with the target.

Coercion, then, depends on two factors: credibility (whether the target believes that the coercer will execute its threats) and persuasiveness (whether the threats will have a great impact on the target).¹⁸ Credibility normally depends on whether the coercer has a reputation for carrying out threats that it makes. Persuasiveness comes from the ability to threaten great damage to something the target considers vital. Threats are not automatically both credible and persuasive; they can also be one but not the other. For example, in the context of a trade dispute a threat of nuclear attack would be very persuasive but not very credible.

Schelling distinguishes compellence from “brute force” in that the coercer credibly threatens the opponent that if the action in question is not stopped, or a desired action is not taken, force will be used to *induce* compliance.¹⁹ If the opponent does not comply, force is applied. The coercer then hurts the opponent but not as much as it might, leaving open the threat of even more pain if the opponent still does not comply. In contrast, “brute force” is simply getting what one wants by violence, as much as it takes.

What Is the Role of Force?

The second conceptual divide concerns the actual or threatened use of force. The role of force complicates the coercion/compellence literature. Simply put, writers on deterrence do not spend much time on force, because the use of force implies the failure of deterrence.²⁰ Depending on the role assigned to the use of force, much of the coercion literature can be classified into three schools: coercion through diplomacy separate from the use of force; coercion exercised almost entirely through the use of force (normally air power); and coercion exercised by both diplomacy and force.²¹ Authors of the first school look at coercion as something that happens before “the first bomb is dropped.” The actual use of force, except for minor demonstrations of resolve, means that coercion has failed; the coercer is moving to brute force to take what it wants. These authors focus on the diplomatic techniques and difficulties of sending “signals” that convey clear coercive threats to the target and of “orchestrating” words and deeds into coherent messages that the target can clearly receive. For this school, coercion is an outcome produced by clear signaling and orchestration. The term “coercive diplomacy” here is intended to accentuate the political-diplomatic nature of this type of coercion, as opposed to the use of force to seize or destroy in “traditional military strategy.” The goal of coercive diplomacy is to *persuade* the opponent to halt what he is doing, not to strike him until his capabilities are so reduced that further resistance is futile. “Coercive diplomacy, then, calls for using just enough force of an appropriate kind—if force is used at all—to demonstrate one’s resolve to protect well-defined interests as well as the credibility of one’s determination to use more force if necessary.”²²

The second school takes a much more forceful approach, viewing coercion as a process that happens during the use of force, or during the actual use of other “sticks,” such as economic sanctions. Coercion is the use of force to get the target to comply with the demands of the coercer, but without completely destroying the military forces of, and occupying, the target state. These writers look at the prospective merits of different coercive strategies, like punishment-versus-denial strategies or force versus economic sanctions. One prominent exemplar of this view limits his focus to open conflict or warfare, wherein coercion happens “after the first bomb has been dropped.” For instance, a successful example of military coercion for him is the American air and naval Pacific campaign, which in 1945 caused Japan to surrender without having been invaded and conquered. In contrast, the air campaign in Europe failed to coerce Germany, which refused to surrender and had to be overrun. One problem for this school, as has been pointed out, is that it is hard to distinguish clearly between coercion and brute force given the scale and intensity of the conflicts studied.²³

A third school of thought draws no sharp distinction between coercion virtually without force and that exercised only through force. For these writers, coercion includes both “signals” sent by diplomatic and military means and the actual use of force. For Schelling the use of force is essentially a continuation or escalation of a threat first articulated before any resort to force. What distinguishes coercion from brute force in this school is that force is used in a measured and controlled way to “signal” to the target the threat of further punishment unless it complies. Coercion for the third school subsumes “coercive diplomacy” and also includes forceful (sometimes very forceful) actions: “Coercion depends more on the threat of what is yet to come than on damage already done.”²⁴ A classic example is the effort of the Lyndon Johnson administration to coerce the North Vietnamese government to cease its support of the Viet Cong insurgents in South Vietnam in the 1960s. In the view of a scholar who has

traced this attempt, there is no sharp break between, first, coercive diplomatic efforts backed by very limited and covert use of force in 1963–64; second, limited demonstrative uses of force in reprisals after the Gulf of

TABLE 2
WHAT ROLE DOES FORCE PLAY IN COERCION?

Coercion <i>before</i> the use of force	George, Gross Stein
Coercion only <i>through</i> force	Pape
Coercion through diplomacy <i>and</i> force	Schelling, Thies

Tonkin incident; and third, the escalating air campaign of ROLLING THUNDER.²⁵ In this view the increasing use of force—in a measured and connected way—is a means of driving home the coercive threat, not necessarily representing the failure of coercion.

Threats and Force

The lack of a shared definition of coercion limits the scope of many studies, and unnecessarily. For example, authors who exclude deterrent threats from their analyses rule out many potentially fruitful areas of research. Similarly, a study of compellent threats that includes only economic sanctions or air power and not deterrent threats automatically excludes many potential cases and insights. It has been suggested that in practice deterrent and compellent threats “mingle” depending upon the actions and reactions of the coercer and target:

General demands to Iraq, such as “Don’t invade Kuwait,” appear to fall clearly in the deterrence camp, whereas calls to withdraw seem like compellence. The in-between areas are more ambiguous. “Don’t go further” involves both stopping an existing action and avoiding a future one—both immediate deterrence and coercion. Moreover, a call to withdraw carries with it an implicit demand not to engage in the offense again and affects the credibility of the deterrence call to not invade Kuwait in the future.²⁶

Even more problematic, the absence of a common conceptual framework means that two authors examining the same cases can come to opposite conclusions. If their criteria and definitions differ, so will their conclusions as to when coercion is successful or not. A writer using the coercive diplomacy framework almost excludes the use of force;²⁷ according to coercive military strategy, however, the use of force is not in itself the failure of coercion.

These differing conceptual frameworks result, for example, in opposite points of view on the 1990–91 Gulf War. One scholar codes the 1990–91 Gulf War as a failure of compellence; Iraq’s refusal to withdraw from Kuwait meant that compellence had failed, since the coalition’s objective was to get Iraq to leave Kuwait without using force.²⁸ In contrast, another lists the Gulf War as a success for a coercive air strategy of denial. The U.S.-led coalition was able to use military force to get Baghdad to retreat from Kuwait without having to invade and occupy Iraq wholesale.²⁹

NATO’s air war over Kosovo in 1999 may be an even better example. If one views coercion as the use of force only, Operation ALLIED FORCE looks like a success. NATO’s bombing campaign caused the Serbs to withdraw from Kosovo without a ground war and to allow the presence of NATO peacekeeping troops.³⁰ Many believe that “the prophecies of Giulio Douhet and other air power visionaries appear[ed to have been] realized,” that air power can coerce by itself.³¹ However, if one adopts the perspective that coercion is exercised through both diplomacy and force, Kosovo seems at best like a limited and belated success, if not a failure. From March 1998 to March 1999, when Operation ALLIED FORCE began, the Serbs withstood various attempts at coercive diplomacy, which led the Serbs to believe that they could depopulate Kosovo and get away with it.³² In his view, the claim that the air war succeeded because the Serbs eventually capitulated begs the question of why it was necessary to have an air war at all. What led the Serbs to believe that they could ignore a full year of coercive threats, apparently without fear of force being used against them?³³ NATO’s coercion of Serbia did not begin “once the first bomb was dropped” but a full year before. Looking for coercion only in the air war and not the deterrence and compellence failures that preceded it effectively excludes from consideration many of the most interesting questions about coercion, about how it works and why it succeeds or fails.

Who Are the Actors?

Coercion writers have for the most part assumed that states involved in coercion are unitary, rational actors.³⁴ Schelling, an economist by training, often incorporated into his writings examples drawn from interpersonal relations—such as mugger and victim, buyer and seller, parent and child—that assume the rational,

value maximizing actors of classic economic theory. This model takes the costs of noncompliance (sticks) and of compliance (carrots) as the independent variables, to be raised and lowered, respectively, against change in the target state's policies as the dependent variable.³⁵ The general underlying theory suggests that if the coercer can make not complying costlier than complying, coercion should be successful. If not, coercion is likely to fail. Success is conventionally thought of as achieved when the target complies with the coercer's demands. This presumption implies that the coercer does not need to know a great deal about the target, only to "step into its shoes" and imagine how a rational, calculating actor would respond to sticks and carrots.

Some more recent authors have slightly modified this assumption, to acknowledge, for instance, that factions within a target state can influence its reactions (Japan in 1945 is an excellent example). One scholar argues that various types of economic sanctions are more or less effective depending on whether the target is democratic or an authoritarian regime. Another makes a convincing point that whether the coercing state has a strong presidential system or a parliamentary one can affect how effectively it sends signals.³⁶

Schelling himself conceded that there is a difference between coercing an individual and coercing a government, but he did not develop the point extensively.³⁷ It has been subsequently pointed out that the rational actor model forgets that the coercer and the target of the coercion are actually governments rather than individuals: "Governments are coalitions of numerous individual decision-makers, virtually all of whom occupy positions within large, semi-autonomous, bureaucratic organizations; any government involved in an attempt at coercion is likely to speak with many voices at once."³⁸

In most, if not all, instances of coercion, groups or individuals in the target state's government have staked their positions and reputations on the policies or actions that cause the coercion in the first place.³⁹ It is likely to be extremely difficult, if possible at all, to convince them that the costs of pursuing this policy would be prohibitive, no matter how high those costs become. Moreover, as has been suggested, it is difficult "to assess the impact of particular coercive pressures" upon the adversary's decision-making process.⁴⁰ Different targets will not respond identically to the same coercive threats.⁴¹ A convincing case can be made that the type of regime targeted for economic coercion has a great effect on the types of coercive threats that are most effective against it.⁴² Even in the same state, individuals or groups might react differently to coercive threats, and some might be more or less responsive to various types of threats to different parts of the target. "For officials involved in an attempt at coercion, then, the problems that they must confront include not only deciding what demands they

should make of an opponent but also learning *who* on the other side must do *what* if the attempt at coercion is to succeed and *how* can the coercer's action be manipulated, if at all."⁴³

Diplomatic threats might mean more to people in a foreign ministry than in a defense ministry, and economic sanctions might have more impact on elected officials than on nonelected ones. One target might be more vulnerable to threats to its industrial centers, while another's military forces might be more susceptible; yet others are not particularly sensitive to threats to either. It has been argued that a coercer needs to determine the Clausewitzian "centers of gravity"—the target's greatest sources of strength, either material or intangible, that "if destroyed, would cause the enemy's resistance to collapse[:]. . . only by threatening the state's center of gravity can a coercer compel the greatest concessions from the target state."⁴⁴ The record of attempts to coerce Saddam Hussein shows that he was most sensitive to threats to his relationship with his power base; that threats to his conventional military power, public sentiment, or the Iraqi economy were less effective.⁴⁵

That individuals within a target government react differently to coercive measures suggests that even if a coercer succeeded in getting demands accepted in the short term, it would be very difficult to secure complete acquiescence in the long term, because certain members of the target's government would attempt to reinstate their objectionable policies, since their political careers (and in some regimes, their lives) depend on it. Coercers, then, need to know a great deal about the regime's composition and internal political struggles, not conceptualize it as a "rational, calculating actor." The coercer needs to know the "political realities within the target state's government and to shape their policies in a way that maximizes the influence of those in the target state's government whose hopes and fears are most compatible with the coercer's objectives."⁴⁶ In some cases there will be factions that are compatible with the coercer's desires, in others not.

To illustrate the effects of internal politics on the responses of targets, it is useful to compare the successful case of coercion in the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962 with the failure against North Vietnam from 1963 to 1968. In the former, Nikita Khrushchev's decision to deploy the missiles to Cuba was taken only about six months before the crisis erupted.⁴⁷ In addition, he made his choices very quickly and with only a small circle of advisers; there was relatively little political or bureaucratic struggle over the decision to deploy the missiles.⁴⁸ The Soviets appeared surprised by the Kennedy administration's firm reaction to the missiles and not to have considered the possibility of war—even a limited one in the Caribbean, let alone a nuclear one—with the United States. Given their surprise and lack of preparation for a war, it is perhaps understandable that

they yielded when offered tangible incentives (the pledge not to invade Cuba and the offer to withdraw missiles from Turkey).⁴⁹

In contrast, the North Vietnamese decision to aid the Viet Cong and resist American pressure was the outcome of a bitter intraparty debate—involving figures, like Le Duan, who had staked their political reputations and careers in the North Vietnamese government on not yielding to American pressure—over the course of an entire decade.⁵⁰ As a result of this debate, the North Vietnamese government took seriously the threat of conflict with the United States, even a direct American invasion of North Vietnam, and vigorously prepared for such an eventuality. Unlike the Soviets in Cuba, the North Vietnamese were unsurprised by American pressure, even escalating force. “We can hypothesize that the longer the bureaucratic battles involved, the more rigid the positions of the participants will become and the greater the stake each participant will have in insuring that his preferred course of action is adopted.”⁵¹

For its part, the coercing state is made up of competing bureaus and organizations. Orchestrating clear signals can be difficult, because “the leadership itself speaks with many voices at once, and there is no guarantee that every voice will convey the same message.”⁵² Messages sent by governments can thus be contradictory and self-defeating. For example, in June 1998, American threats meant to induce Serbia to halt its offensive against Kosovo were supposed to be reinforced by open planning for a military intervention and by air exercises.⁵³ Unfortunately, these efforts were undermined by public comments of national security adviser Samuel Berger and Secretary of Defense William Cohen that no plans for military intervention were “on the table” and that the exercises were only that, exercises.⁵⁴

Even given agreement on the use of a coercive strategy, the issues of how, when, and with what tools that strategy is to be implemented can be contentious and reduce its effectiveness. Members of various agencies will probably suggest policies that draw upon their organizations’ expertise—military action for defense ministries, diplomatic action for foreign ministries, etc. For example, in the 1995–96 Taiwan Strait crisis, as many argue, the People’s Liberation Army played a key role in a decision to shift the unification strategies of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) from “peaceful coexistence” to coercive diplomacy through shows of force—missile tests and military exercises—to make compelling threats to the Republic of China.⁵⁵ It has been argued that the Army did so because it saw the diplomatic sanctions of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs—the cancellation of visits and the recall of the ambassador to Washington—as “weak and indecisive.”⁵⁶ Individuals and organizations within the same state can find themselves in intense competition for the adoption of “their” policies over rivals’, or put organizations or services at cross purposes.

Therefore (see table 3), coercion theorists need to analyze the reactions of the target as the responses of groups and organizations rather than of a rational individual. Theorists must also take into consideration the fact that the coercer is not a unitary rational actor either.

TABLE 3
WHO ARE THE ACTORS?

Best thought of as identical, unitary, rational calculating actors	Schelling, George, Pape,* and Daniel Drezner
Rational actors that can be somewhat different (democracies vs. authoritarian governments) or are made up of a few simple parts (government, military, public, etc.)	Pape,* Risa Brooks, Byman and Waxman
Complex governments that both threaten and respond to threats differently	Thies, David Auerswald

* In some cases Pape treats the target as unitary rational actor, but in others he distinguishes between different factions that react differently to coercive threats (as in the case of Japan and Germany in World War II). See his *Bombing to Win*, pp. 108–27 and 283–313.

PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

Much of the literature on coercion (whatever the term used) is devoted to the practice of coercive strategies rather than the results of coercion. This is particularly true of works that focus on air power and economic sanctions as coercive instruments.⁵⁷ This approach, while valuable, risks suggesting that the right strategy and the right coercive tool will prevail no matter the consequences or setting. In other words, the right strategy will actually have yielded very little in the long term if the target continues to take actions like those that caused the coercion in the first place.⁵⁸

It is often forgotten that coercion is only a tool of foreign policy and that “success” in coercion depends not only upon the tactical success of a particular coercive strategy but also upon the benefits accruing to the foreign policies of coercing states. Coercion does not take place within a vacuum; important political, historical, and situational factors influence outcomes.⁵⁹ “The effectiveness of coercive strategies will therefore depend on the overall political context in which they are implemented, and even a potentially promising use of force can be squandered by an ineffectual diplomacy.”⁶⁰

It must be remembered that coercion is not a substitute for an effective foreign policy.⁶¹ A comprehensive study has been made of American political uses of military forces, including coercive (both deterrent and compellent) threats and deployments in support of allies, between 1946 and 1975. It found that most of the time these actions served only to buy time and that the effectiveness declined sharply over time.⁶² It “should be recognized that these military operations cannot substitute for more fundamental policies and actions—diplomacy, close economic and cultural relations, an affinity of mutual interests and

perceptions—which can form the basis either for sound and successful alliances or for stable adversary relations.”⁶³ If coercion, then, can produce only a breathing space, the coercer needs to consider using that time to “*reduce the motivation* underlying that [aggressive] intention, and/or to *provide alternative goals* that may be relatively satisfactory to the deterred [or in this case, the coerced] power.”⁶⁴

For example, it has been argued that China was successful in its efforts to coerce Taiwan during the 1995–96 crisis. At first glance, the PRC does seem to have achieved some of its goals in the short term, with respect both to Washington and Taipei. In Washington, President William Clinton gave a public assurance that the United States did not support “a two-China policy, Taiwan independence, or Taiwan membership in the UN.” In Taipei, the pro-independence Democratic People’s Party made a poor showing in the March 1996 elections, President Lee Teng-hui scaled back his “independence diplomacy,” and Beijing found itself taken more seriously in the region, especially regarding its willingness to use military force over Taiwan.⁶⁵

However, the long-term benefits of that coercion for China are less clear. The American and Taiwanese defense relationship, which had been left uncertain under the American policy of “calculated ambiguity,” was now clarified: the United States was both willing and able to defend Taiwan militarily.⁶⁶ Beijing’s actions increased the perception in Washington of the PRC as a threat, particularly among the “anti-China” lobby.⁶⁷ American and Taiwanese defense cooperation, which had been almost withering away, as some feel, since the 1970s, was renewed and strengthened by Beijing’s threats.⁶⁸ President Lee, who won the election, after a short pause resumed his efforts to increase Taiwan’s international recognition, including lobbying for UN membership, high-profile visa requests, and international trips (his “transit diplomacy”).⁶⁹ Security arrangements between the United States and other powers in the region, like Japan and South Korea, were also increased, and if other Asian countries took Beijing more seriously, it was because they had reassessed the PRC as a possible future security threat.⁷⁰ “The international reaction to China’s military coercion surprised Beijing, which had hoped that most countries would close their eyes to its efforts to punish Taiwan. . . . In fact, Beijing’s actions quickly internationalized the Taiwan issue in a way that had not occurred since 1971. . . . By going too far, Beijing catalyzed international opinion against itself.”⁷¹

Coding Coercive Outcomes

Most authors categorize the outcomes of coercion as either “success” or “failure.” “Success” is said to occur if the target concedes to a significant part of the coercer’s demands, and “failure” when it does not. A scholar associated with this “unidimensional” criterion, analyzing strategic bombing campaigns, codes as

successes the campaigns against Japan in 1942–45 and North Korea in 1950–53, the LINEBACKER raids in 1972, and the 1990–91 Gulf War, but as failures the campaign against Nazi Germany in 1942–45 and ROLLING THUNDER in 1965–68.⁷²

Others reject this simple approach.⁷³ One argues, for instance, that a unidimensional criterion for success—that the target concedes to a “significant part of the coercer’s demands”—“does not allow for gradations in the degree or kind of success.”⁷⁴ Such an analysis, on this view, ignores both the costs for the coercer of using sanctions and the possibilities of partial success. In other words, a “multidimensional” approach would acknowledge that sanctions, for instance, can be *useful* to policy makers without “working” in and of themselves.⁷⁵ It is worth quoting one scholar at length on this point:

What policymakers “most want to know” is not, as [scholar Robert] Pape asserts, “when the strategy of economic sanctions can change another state’s behavior without resorting to military force,” but rather when economic sanctions are likely to have more utility than military force. The deductive case for using economic sanctions is not based solely on the comparative effectiveness of military force and economic sanctions, as Pape implies; it is based on their comparative utility, which is a function of both effectiveness and costs. Thus it is quite possible for sanctions to be more useful than force even in situations in which they are less effective.⁷⁶

Some demands will be easier for the target to meet than others; “a moderate degree of success in accomplishing a difficult task may seem more important than a high degree of success in accomplishing an easy task.”⁷⁷

For one scholar, whatever the form of coercion, the more important question “is not whether it works, but whether it is useful, and if so, whether it is worthwhile.”⁷⁸ Another, moreover, criticizes the “simple dichotomy of success/failure” in the economic sanctions literature. The idea that success is a return to the status quo ante and failure anything else is an unfair test. On this view, outcomes need to include the possibilities of compromise between the actors and to take into consideration what is demanded of the target.⁷⁹

Other “multidimensionalists” look not for either success or failure but for marginal changes in the probability of behavior.⁸⁰ It is not an “either-or” contest. Further, different coercive tools can work together to produce results; “economic and military pressure can act together synergistically—just as naval and infantry forces usually work with air power.”⁸¹ Coercion, it is argued, is a dynamic process; because the target is not static, it can attempt both to neutralize coercive pressures and coerce the coercer in return.⁸² This interaction can lead to unpredictable results that do not fit neatly into complete successes or failures.⁸³

As has been argued, it is misleading to code cases of coercion in absolute binary metrics, with “success” and “failure” the only possible outcomes. An attempt

at coercion that “fails” does not necessarily return the situation to that which previously existed; the new situation could be much worse for the coercer. In any case the coercer must pay enforcement or implementation costs, and these can outweigh the benefits of even successful coercion, making it Pyrrhic.⁸⁴ A comparison between the international position of the United States in 1963, before the expansion of the coercive conflict against Hanoi, and in 1973, at the time of the withdrawal from Vietnam, shows that “failure” does not simply mean returning to the previous status quo.

Authors (see table 4) then need to expand the framework on coercion to include results that cannot neatly fit into either success or failure. All too often, coercion and coercive tools are viewed “in a vacuum” and are judged on their ability to coerce in and of themselves.⁸⁵ The focus of much of the literature on coercive tools reinforces a belief that success in a particular coercive strategy will translate into the achievement of some policy goal.⁸⁶

TABLE 4
HOW IS SUCCESS DEFINED?

Full compliance with coercer’s demands, independent of any other factors	Pape
Need to distinguish degrees of success. Possible to have partial success or secure secondary objectives without securing primary objectives	Kimberly Elliot, Drezner, Karl Mueller, and Byman and Waxman

Coercion and the Great Air Power Debate

The tendency to study coercive methods at the expense of their long-term consequences is perhaps most marked among writers who focus on the role of air power as a coercive tool. The failure of air power in the Vietnam War and its apparent recent success in the Gulf War, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq have both rekindled the “great air power debate”—Can air power win wars by itself?—and have tied that debate to coercion.⁸⁷ Like coercion theorists, air power proponents have sought to show that it can force a target to capitulate with its military forces undefeated, while air power pessimists have doubted the ability of air power to “do it alone.”⁸⁸

In an attempt to resolve the air power debate by combining it with the coercion literature, a distinction was drawn between *denial* strategies, which target and disrupt the enemy’s military strategy through the combined pressure of theater air and ground forces, and *punishment* strategies, in which strategic air power targets civilian centers. The conclusion from the case studies adduced is that denial strategies can produce successful coercion while punishment strategies are rarely successful. In that case, the best (if not only) way to coerce

successfully is to “undermine the target state’s confidence in its own military strategy.”⁸⁹ Once the costs of resisting are higher than the costs of surrendering, coercion can succeed; hence, the successful coercer manipulates effectively “the costs and benefits” of continuing the action in question. However, denial is not a silver bullet; it is not guaranteed to work in all situations. It is most effective against an opponent who uses a conventional military strategy that depends on massive logistical support and communications and offers lucrative targets for air strikes. On the contrary, if the opponent relies on a guerrilla strategy that depends on local support and slight logistical “tail,” denial is likely to fail.

An illustration of the superiority of denial strategies might be the Johnson administration’s failure to coerce Hanoi by means of a combination of punishment and denial strategies from 1965 to 1968 (ROLLING THUNDER), as compared to the success of the Richard Nixon administration’s denial strategy in 1972 (LINEBACKER I and II).⁹⁰ Conventional punishment failed, as some argue it almost always will, and conventional denial failed as well, because bombing could not easily disrupt Hanoi’s guerrilla strategy of the earlier period, which required no elaborate logistical network. However, when Hanoi switched to a conventional strategy in its 1972 offensive against South Vietnam, it became vulnerable to the denial bombing campaigns of LINEBACKER I and II. These campaigns, it is argued, halted the North Vietnamese offensive and brought Hanoi to agree to U.S. demands at the negotiating table: “The bombing was a coercive success, forcing the North to cease its ground offensive and accept a cease-fire, even though it retained the capacity to continue organized military action.”⁹¹

Such conclusions about the LINEBACKER strikes are an excellent example of the dangers of concentrating on coercive tools but losing sight of the actual long-term effects of coercion. It is true that in the short term the LINEBACKER strikes disrupted the North Vietnamese offensive and guaranteed the independence of South Vietnam during the American withdrawal. However, what the North could not accomplish in 1973 it accomplished in 1975, when Saigon fell. It seems a stretch to list the LINEBACKER campaign with the surrender of Japan in 1945 or the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 as a successful example of coercion. To do so would lower the standards to endorse policies that at best only buy time or save face, rather than secure desired outcomes.

Coercion and the Sanctions Debate

In contrast to the air power debate, the economic sanctions debate largely concerns the merits of sanctions themselves rather than the relative merits of different types. Some authors attempt to judge sanctions on their ability to coerce targets by themselves; for these authors, success is when the target complies with

the coercer’s demands, failure is when they do not. Judged by this standard sanctions appear to be a “notoriously poor tool of statecraft,” with a very low success rate.⁹² At first glance this seems to be a logical and rigorous standard; in fact, however, it is an unrealistic and unfair test for economic sanctions.⁹³

As has been pointed out, economic sanctions cannot be evaluated only by their ability to coerce targets by themselves.⁹⁴ The costs and benefits of economic sanctions must be evaluated within the context of other instruments that policy makers have at their disposal, such as military force or diplomacy. Moreover, depending on that context, “ineffective” economic sanctions might be the best, or the only, option available.⁹⁵ There are always costs to using coercion, and the most “effective” tools are not always the most useful.⁹⁶ In certain circumstances, for instance, the use of military force is unthinkable. For example, during the 1956 Suez crisis, President Dwight Eisenhower wanted to coerce two allies, Britain and France, but military force could hardly be used against liberal democratic allies, however “effective” it might be in theory. The president instead threatened an economic sanction—refusal to let the International Monetary Fund provide a backup loan to Britain (the currency of which was under increasing pressure) or to give access to dollar credits to pay for oil imports from dollar zones in North and South America.⁹⁷ If economic sanctions are “notoriously poor tools of statecraft,” are there any better tools that are low cost, always available, and highly likely to succeed? The answer, once again (see table 5), depends on the definition of success.⁹⁸

TABLE 5
WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF COERCION?

Whether or not certain coercive tools (air power strategies, economic sanctions, etc.) can coerce by themselves	Pape
How coercive tools can help meet the greater foreign policy goals for statesmen	David Baldwin, Mueller, Elliot, and Byman and Waxman

WHERE DOES THE FIELD GO FROM HERE?

This controversy over success and outcomes does more than complicate academic arguments; it has consequences for policy. States have used coercion at least since the time of Thucydides, and all indications from recent events—the 1999 war over Kosovo, Indo-Pakistani standoffs, Russian pressure on Georgia, and the American pressure against Iraq—imply that states will continue to use coercion as a foreign policy tool.⁹⁹ Yet for all the rich history of coercion and manifest willingness of many states to use it, coercion lacks a commonly accepted conceptual framework. Should policy makers think of deterrence and coercion as separate strategies having nothing to do with one another, or of deterrent and compellent threats as two types of coercion that may overlap in

practice? Can a coercer simply reason deductively, on the basis of how rational individuals would respond to threats and pressure? Or does a coercer need to have accurate intelligence on the composition and politics of the target's decision-making system? How can policy makers know the difference between conditions and techniques that are conducive to success and those that are not, when the very meaning of "success" is contested? Do air power and economic sanctions need to be effective by themselves to be useful?

Three things could be done to increase the understanding of when coercion "works" and when it does not. First, coercive theorists should concentrate on building a solid, shared definition of coercion, rather than each one designing his or her own topic with its own qualifications. A third school, one that considers both the threat and the use of force, should provide an adequate compromise on the role force should play in coercion, since it acknowledges that the answer depends on the case in question. At times threats are all that might be required, at other times only force might work, and many cases will fall somewhere in between.

Indeed, the answers to some of the questions listed above as left open by the literature are in fact clear enough. The reasons, after all, that effective coercion is rare are, first, that states sending and receiving signals do not behave as unified actors, and second, that coercion is best viewed as a process rather than an outcome, being the product of a wide array of interactions among distinctive international actors.¹⁰⁰ Neither the coercing government nor a target government is a unitary, rational actor. Further, coercers do need to know a great deal about the nature of the target to determine whether it is likely to be coercible, and if so, what kinds of threats will be most effective. Because they are not unitary actors, coercers can rarely send clear "signals" or "orchestrate" coherent messages, and targets can rarely be relied upon to listen to the correct messages or draw the right conclusions.¹⁰¹

Second, concerning the outcomes of coercion, it would be useful to analyze coercion in terms of positive and negative outcomes rather than successes or failures. It has been argued that studies should focus on the "outcomes related to the principal behavior desired by [the coercer and the target]."¹⁰² As suggested earlier, the dependent variable should be defined as a marginal change in the behavior of the target rather than in absolute terms—complete compliance with the coercer's demands versus no compliance at all. The more the outcome suits the desires of the coercer, the more positively the outcome can be rated. If the target does not change its behavior to suit the coercer's demands—by maintaining its current behavior or intensifying its activities—the outcome can be judged as negative. Outcomes achieved in the short term can differ from what emerges in the long term, as the examples of the LINEBACKER raids and the 1995–96 Taiwan

Strait crisis illustrate. Moreover, the outcomes can be positive for both the coercer and the target if a compromise can be found that is acceptable for both; in truly disastrous cases, one can conceive negative outcomes for both.¹⁰³

Third, writers need to place coercion in the perspective of the greater foreign policies of states rather than concentrate on “how-to” approaches, and they should not assume that the success of a particular coercive strategy will meet the needs and concerns, and fit the options, of policy makers. It would be useful to consider not only how examples of coercion play out but also their long-term impacts (positive or negative) on the triggering events, the internal politics of both coercers and targets, and the relations between the actors in the years following the coercive acts.¹⁰⁴ What is needed is a comparative study that goes beyond the incidents of coercion themselves to examine the contexts in which the selected cases occurred and their aftermaths, in order to see when coercion in combination with an effective foreign policy can yield long-term benefits.¹⁰⁵ As is often said, “It is possible to win the war but lose the peace.” The political interactions at the end of a crisis, or just following a conflict, can be just as vital as the ones just before.¹⁰⁶ What Colin Gray has said of competent strategists could be applied to competent coercive strategies: “A competent strategist . . . balances means with ends and understands that lasting success requires the definition of the international order which erstwhile foes find tolerable. An incompetent strategist . . . fails to define and settle for such an order.”¹⁰⁷

NOTES

1. This definition is a broad synthesis of Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 2–6; Daniel Ellsberg, “The Theory and Practice of Blackmail,” in *Bargaining: Formal Theories of Negotiation*, ed. Oran Young (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1975), p. 344; Lawrence Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” *Strategic Coercion: Cases and Concepts*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), p. 15; and Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), p. 1.
2. Janice Gross Stein argues that the 1990–91 Gulf War was a failure of compellence, and Robert Pape that it was a success for a coercive military strategy of denial. See Janice Gross Stein, “Deterrence and Compellence in the Gulf, 1990–91: A Failed or Impossible Task?” *International Security* 17, no. 2 (Fall 1992), pp. 170–79; and Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1996), pp. 211–19.
3. This essay seeks to emulate Donald Puchala and Stuart Fagan’s stock-taking of the international relations literature in “International Politics in the 1970s: The Search for a Perspective,” *International Organization* 28, no. 2 (Spring 1974), p. 248.
4. Karl Mueller, David Baldwin, and Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman have also made this point. See Mueller, “Strategies of Coercion: Denial, Punishment, and the Future of Air Power,” *Security Studies* 7, no. 3 (Spring 1998), pp. 201–202; Baldwin, “Correspondence: Evaluating Economic Sanctions,” *International Security* 23, no. 2 (Fall 1998),

- p. 189; and Byman and Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate," *International Security* 24, no. 4 (Spring 2000), p. 6.
5. This has been similar to the ever-expanding list of names of liberalism and realism (utopianism, liberal-idealism, neo-liberalism, neo-liberal institutionalism, traditional realism, neo-realism, structural realism, contingent realism, etc.).
 6. Schelling uses "coercion" and "compellence," in *Arms and Influence*; Alexander George, David Hall, and William Simons use the term "coercive diplomacy," in *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba and Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); Ellsberg, "coercion," in "The Theory and Practice of Blackmail," pp. 343–63; Pape, "military coercion," in *Bombing to Win*; Stephen Cimbala, "coercive military strategy," in *Coercive Military Strategy* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1998); Freedman, "strategic coercion," in "Strategic Coercion"; and Byman and Waxman, "coercion," in *The Dynamics of Coercion*.
 7. For example, the contrasting findings of Gross Stein and Pape in the case of the 1990–91 Gulf War mentioned in note 1. There is also a debate over whether Operation ALLIED FORCE, the air war over Kosovo, was a success (as Javier Solana and Wesley Clark see it) or a failure, or at best a qualified success (as Wallace Thies sees it). See Solana, "NATO's Success in Kosovo," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November–December 1999), pp. 114–20; Clark [Gen., USA (Ret.)], *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo and the Future of Combat* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), pp. xxv, 417–19; and Thies, "Compellence Failure or Coercive Success: The Case of NATO and Yugoslavia," *Comparative Strategy* 22 (June 2003), pp. 243–67.
 8. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 2–3. There has been a growing interest in the differences and difficulties of coercing nonstate actors like terrorist groups and drug traffickers. See Joseph Leggold, "Hypothesis on Vulnerability: Are Terrorists and Drug Traffickers Coerceable?" in *Strategic Coercion*, ed. Freedman, pp. 131–50; and Yezid Sayigh, "A Non-State Actor as Coercer and Coerced: The PLO in Lebanon, 1969–1976," in *Strategic Coercion*, ed. Freeman, pp. 212–48.
 9. See George, Hall, and Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*; Gross Stein, "Deterrence and Compellence," pp. 147–48 (notes); Alexander George and William Simons, eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1994); and Pape, *Bombing to Win*.
 10. See Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 69–86; Ellsberg, "The Theory and Practice of Blackmail," pp. 344–45; Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," pp. 20–26; and Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, pp. 6–9.
 11. Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), and *Arms and Influence*; also the summary of Schelling's contribution to nuclear strategy in Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's, 1987), pp. 219–23.
 12. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, p. 70.
 13. Robert Art, "To What Ends Military Power?" *International Security* 4, no. 3 (Spring 1980), p. 6.
 14. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, p. 175.
 15. Art, "To What Ends Military Power?" pp. 8–10; Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," p. 34; and Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 6. Schelling qualified this by saying: in a "world without uncertainty . . . [i]t is easier to *deter* than to *compel*" [italics original], p. 100. Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein debate this assumption; see "Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable," *World Politics* 42, no. 3 (1990), pp. 351–53. The difficulties in getting an opponent to acquiesce through coercion when the leadership of the target state has staked its political capital on the policy in question is addressed in detail by Wallace Thies, *When Governments Collide: Coercion and Diplomacy in the Vietnam Conflict, 1964–68* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980).
 16. Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," p. 21.
 17. Colin Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999), p. 338.
 18. Thies, "Compellence Failure or Coercive Success?" p. 5. Also see James D. Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 68–91; and David Auerswald, *Disarmed Democracies: Institutions and the Use of Force* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. 133–36.

19. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 79–80.
20. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for this point.
21. Alexander George and Janice Gross Stein represent the first school; Robert Pape, Daniel Byman, and Matthew Waxman the second; and Thomas Schelling, Daniel Ellsberg, Wallace Thies, and Lawrence Freedman the third.
22. George, Hall, and Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, p. 10.
23. Mueller, “Strategies of Coercion,” pp. 191–92.
24. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, p. 172.
25. Thies, *When Governments Collide*.
26. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” pp. 19–20; and Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion*, pp. 7–9.
27. For example, two of Pape’s cases, the bombing of Germany and of Japan in the Second World War, would automatically be excluded by George’s framework.
28. Gross Stein, “Deterrence and Compellence,” pp. 170–79.
29. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, pp. 211–19, although Pape finds the Gulf War a failure for a coercive military strategy of decapitation (pp. 211–14, 226–40).
30. Former Secretary-General Javier Solana and General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander Europe at the time, take this position. See Solana, “NATO’s Success in Kosovo,” pp. xxv, and Clark, *Waging Modern War*, pp. 417–19.
31. Byman and Waxman, “Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate,” p. 5.
32. Thies, “Compellence Failure or Coercive Success,” pp. 2–3.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3, 41–47.
34. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 2–5; George, Hall, and Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, pp. 18–19; and Pape, *Bombing to Win*, pp. 15–18.
35. Interestingly, carrots have not received as much attention as sticks, though there are exceptions. See Daniel W. Drezner, “The Trouble with Carrots: Transaction Costs, Conflict Expectations, and Economic Inducements,” *Security Studies* 9, no. 2 (Fall 1999/Winter 2000), pp. 188–218.
36. On the first point see Pape, *Bombing to Win*, pp. 108–27, 283–313; on the second, Risa Brooks, “Sanctions and Regime Types: What Works, and When?” *Security Studies* 11, no. 4 (Summer 2002), pp. 12–20; and the last, Auerswald, *Disarmed Democracies*, pp. 132–36.
37. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 85–86; and cited by Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 221.
38. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 13.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 262–66, esp. chap. 5, “Coercing Governments,” pp. 213–83.
40. Byman and Waxman, “Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate,” p. 12.
41. As Yaacov Vertzberger remarks, “Culture shapes the decisionmaker’s style of thinking, mode of judgment, and attitude to information. The norms of rationality are culture-bound; that is, the same behavior may be interpreted differently in different cultures.” Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1990), p. 270.
42. Brooks, “Sanctions and Regime Types,” pp. 1–50.
43. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, pp. 13–14.
44. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), pp. 595–97; and Daniel Byman, Kenneth Pollack, and Matthew Waxman, “Coercing Saddam Hussein: Lessons from the Past,” *Survival* 40, no. 3 (Fall 1998), p. 127.
45. Byman, Pollack, and Waxman, “Coercing Saddam Hussein,” pp. 140–42.
46. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 417.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
48. As Thies notes, the Soviet ambassador to the United States, Dobrynin, was apparently unaware of the deployment of missiles to Cuba; *ibid.*, p. 281. Drawing upon declassified documents, Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali give the date of Khrushchev’s decision even later than Thies, on 20–21 May 1962. See *One Hell of a Gamble: Khrushchev, Castro,*

- and Kennedy, 1958–1964 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), pp. 179–83.
49. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 281.
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 262–83.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 280. See also Ann Cheng Guan, *The Vietnam War from the Other Side* (New York: RoutledgeCurson, 2002).
52. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 286.
53. Thies, “Compellence Failure or Coercive Success,” p. 23.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.
55. You Ji, “Changing Leadership Consensus,” in *Across the Taiwan Strait: Mainland China, Taiwan, and the 1995–1996 Crisis*, ed. Suisheng Zhao (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 86–90; Suisheng Zhao, “Changing Leadership Perceptions: The Adoption of a Coercive Strategy,” in *Across the Taiwan Strait*, ed. Zhao, pp. 99–103; Steven Goldstein, “Taiwan’s Mainland Policy,” in *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power*, ed. Alastair Ian Johnston and Robert Ross (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 73; and Andrew Scobell, “Show of Force: Chinese Soldiers, Statesmen, and the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis,” *Political Science Quarterly* 115, no. 2 (2000), pp. 232–36.
56. Scobell, “Show of Force,” p. 235.
57. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, and “Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 90–136; Byman and Waxman, “Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate”; and Elizabeth Rogers, “Using Economic Sanctions to Control Regional Conflicts,” *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1997), pp. 43–72.
58. This could be argued of the LINEBACKER II air strikes in 1972. The North Vietnamese offensive was halted, but shortly thereafter the United States withdrew and Hanoi conquered Saigon. For an argument of the success of LINEBACKER, see Robert Pape, “Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War,” *International Security* 16, no. 2 (Fall 1990), pp. 130–45.
59. George and Simons, eds., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, pp. 270–74; Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1978), pp. 109–32; Korina Kagan, “The Failure of the Great Powers to Coerce Small States in the Balkans, 1875–1877 and 1914: Situational versus Tactical Explanation,” in *Strategic Coercion*, ed. Freedman, pp. 90–92; and Thies, “Compellence Failure or Coercive Success?” p. 6.
60. Freedman, “Strategic Coercion,” p. 33.
61. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, p. 415.
62. Blechman and Kaplan, *Force without War*, p. 517.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 517–18.
64. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1974), p. 63 [emphasis in original] (as quoted in Thies, *When Governments Collide*, pp. 414–15).
65. Scobell, “Show of Force,” pp. 243–44, 112–18; and Robert Ross, “The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation: Coercion, Credibility, and the Use of Force,” *International Security* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2000), p. 90.
66. John Garver, *Face Off: China, the United States, and Taiwan’s Democratization* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 149–50.
67. *Ibid.*; and Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, “The Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996: Implications for U.S. Security Policy,” in *Across the Taiwan Strait*, ed. Zhao, pp. 281–84.
68. Van Vranken Hickey, “The Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996,” pp. 279–90; and Goldstein, “Taiwan’s Mainland Policy,” pp. 77–78.
69. Ross, “The 1995–96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation,” pp. 115–16.
70. Garver, *Face Off*, pp. 139–45.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
72. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, pp. 52–54.
73. They include David Baldwin, Daniel Drezner, Karl Mueller, Kimberly Elliot, Daniel Byman, and Matthew Waxman.
74. Baldwin, “Correspondence,” p. 191. These points were in an exchange of correspondence in which David Baldwin took issue with Robert Pape’s unidimensional analysis of economic sanctions.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 194.

77. David Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1985), p. 372.
78. Mueller, "Strategies of Coercion," p. 204.
79. Daniel W. Drezner, *The Sanctions Paradox: Economic Statecraft and International Relations* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 18–19.
80. Byman and Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate," pp. 13–15, and *The Dynamics of Coercion*, pp. 33–37; and Daniel Byman, Eric Larson, and Matthew Waxman, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999), pp. 22–26.
81. See Kimberly Elliot, "The Sanctions Glass: Half Full or Completely Empty?" *International Security* 23, no. 1 (Summer 1998), pp. 54–57.
82. See Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, "Defeating U.S. Coercion," *Survival* 41, no. 2 (Summer 1999), pp. 107–20.
83. See also Elliot, "The Sanctions Glass," p. 56. Thies comes to similar conclusions, particularly in *When Governments Collide*, chap. 6, "The Government as Coercer: Idioms and Orchestration," pp. 284–348.
84. Freedman, "Strategic Coercion," p. 30.
85. The works of Robert Pape are the classic example of this tendency. See *Bombing to Win* and "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 90–136.
86. George, Hall, and Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, pp. 226–27; and Thies, *When Governments Collide*, pp. 416–20.
87. For a good introduction to the writings of the air power theorists, see David MacIsaac, "Voices from Central Blue: The Air Power Theorists," in *The Makers of Modern Strategy*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 624–47.
88. For a good introduction to the air power debate see *ibid.*, and Byman and Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate."
89. Pape, *Bombing to Win*, p. 10.
90. *Ibid.*, pp. 174–76, 209–10.
91. Pape, "Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War," p. 131.
92. Kim Richard Nossal, *Rain Dancing: Sanctions in Canadian and Australian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1994), p. xv (as quoted in David Baldwin, "The Sanctions Debate and the Logic of Choice," *International Security* 24, no. 3 [Winter 1999–2000], pp. 80–107).
93. This point was well made by Elliot, "The Sanctions Glass," p. 51.
94. Baldwin, "The Sanctions Debate and the Logic of Choice," pp. 85–96.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 92, and Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, pp. 66–67.
96. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft*, pp. 65–69.
97. Joseph Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (New York: Longman, 2000), p. 159; and Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," p. 115.
98. As Baldwin well put it, "It is not enough to describe the disadvantage of sanctions, one must show that some other policy alternative is better. If the menu of choice includes only the options of sinking or swimming, the observation that swimming is a 'notoriously poor' way to get from one place to another is not very helpful." "The Sanctions Debate and the Logic of Choice," pp. 83–84.
99. There is a rich set of examples of coercion in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, but see especially "Book I: The Spartan Ultimatum and Pericles Reply," pp. 118–23, and "Book IV: The Melian Dialogue," pp. 400–408 (citations from Rex Warner's translation [New York: Penguin Books, 1972]). However, the practice of coercion goes back much farther than the Greeks.
100. My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this point.
101. Thies, *When Governments Collide*, pp. 386–99.
102. Blechman and Kaplan, *Force without War*, p. 68. Blechman and Kaplan further argue that "'success' and 'failure' imply causation, which cannot be determined absolutely" (p. 67).
103. The 1898 Fashoda crisis may be an example of a "win-win" outcome from coercion. Great Britain coerced France into withdrawing from Sudan but was careful to support the solidification of France's West and North African territories; by 1904 the powers were no longer rivals but allies. Perhaps the best example of negative outcomes for all parties is

Austria's failed coercion of Serbia in 1914, which quickly spread into a wider war, with devastating results for all.

104. Some authors have urged that terms of settlement be clear and that coercion be part of an effective foreign policy. See George, Hall, and Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, pp. 226–27, 416–20.
105. One of the few studies to take a longer-term view was Blechman and Kaplan, *Force without War*. Yet while its framework was well

executed, the detailed case studies were completed by other authors, who did not rigorously apply Blechman's research technique. Also, some of the case studies are now dated.

106. For an excellent example of the importance of the interactions at the end of conflicts, see Paul Kreskemeti, *Strategic Surrender: The Politics of Victory and Defeat* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1958).
107. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, pp. 53–54.