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Beyond Predatory Peace

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**Abstract**

This autobiographical review is about a research life unusually oriented to the long-term study of organizational crime, peace, and crisis prevention. Most ambitions proved half-baked. Hopes for a more sweeping macrocriminology of freedom will doubtless remain half-baked when cooking ceases. None of the author's mentors bear responsibility for the mess left in the kitchen from attempts to understand how to grow freedom and prevent crime and war. Messy kitchens must sometimes become even messier before they create the best kind of challenge for the tidier minds that clean them up.



## MENTORS WHO PUT VOCATIONS IN PERSPECTIVE

In the life of a criminologist, there is comfort in looking back over the students one believes one helped. There resides great satisfaction for scholars because with hindsight you feel pretty sure you did help in some ways. It connects to the deepest reality of being a scholar: that one measure of success is seeing one's students contribute more profoundly than oneself and become their mentor's mentor. I draw satisfaction from students who have done so and who in the future will do more useful things than I have on the topics on which we have toiled.

It is equally important to appreciate past mentors, who for me were my beloved family, then John Western and Paul Wilson when I was a University of Queensland student, and then Gilbert Geis, Brent Fisse, Peter Grabosky, and Philip Pettit. I also had somewhat younger mentors from whom I learned so much. The most important of these was Valerie Braithwaite, along with Hilary Charlesworth, Toni Makkai, Peter Drahos, Ian Ayres, Heather Strang, Bina D'Costa, and Ali Wardak across long periods of learning and writing together. There are other former students and junior colleagues like Miranda Forsyth and Kate Henne who later taught me (and other colleagues) about how to be a better leader.

With policy reform, it is hard to judge whether such mentoring takes us in a good direction and if one's contribution to the conversation had relevance. That is for the future to judge or ignore. Policy relevance that universities push us to highlight as "impacts" in the here and now tends to be spurious. Criminologists have exaggerated views of how important our colleagues regard awards as evidence of impact. One reason for award cynicism became clearer through the lens of my research with peace activists who chastised Nobel Peace Prize nominees for asserting personal credit over collective accomplishments, thereby undermining peace by demoralizing collaborative, humble peacemakers. There can be satisfaction in suggesting someone else instead when we believe they are more deserving, or some organization or person who would be more greatly helped by the acknowledgment. Kindly people can keep coming back with attempts to give you that prize. It is a lovely thing about awards that friends care enough to spend time on nominations. The warmth of that friendship is the best thing about awards, so we enjoy what matters most when we miss out.

Gil Geis used to say after I missed out on jobs that in the short term, universities make mistakes, but in the long term, academic job markets trend toward meritocracy. Someone hires and promotes us if we are willing to move and genuinely good at some kind of criminology. For some of us, it does not prove best for our well-being to push hard for promotion. Academic life is a long-distance event in which many runners stumble across the finish to genuine applause, even though they are runners who did not sprint early to the front. The satisfactions of tranquil long-distance runners like Peter Grabosky are worth noticing because they focus on savoring the substance of a field rather than on the tactics of the rat race.

However, Gil Geis's views on meritocracy must be tempered with concerns about systemic gender and race bias as well as the bias that scholars educated at Western universities are supposedly better than those educated in the Global South. A splendid way to make a difference is to pick scholars from the Global South who will be "slow-food" accomplishments, who think deeply about the substance of the field, yet may perform poorly in early laps of academic races that prepare scholars for racing like a rat. Sadly, academic life can discipline young people to look flash as a rat with a gold tooth as they run some extractive scholar's templated, tedious maze.

## WASTING A LIFE WORRYING

I spent too many years with worries overly focused on saving my university from Balkanization, arrogance, discrimination, and capture by corporate and statist agendas. Little was accomplished by my agitation about the balance between contributing to social science disciplines and seeking



to tear down disciplinary dominations in favor of more fertile interdisciplinarity. It weakened my writing by burdening it with too many layers, too many moving parts. Too often, alongside making a substantive contribution, I attempted to contribute something about how to do our field better. I learned to evaluate myself less on this holism of the contribution and more on my little piece toward solving puzzles that matter. A missing layer in my work that I have begun to fix lately (Braithwaite 2022b) is attending to how to scale up reforms that proved promising at small scales.

Although discussion of the dysfunctionality and ossification of the disciplinary structure of the social sciences is important, there is much to be said for the Gandhian insight to concentrate on “being the change you wish to see in the world.” The ossification of the social sciences compares poorly to the disciplinary dynamism of the biological sciences, which caused old disciplines like botany, zoology, entomology, and anatomy to become less important. Change did not come from structural reformers but from theoretical doers. Darwin contributed foundations to evolutionary biology by dint of his research. Likewise, the innovators of DNA created the new micro–macro of molecular biology, and others pioneered ecology as the most consequential constellation of scholars for our future. Arnie Binder and Gil Geis founded a visionary Program in Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine. Today, it is much more than one of the very best criminology and law and society schools in the world; it is an interdisciplinary powerhouse. Even so, they died waiting for great social ecology tracts that transform theoretical foundations across the social sciences [although fine scholars like Christine Parker (2021) work with promise on that challenge today].

As I aged, I evolved into a failed reformer of institutions where I worked and a failed theoretical transformer, yet comfortable inside that skin. This evolution paralleled the way I was a dud in my 20s as an individual with political ambitions. We need to feel more comfortable as failures. I am like legions of people in having far from fully failed in a lifetime as a political activist. This is a common pattern because social movement politics is a team activity where we contribute as an also-ran player who throws the odd good pass to a slicker player. Failures that morphed into limited successes, like the following, were sometimes embarrassing. In 1982, as Executive Director of the Australian Federation of Consumer Organizations, I infuriated the Attorney General with media commentary that commissioner appointments to what is now called the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC; the antitrust, consumer protection, investor protection, product safety agency) “put foxes in charge of the hen house.” One new commissioner was CEO of the firm with the Commission’s worst convictions record, another was a business political donor to the governing party. Two years later, I was appointed part-time as a commissioner. There was joking that my bias was that of a social movement fox who banged down the institution’s door. I found from working with one of the commissioners appointed at the time of my media commentary, who was neither a business fox nor a political donor, that he was wiser and more technically competent than me. Others thought likewise; he became Chief Justice of Australia Robert French. My ten years as a commissioner were educative for an immature scholar of corporate crime. Although I endured jocular jibes about who was really defending the hen house, it was a period when my contribution may have been tiny, but when the Commission as a whole served Australia well. The ACCC became internationally admired for regulatory excellence (Smullen & Clutton 2021).

The ACCC also became the first to experiment with combining ideas on restorative justice and responsive regulation (Parker 2004). Valerie Braithwaite inspired the Australian Taxation Office to become a more systematic, sustained innovator that diffused responsive regulation more widely (Ivec & Braithwaite 2015, Leviner 2008) after the international repute of the ACCC helped early diffusion. If we can nibble a bit at the edge of ideas that one day might transform, if we can be midwives with students who so nibble, this is the good enough life. I found contentment in



patiently seeking to improve the quality of conversations that might occasionally continue after I pass on.

Recently, I became somewhat more comfortable as a criminologist. After two years of retirement from the Australian National University, my first job in a criminology department arrived in 2022. I joined old friends at the University of Maryland, which has grown so many effective leaders. I enjoyed my time there as a visitor in the 1990s when Lawrence Sherman was head of the department, and the longstanding tradition of excellent leadership continues with Sally Simpson today. I was the first to complete a PhD in sociology at the University of Queensland in 1977 and was an early criminology teacher there. I established the first criminology course at Griffith University in 1977, where I worked as a tutor after my PhD. Tutoring at Griffith profoundly enriched my engagement with interdisciplinarity. These are fond memories of early forays into criminology. These universities have since become world criminology leaders. The Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane joined Griffith and Queensland as another outstanding criminology group. Is there a city in the world with more fine criminologists per capita than Brisbane? This excellence of the cluster was accomplished after I left Brisbane, surely a negative causal association with my departure!

The craft of a contented scholarly life can be simple. Be the change you want to see, nurture students who choose to come to the light you flicker on some hill, and encourage those other students who seek to extinguish your light. Tell them that you admire their commitment and their brand of scholarship as they critique yours. Our generation will not judge who lit the brighter light on the more inspiring hill versus who doused careless brushfires.

Anyone who looks at Braithwaite writing (Valerie's or mine) is likely to conclude that it is scattered across an odd array of substantive topics and so devoid of a criminological focus that it is barely criminology. One can view it through a peace studies lens or a republican political philosophy lens (Pettit 1997). From my perspective, notwithstanding my own rejection of a North Atlantic discipline called criminology, I embrace criminology as a field of growing relevance to topics like predatory peace. Crime on its own is as important as peace but partly because of its relevance to peace (Green & Ward 2004, Hagan et al. 2015, Walklate & McGarry 2015). In my lifetime, I have seen our field make worthy contributions toward a better world for future generations, for example, through green criminology. Partially, I view my work on the regulation of pollution or war through a criminology lens and interrogate it in terms of contributions to criminology as a community of scholarship. It is just that one can take the view that it might be more useful to theorize crime–war than crime and war (Braithwaite 2022a). Sometimes, it can be more useful to theorize local–global violence and domination that also include self-domination and the self-violence of suicide. Although Durkheim made many errors, I admire his ambition to attempt a local–global imagination about suicide–homicide that identified the importance of variables like anomie, industrialization (deindustrialization), and professional morality.

It can be useful for explanatory theory (ordered sets of propositions about the way the world is) to be integrated with normative theory (ordered propositions about the way the world ought to be). Evocative normative theory concepts can improve the explanatory power of criminological theory, and powerful explanatory concepts can sharpen the political and ethical edge of normative theory, even restore its healing edge (Braithwaite & Pettit 2000). Criminology is a dangerous game. Unless criminology is tempered by a community of conversation about normative theory, harm is inevitable. My contribution with Philip Pettit to that conversation was to contend that criminal law and justice might be transformed to maximize freedom (Braithwaite & Pettit 1990, Pettit 1997). Thin liberal freedom has value and might slightly help to build societies with less crime and less war. The older republican way of viewing liberty as freedom from domination is more normatively fertile, however. This is freedom that was originally



juxtaposed against slavery, freedom from arbitrary power of others over us. Cross-nationally and historically, it is fertile to see the most devastating histories of slavery and colonial decimation as enduring in their impacts on increased crime and punishment across postcolonial peripheries, including in the United States (Braithwaite 2022a, Schargrodsky & Freira 2021). For example, societies that had more nineteenth-century slavery have more crime today. Moreover, poverty is worse today in those African societies that supplied more slaves in past centuries (Nunn 2008).

## TWEAKING OLD IDEAS IN FOUR BOOKS

My research has been on a trajectory toward four integrations. The first is *Cascades of Violence: War, Crime and Peacebuilding Across South Asia* (Braithwaite & D'Costa 2018). The second is *Macrocriminology and Freedom* (Braithwaite 2022a), which builds *Cascades of Violence* into a contribution to criminological theory. Work proceeds on a third, *Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes*. The final integration, tentatively titled *Predatory Peace*, seems an eternity away. Progress on fieldwork to finish it had two minor setbacks. One was COVID-19. It locked me in Australia with no fieldwork progress until my plan to return to the field in Guatemala in June 2022. After 70, anxiety can fester about how many years of active fieldwork in conflict zones can be sustained. Before COVID-19, I was set back by stays in hospital across months that became years away from fieldwork after surgery did not go smoothly. On the upside, I recovered well and made better homebound strides writing the first three late-life books.

*Macrocriminology and Freedom* seeks to integrate ideas about criminological theory and how to test theories. Criminologists afflicted with a standard graduate school curriculum can be excused for thinking of Braithwaite as a theorist who tweaked labeling theory through reintegrative shaming. That is not incorrect. *Macrocriminology and Freedom* reveals me more fundamentally as a scholar who integrates explanatory and normative theory. For example, being a quantitative scholar of terrorism is a dangerous game when unmoored to normative prudence. This is not just about averting the dangers of domination, of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib state interrogation techniques, of private intelligence corporations that recruit and train people to use new interrogation techniques at close quarters in such places, to spy on us all and reign terror from space. It is also about hope for good normative theory improving the power of explanatory theory applied to problems like terror and contemporary war-making, and good explanatory theory improving the normative power of normative theory.

Few marks of failure of the character of Western justice are more total than the evidence that Islamic State in Iraq and Syria was founded by an inmate of a prison run by the US government and its corporate contractors (Camp Bucca). Abu Omar al-Baghdadi had not been a combatant (therefore, not a POW), nor was he tried for any specific criminal offense. All his initial recruitment to form Islamic State was conducted among inmates inside Camp Bucca, drawing inspiration from arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and willful disrespect for the Q'uran, all of which by then were publicized facts of the criminalized regimes inside Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib (Braithwaite & D'Costa 2018). Inscribed on the elastic bands of the underwear of Islamic State converts as they left Camp Bucca was the Islamic State recruitment phone number. After the ill-fated 2011 regime-change military campaign sponsored by France, Britain, and the United States in Libya, these prisoners took their underwear south to help spread Islamic State terror across huge swathes of Africa. They recreated the reality of a Global North adept at shifting the suffering driven by the geopolitics of the North to the South. Across Africa, this drove higher levels of terror killings than the world endured worldwide before the War on Terror (Kilcullen & Mills 2022). Meanwhile, the North mostly crushed this terror on its own shores, although not the terror of an authoritarian right that was given oxygen via this same pattern of politics.





Another preoccupation in my work is that crime helps explain war and war helps explain patterns of crime. This is because both crime and war are cascade phenomena that cascade into each other. Among the best predictors of whether you will be a victim of crime or war is whether you have recently been one, whether the period of history you live through has been war-afflicted and whether your neighbors—people who share your home, your neighborhood, your society, your region (whether you live in Central America, the Great Lakes region of Africa, the Middle East, for example)—have been victims of crime/war. *Cascades of Violence* (Braithwaite & D’Costa 2018) argues for flipping hot-spot theory to spreading ink spots of nonviolence until these ink spots connect up to cover whole societies and regions. Restorative justice has a useful role in building the collective efficacy for nonviolence in politics and social control. Well-tempered institutions have the most important role (Krygier 2019). This is what Keane calls monitory democracy that humbles power (Braithwaite 2015, Keane 2018). *Macrocriminology and Freedom* argues against seeing this as new; my work just tweaks theories of collective efficacy (Sampson et al. 1997) and institutional anomie theory (Messner & Rosenfeld 2013) in macro ways.

From my student days (Braithwaite 1979), I sought to shift thinking on the relationship between inequality and crime. The aim always was to orient that literature toward the effect of domination on crime. I was unimpressed by the criminology of doubt about the centrality of poverty and inequality to understanding crime. I am referring to the large number of studies that show that some measure of poverty explains crime, and when that effect is in the model, some measure of inequality does not explain crime, or vice versa. The criminologist then concludes that poverty, not inequality, is the theoretically important variable, or vice versa. Or the misguided conclusion might be that it is economic inequality, not racial or religious inequality, that explains crime, or vice versa. Or perhaps the causal explanation imputed by the multivariate work is about infant mortality or abortion rates explaining crime rates. *Macrocriminology and Freedom* makes the case that we do well by crime prevention and freedom promotion to seek to diminish all forms of domination, even as we fail to fully understand their nonlinear interactions at specific places and times.

Readers might ponder the possibility that this is quite a simple normative proposition grounded in much more complexity at the explanatory level. Parsimony in normative theory can be married interactively to complexity in explanatory theory. That project is assisted by reducing poverty, inequality, and diverse, intersectoral kinds of domination (Crenshaw 2017, Henne & Troshynski 2013), wherever we find them. The social-democratic aspect of my normative theory leads to the contention that no society has ever accomplished too much equality between men and women, racial or religious groups, or rich and poor. Excessive equality is never a practical macro problem because the power of the powerful to rebuild inequality is endlessly resilient. Therefore, my normative ideals are about how to struggle to continually reduce inequality rather than about what are unjust and just levels of it.

In terms of quantitative criminology, I am more interested in the coefficient of poverty and inequality entered together as parts of one block of highly correlated variables that together measure domination than in putting poverty and inequality in competition with each other. At the end of the day, as a criminologist, perhaps I am a failed Australian Labor Party hack. As a 25-year-old, I unsuccessfully contested a ballot for State Secretary of the Queensland branch of the party with the ambition of fomenting a coup through federal intervention into the party’s corrupt affairs of that time.<sup>1</sup> It was a formative experience because our failed coup contributed to an improved political conversation; some years later federal intervention did come at the hands of

<sup>1</sup>My political career was ended by two different votes I lost on the Labor Queensland Central Executive (one for state secretary, the other for a parliamentary seat), notwithstanding overwhelming support from local branch members.



more skillful politicians than me. A reformed Labor government swept away the corrupt Bjelke-Peterson regime and slightly improved its criminal legal system, imprisoning its corrupt police chief. I am embarrassed to say that this same police chief helped get me out of Queensland by calling the Prime Minister to persuade him to intervene in an Australian Institute of Criminology 1978 job offer in Canberra.<sup>2</sup> What I am suggesting is that in the imperfect marriage of theory to local political practice, we contribute if all we do is stoke the conversation.

The big picture conclusion of all my work is that deeply free societies constitute conditions for low crime rates. Furthermore, freedom from fear of violence is constitutive of institutions of freedom. At its foundations, this is a civic republican way of thinking about crime, and about how to integrate explanatory and normative theory. The connections to institutional anomie theory loom large. This is because the criminalization of states and the criminalization of markets when commodification is inadequately regulated are vital variables for understanding why some societies have much crime and limited freedom. The keystone hypothesis is that freedom is fundamental to building a low-crime society and crime prevention is fundamental to freedom. Many societies, particularly across northern Europe, but in many corners of the planet from Costa Rica to South Korea and New Zealand, have done reasonably well at this, so there is no impossibilism in this core prescription. *Macrocriminology and Freedom* breaks the abstraction of this keystone proposition into 150 tributary propositions.

## PUTTING THE THEORY TO WORK

As I drafted this article, President Biden condemned China for hiring contract criminals to hack the financial and security infrastructure of the West, specifically Microsoft doorways. Secretary of State Blinken charged that China's Ministry of State Security "has fostered an ecosystem of criminal contract hackers who carry out both state-sponsored activities and cybercrime for their

<sup>2</sup>The Commissioner, Terry Lewis, took me to lunch afterward to say, "You owe me." I told him that I did not ask him to do that, never repaid him, and shared with him and with Ray Whitrod (his predecessor as police commissioner) that I was embarrassed that Ray did not get the job ahead of me after this intervention by the Prime Minister's office. Only in 2021 did I learn of another incident that placed me even more at risk of disaster as a result of intersections between my criminology and activism as a Labor Party hack. I had lunch with my friend, Jim Fouras, longstanding Speaker of the Queensland Parliament, three weeks before he died. I had been centrally involved in organizing the numbers for his preselection as the Labor candidate for South Brisbane. All members of affiliated trade unions were entitled to vote in Labor preselections in the 1970s. One of my jobs was to meet with union bosses to tell them which of their members lived in South Brisbane and ask which of these members they could help get out to vote for Fouras. Typically, they would state around 20 percent. When I met the Secretary of the Ship Painters and Dockers Union, he said every one of his members would turn out for Fouras. At that lunch, Fouras explained that he had learned compliance was so good in this union because the union boss had an iron bar wrapped in a newspaper on his desk for encouraging recalcitrants. Jim complained that for decades unionists came to him asking for sometimes extravagant favors. Jim finally said to one of them that he appreciated his vote those years ago, but the requested favor was over the odds. "I did more than vote for you," replied the union member and then explained that every member of the union had been required to donate \$50, a lot for working-class families in the 1970s, to the Fouras campaign. Jim's campaign saw none of that cash and no one involved in the campaign knew it was collected. Jim then discovered that members had paid in cash and their secretary had laundered it through bets with racetrack bookmakers. In the 1980s, I provided minor assistance to the Costigan Royal Commission into corruption in the Ship Painters and Dockers. After the 2021 lunch with Fouras, I imagined myself on the dock before the Commissioner being questioned about where that money had gone. I imagined myself replying truthfully that I had no idea this money had been collected even though I was indeed the organizer of these union votes for Fouras. No one would have believed this, I thought, and my youthful career as a scholar of organizational crime would have come to an early end. Although there is a lot to be said for criminologists being politically active, there are risks of collateral damage from sinister actors in party politics.





own financial gain” (Kanno-Youngs & Sanger 2021). Although China has deprivatized many of its hackers, hiring its best as state employees, Blinken’s allegation remains basically correct and is much more true of Russia. Perlroth (2021, p. 421) quotes a Russian cybercrime expert: “There’s a pax mafiosa between the Russian regime and its cyber cartels.” Perlroth shows this is also true of some US allies (e.g., Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who pay millions to private sector cybercriminals for each new hacking tool, as the United States itself regularly does).

It was bold to publicly shame China when the US national security state has so often hired organized criminals to not only hack but also victimize enemies and even kill leaders in coups. The United States has banned Chinese company Huawei with the allegation that Huawei is a security threat but, as true as this might be, produces no evidence that Huawei has compromised the security of any society. Yet an insider from the US national security state has tabled evidence that the United States hacked Huawei on more than one occasion (Kanno-Youngs & Sanger 2021).

Think of the blowback from Oliver North, the CIA, Saudi intelligence, and US allies of the 1980s, including Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, using the bank that the CIA itself called the Bank of Crooks and Criminals International (BCCI; the Bank of Credit and Commerce International). BCCI laundered gun money as well as drug money and other dirty money for the worst organized crime and terrorist groups. Think of how CIA players helped establish the Australian bank Nugan Hand, which was the BCCI predecessor in creating “an ecosystem” of criminal banking to manage dirty CIA money and Mafia money alike (Braithwaite 2022a).

This is hypocritical mutual stigmatization devoid of reintegration or shame acknowledgment (Ahmed et al. 2001). Yet when key agents of these national security states meet in private, they can manifest tacit, even explicit, concessions that of course we both do such things. And indeed it may be that Biden, Xi, and Putin are the kinds of pragmatic leaders who can be tacitly honest, face to face, about their states’ histories of criminal uses of power. My theory for war and crime prevention posits that reintegrative nods of acknowledgment are important as they look each other in the eye and discuss the dangers of a pax mafiosa with criminal hackers.

President Lyndon Johnson was reflecting on the history of the United States using the Mafia in attempts to contract assassination of Fidel Castro and Mafia connections to the Kennedy assassination when he said that the government “had been operating a damned Murder Inc. in the Caribbean” (Holland 2004) and “Kennedy was trying to get Castro, but Castro got to him first.” Quite likely Johnson was wrong, but it is always prudent for leaders to ponder the risk that the worst tools they use to achieve objectives may be turned against themselves. This proved true after the Stuxnet virus was used to destroy Iranian nuclear production centrifuges as a noble alternative to Israel’s plan of a military strike. Then the virus escaped, returning to harm the United States. It proved even more true after the leak in 2016 of the National Security Agency’s most important hacking tools that were then turned against the United States (Perlroth 2021).

By the lights of a macrocriminology of freedom, a constructive pitch by Biden to China is the essence of the kind of crime prevention and freedom promotion that is most decisively important. All criminologists understand that bank robberies, indeed all forms of robbery, are relatively unimportant today (compared to their significance in previous centuries). Cybercrime has become more critical (in disruption to economies, to national security, and in the quantum of theft). What criminologists do not study as assiduously as they should is the connection between cybercrime and risks of war (Beebe 2019, Ellsberg 2017, Perry & Collina 2020).

Most people think the risk of nuclear war is lower than during the Cold War. *Macrocriminology and Freedom* contends the reverse, mainly as a result of risks of accidental, unintended nuclear wars based on misunderstandings and technical malfunctions and particularly as a result of risks of cyberwarfare, cyberterror, and cybercrime. One reason unintended nuclear war was less likely at the height of the Cold War was that weapon systems and radar detection of nuclear warfare were



totally separated from those for conventional warfare. Today, the same IT that detects and launches nuclear missiles also detects and launches conventional missiles. The same satellites that are used for conventional warfare and diverse commercial purposes may be used in nuclear warfare. Software used for commercial purposes may be used to wage conventional and nuclear war. Hence, the depth of alarm over the hack that opened Microsoft backdoors. False flag risks compound cyberespionage perils, with the NSA and Britain detecting Russian intelligence boring into networks of an elite Iranian hacking unit, piggybacking Iran's systems to attack governments (Perlroth 2021).

Another danger is naïve hackers who think they are hacking a commercial target but are unintentionally targeting IT critical to nuclear targeting, missile detection, or launch. A worry is that the victim will wrongly interpret the hack as intended to prepare the way for a nuclear attack at some tense geopolitical moment. In the worst case, it might trigger a “use it or lose it” response, i.e., because the hack is interpreted as evidence that a nuclear strike on weapon systems is imminent, the weapons must be used before we lose them.<sup>3</sup>

When President Biden accuses China of being the worst carbon emitter without also confessing that the United States is twice as bad per capita and that the United States is the biggest contributor to the carbon stock even though China makes much bigger contributions to the flow of new emissions, we sigh at crude stigmatization. China likewise frequently stigmatizes with its diplomacy. Criminological theory instructs us that such stigmatization can always be reintegratively reversed. Leaders like Biden are gifted at doing so. The normative and explanatory proposition at issue is simple. Reverse the cascade of stigma by putting the problem in the center of the circle rather than the actors who are the climate criminals. Put the dangers on all sides of a pax mafiosa with organized hackers in the center of the conversation rather than endlessly stigmatizing each other for specific hacks. Work together to restore the carnage of a combative past with a healing future. It is never so late that it makes sense to give up on this, not with China, not with Iran, not with Donald Trump, not with the worst murderer.

### SIMPLE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX CATASTROPHES

One counter-narrative to Steven Pinker (2011) perceiving a civilizing long-run decline in violence is that emergency care has improved to the point where a stabbing is less likely to result in homicide than in previous centuries. Ambulances get victims to hospital emergency care before they bleed to death. This has to be a counter-narrative with at least a partial degree of historical validity. It creates omitted variable bias in almost all regression analyses of violent crime rates, especially when societies with weak and variable healthcare infrastructure are included. Military ambulances are also why it is so hard to kill soldiers in twenty-first-century wars compared to twentieth-century conflicts. It illustrates the main point of the book on which I currently toil, tentatively titled *Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes*. From more minor catastrophes like the COVID-19 pandemic, societies can learn lessons about how to scale up simple institutions like ambulance services in preparation for more major crises like nuclear war.

Cascades of crime waves feeding into waves of war that cluster in war-torn regions of the planet is an example of a complex cascade. Having a good ambulance institution designed to be capable of scaling up quickly and massively if there is a nuclear war or a pandemic is not only good for containing crime harm, it helps contain harm from varied crisis cascades. Although cascade phenomena are complex and nonlinear, frequently passing tipping points to reverse direction, a well-designed

<sup>3</sup>These can be panicked judgments because four minutes is a current estimate for how long many nuclear missiles between India and Pakistan take from launch to detonation, leading to mass famine and possible nuclear winter (Dyer 2021).



ambulance service is an example of a simple institution for containing that complexity, however it unfolds. A good university system that does the research and training to diagnose complex crises as they pass tipping points is another example of a simple institutional imperative that societies are capable of maintaining in good order. That institutional imperative is simple, even as what universities do through their research is complex on challenges like climate change. Universities are slow-food institutions that are weak at inventing overnight crisis fixes and strong at generative problem-solving.

*Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes* is particularly concerned about four kinds of crises: climate change, crime–war cascades, epidemics, and financial crises. These catastrophes are conceived as complex and prone to cascade. It is well documented that the climate crisis proceeds as a cascade phenomenon that takes ecosystems beyond tipping points that could be impossible to reverse. One reason climate crisis has complex effects is the large impacts that it is likely to have on the other three kinds of crises. For example, a climate crisis directly engenders epidemics because as forests are destroyed, wildlife is thrust into closer contact with human populations as they cling to surviving urban green belts. In Australia, we have seen this with mass bat infestations of city botanic gardens. Twenty percent of the planet’s mammals are bats. Bats are good at jump-starting epidemics because they are the only mammal that flies from city to city. Viruses are thus increasingly likely to leap from bats to humans, just as they leapt from apes to humans in new ways with HIV-AIDS and Ebola along Congo’s Ebola River. A climate crisis may also cause major rivers to run dry; thus, powerful states may be tempted to divert melting snows away from flows into weaker countries’ river systems. African states and Syria do this with surrounding states. There are fears that China might divert Himalayan snow from flowing South into the massive river systems of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia, like the Mekong, to replenish drying rivers critical to Chinese famine prevention, like the Yellow and Yangtze systems.

These temptations may cascade in complex ways that risk future wars. War in turn cascades to economic crises, as may happen with the current war in Ukraine, and epidemic crises. A well-documented example of cascade to epidemics is the way that the deadliest cascade of war to emerge since the end of the Vietnam War, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, spread HIV-AIDs across Africa. More than twenty foreign armies were fighting inside Congo; mass rape was rife and foreign armies who participated in the rapes spread HIV back to their home countries and across the continent.

During my Peacebuilding Compared research in 2017, I spent time with Kurdish nomads in the border regions between Iran, Iraq, and Syria. I ate meals inside tents where their declining stocks of infant animals were housed to protect them from predation. Returning to Australia, I was thrust into quarantine with pneumonia on suspicion of being Australia’s first case of MERS coronavirus (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome). Since the battle of the Somme cascaded the flu pandemic in 1918 when soldiers returning home spread it as far as Samoa, killing 20 percent of its population, societies have been vigilant against war contagions (Barry 2020).

When climate crises cascade to wars and the globalization of disease, these cascades can in turn cascade to economic crises. The COVID-19 crisis illustrated this dynamic as it thrust the world into recession in 2020. I diagnose ways each of these four crises has tendencies to cascade into one another in *Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes*. Three general points are worthy of mention here. One is that in conditions of hyperconnectivity, crises cascade faster. The second is that crises are more tightly coupled than in the past. Warren Buffet made this point about the international cascade of economic crises in 2008; we learned that risks had become more coupled than in the past, so the collapse of a US bank more readily cascades to the collapse of European banks. With COVID-19 and the Ukraine war, we are now learning that pandemics and wars can disrupt supply chains with more systemic risks to economies than in the past. The third general



point about tendencies for crises to cascade into each other is that criminology has an important part to play in prevention, whether through preventing fraud by banks, carbon trading fraud, or the criminalization of states and markets.

*Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes* takes a page from the playbook of institutional anomie theory and applies it to interconnected contemporary crises. This arises from my reading of the way Messner & Rosenfeld (2013) forged institutional anomie theory from the insights of Robert K. Merton (1968). Anomie effects are complex and prone to reversal. Durkheim connected rising nineteenth-century suicide rates with the social disruption of industrialization. William Julius Wilson (2012) and *Macrocriminology and Freedom* explain the steep crime rise of 1960–92 through anomie associated with deindustrialization. Again, it is not the job of this article to come to grips with the complexity of such reversals. It is simply to make the institutional anomie point that however complex cascades of anomie play out, it matters to have strong basic institutions like a good education system, health system, loving families for raising children, plentiful employment, and rights of access to housing for the poor (Braithwaite 2021). Such institutions are quite well understood. Many societies have done reasonably well building them at different stages of modernity, even if they neglected them during more neoliberal periods. Although the rapidly moving, coupled crises to which societies respond are hard to understand, these simple, generative institutions are not so tricky to comprehend. They require long histories of consolidation. We know a great deal about what we need to do to build and preserve them, hence *Simple Solutions to Complex Catastrophes*.

## PREDATORY PEACE

The fourth book, tentatively *Predatory Peace*, is far away. Predatory peace means peace with plunder and exploitation, with extractive institutions, and with a great deal of predatory crime. With collaborators, particularly Valerie Braithwaite, Bina D’Costa, and Hilary Charlesworth, I have published six books using the Peacebuilding Compared data that are stepping stones to *Predatory Peace*. Data collection has proceeded since 2004, preliminarily coding more than 800 variables for 66 armed conflicts. The method is historical–qualitative–quantitative. Qualitative dimensions require fieldwork led on the ground by me for each armed conflict. One obligation of my privileged scholarly life has been to tackle projects of wide ambition compared to academics tied to intensive workloads.<sup>4</sup> I am nonplussed about how to analyze hundreds of independent variables to explain fewer than a hundred wars (and patterns of postwar violence).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Data collection with Peter Drahos on the globalization of regulation took a decade (Braithwaite & Drahos 2000). There was likewise the novel ambition to study all the important regulatory agencies in one country (103 in Australia) (Grabosky & Braithwaite 1986). Data were assembled cross-nationally across 18 years for *Regulating Aged Care* with a huge fieldwork commitment to watching inspectors enforce the law (Braithwaite et al. 2007). Valerie then led another team over eight years to test many of the same hypotheses on tax enforcement (Ivec & Braithwaite 2015, Leviner 2008).

<sup>5</sup>Will I use machine learning, fuzzy-set qualitative case analysis, or regressions that are preceded by factor analyses for data reduction? Offers are welcomed from scholars who might improve my sophistication in coming to grips with this. One challenge is that my theory says that there are a hundred variables that really matter to preventing crime and war. Maybe I could, should, be forced to specify five key ones. However, relenting to that would not be true to what I believe. Perhaps a methods savior will ask me how well my theoretically best 100 independent variables explain crime and war when the 100 are blocked into suites of variables. Then my best five might prove little weaker in explanatory power than my best 100. Next, maybe we should play with machine learning to pick others among the 800+ remaining coded variables that other theorists argue are more important and then assess how their better theory proves more parsimonious while improving the explanatory power of my starting theories?



The keystone hypotheses I plan to test in *Predatory Peace* are:

- Peace agreements are ultimately effective in ending wars but tend to degenerate to predatory peace.
- Ceasefire capitalism tends to degenerate to criminalized markets.

### **Peace Agreements Are Ultimately Effective in Ending Wars but Tend to Degenerate to Predatory Peace**

Preliminary coding of the 66 armed conflicts suggests degeneration toward predatory peace is distressingly common. Edward Aspinall (2014) argued that the long civil war in Aceh, Indonesia led to a peace agreement and a predatory peace that involved high levels of plunder and authoritarianism. Aceh's peace is not as predatory as Cambodia's, for example, where only one leader has been able to win elections post genocide. Yet Cambodia and Aceh have in common that their citizens enjoy a peace in terms of prosperity after the suppression of violence. It is not just military combat that has ceased this century. In comparative terms, these societies enjoy the peace on the streets of low-crime societies (Braithwaite et al. 2010; Broadhurst et al. 2015, 2018). Women of these societies suffered shockingly high rates of wartime rape compared to lower sexual assault today [as is well documented for Cambodia by Broadhurst et al. (2015, 2018)], even as they suffer postwar family violence. All things considered, predatory peace tends to be better than war for citizens.

Transitional justice in Aceh illustrates why the predation trap is so hard to escape. The predatory peace deal was between the Indonesian state and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). In essence, the deal was that if GAM leaders decommissioned fighting units and surrendered weapons and if those GAM leaders could succeed in winning postwar elections (which prominent GAM leaders did do), special autonomy for Aceh would be steered to grant these GAM winners provincial shares in Indonesian patrimonialism. GAM foot soldiers did not win snouts in the patrimonial trough in the way their leaders did. They did get modest one-off reintegration payments when they surrendered weapons. Civilian victims of the war won even more paltry reparations than the foot soldiers. Most missed out on reparations and stayed poor. Again, these exclusionary dimensions of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration deals of peace agreements are widespread. They arise from the logic of war that foot soldiers control the gun, commanders control foot soldiers, and civilian victims control nothing.

There were always two other risks to GAM elites who were personal winners from the predatory peace deal. The first was that they might have been implicated in crimes or human rights abuses committed by units under their control. The second was that if those GAM leaders used their newly won provincial power to pierce impunity for the Indonesian national security state, its intelligence operatives would find a way to bring them down, for example by proving corrupt enrichment. They became rich and powerful, yet were in palpable terror of militarized state might, particularly of the secret police.

Acehnese civil society learned from the way the Timorese clandestine movement (led by university students) organized. They not only mobilized Timorese civil society on the streets of Jakarta in 1998 but also played a prominent role in mobilizing wider Indonesian civil society for democracy. The Timorese students were the shock troops of civil society innovation through tactics like fence-jumping into Western embassies to request asylum (Braithwaite et al. 2012). At Aceh's finest hour in November 1999, perhaps a million protestors surged onto the streets (Braithwaite et al. 2010).

Unfortunately, Acehnese activists were less tough-minded and more trusting than the Timorese *clandestinos* who rejected deal after deal proposed by the authoritarian Indonesian leadership and continued to hold the streets to make the society ungovernable until their demands were met.





Sadly, Acehese civil society failed to hold or return to the streets until they got genuine concessions that made their 2005 peace less predatory. There is an inevitability that ceasefire deals and negotiations that make ceasefires permanent are politically centralized. They are deals that at first must be done by leaders who control the guns. Indeed, there is evidence that peace deals in cases like Aceh are extremely hard to nail down and occur against a background of repeated failures (Braithwaite et al. 2010). Therefore, peacemakers do not want too many cross-cutting voices in the room to make the initial deal that stops the shooting. There is a two-table reality to how this dealmaking by a small negotiating group works (Putnam 1988). Representatives of each side confront their adversaries across one table. Behind each of them at a second table are their supporters: party activists, local commanders, and civil society leaders. Negotiators must do deals with both tables. For Aceh's predatory peace, that second table only weakly empowered civil society, but it more strongly did so in Timor-Leste. To put it crudely, the GAM leaders and the Indonesian negotiators who did the deal excluded most voices that were seeking to be heard at that second table.

Frankly, that can be necessary up to a point to silence the guns. But the best peace processes quickly move from an initial ceasefire that consolidates the silencing of guns, then to a more permanent peace, and to a more inclusive process. Again, Timor-Leste is an apt contrast, as are Bougainville and many other peace processes in this regard (Braithwaite et al. 2012). When the Constitution of postconflict Timor-Leste was drafted, many of those *clandestinos* from the 1998 streets of Jakarta who were negotiating with Indonesian leaders had become elected members of the Constituent Assembly that was drafting the Constitution for the world's newest nation, Timor-Leste. That is not to deny that impunity, autocracy, and elements of predation ultimately congealed into the Timor-Leste peace. It is just to say that it was a much more participatory peace than Aceh and that widening the circle of civil society participation in the second phases of peace negotiations was one important factor in that accomplishment, as in other peace processes (Braithwaite et al. 2012).

Another part of the dynamics of predatory peace is that insurgent leaders who seize the reins to shape the peace must reach an accommodation with enough factions of the state, and with enough factions of their own movement, to prevail. Among the demands factions can make for their support is that other factions with different views from their own be excluded from putting their snouts in the patrimonial trough post conflict. War criminals especially can demand that civil society groups be excluded from Constitutional reform or transitional justice negotiations if they demand an end to impunity for war crimes. These are the micropolitical dynamics of how putting together a coalition for peace recurrently becomes a coalition for impunity and predation.

If the primary interest of a local faction leader is corruptly monopolizing some market as a businessman, he can say "I don't demand a seat at the peace negotiation table and I won't compete against you to become a political leader of the postconflict government, but only if you protect my monopoly and give me government contracts." In some conflicts, such "shadow state" business actors (Reno 1999) who support a criminalized state end up more powerful than incumbents of formal state power, who become puppets dependent on their campaign contributions. Ceasefire capitalism (Woods 2011), crony capitalism (Haber 2013), deep states (Filiu 2015), and booty capitalism (Hutchcroft 1998) are other terms used to describe the complex variants of this dynamic of predation by business puppeteers beyond official corridors of power.

### Ceasefire Capitalism Tends to Degenerate to Criminalized Markets

One way of redefining what is a predatory peace in the theoretical terms of *Macrocriminology and Freedom* is a peace untempered by checks and balances. Unfortunately, criminalized markets have persistence, as do corporations corrupted by ceasefire capitalism. Criminalized war leaders are less





enduring as they lose power to coups or election defeats. What then is to be done about a peace afflicted with predation? One answer is that it is never too late for civil society to mobilize against predation and retrieve opportunities missed in the peace deal. This theoretical orientation about what is to be done returns to institutional anomie theory. What is needed is a strong civil society, a strong state, and strong markets that are tempered by plural separations of powers and regulatory institutions that cramp the style of crony capitalists. Networked governance for freedom and against predation is required (Braithwaite et al. 2012). Constant and creative democratic struggle to temper power is the evolutionary imperative that is more important than any revolutionary regime change. The 150 propositions of *Macrocriminology and Freedom* give some specificity and texture, probably too much(!), regarding how to struggle institutionally against predation. The essence of their implications is that without constant agonistic struggle against the abuse of power (Mouffe 2013), even peace with democracy is likely to decay to criminalized democracy with criminalized state institutions and criminalized markets. That said, effective civil society struggle against abuse of power is not rocket science. It can and regularly does institutionalize checks and balances that deliver nonpredatory peace across regions of the planet.

International society liked to dress up deals like Aceh's predatory peace as positive peace with democracy and justice. Aceh was one of the biggest of eight civil wars that raged in Indonesia up to 2005 (Braithwaite et al. 2010). All were extinguished as hot wars in a newly democratized Indonesia. Van Klinken (2007) called these *Small Town Wars*; they killed tens of thousands in most cases, and more than 100,000 in three of the conflicts (Braithwaite et al. 2010). Indonesia's transition to a G10 economy of 270 million was the most important democratization of the past 30 years, yet it was still the locus of many a predatory local peace. It also transitioned to a low-crime society (homicide rate 0.4 per 100,000 on the latest United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime figures), and a low imprisonment society.

The most important democratization of the eighteenth century was in the United States. It put in place an inspiring architecture of constitutional checks and balances, further improved by the Reconstruction Amendments of 1865–70 (Richards 1993). Yet what was institutionalized by the peace settlement with Britain to end the War of Independence was a predatory peace. By the time Jefferson became president, small town and frontier wars dotted the society; they were settled with local peace agreements. These were worse than predatory wars; they were genocidal, involving systematic ethnic cleansing, mass murder, destroying the identity, the languages, the land, and the buffalo of Indigenous peoples. Meanwhile, a predatory America grew on the backs of African slaves. The genocidal colonial violence of the Americas involved greater slaughter than colonial and postcolonial violence in Indonesia. Braithwaite & D'Costa (2018) argue that the sheer scale of colonial violence in the United States bequeathed a much higher-crime–higher-imprisonment society in the United States than in Indonesia. Colonialism and slavery were even more violent again across most of Latin America and the Caribbean. Two and a half centuries on from the American Revolution, the peace of the Americas gradually became less predatory, although this progress is historically recent in countries like Chile and Argentina and is yet to arrive in countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia. The unbroken predatory power of gangs and shadow governments embedded in corrupt markets and the violent US policies of the War on Drugs prevented ink spots of civility from spreading across a region of the Americas that stretches predation and violence from Mexico south beyond Colombia (Braithwaite 2022a).

The United States and Indonesia are like most societies that have had inspiring transitions to peace and democracy in that they delivered peace that was more and less predatory at different times. South Africa in the two decades after Nelson Mandela came to power consolidated peace and embraced non-Whites into democratic institutions. The trajectory from Mandela to Zuma



unraveled quickly toward a more predatory peace that was also an enormously higher-crime–higher-violence peace than that found in Indonesia, North America, Chile, or Argentina. The 1986 People Power overthrow of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines was another inspiring transition, but the Philippines soon became the country with the highest homicide rate in Asia and, like the United States (the country with the highest rate of police killings in the Global North), a society with high rates of police killings of civilians (Braithwaite 2022a).

Cambodia was another UN poster case of this era. Its peace ended a genocide that killed more than a million people. UN peacekeeping in Cambodia ushered in what Broadhurst et al. (2015, 2018) concluded was a Cambodian civilizing process that delivered Cambodia a low-crime society with homicide rates less than half the world average. Yet Cambodia’s peace was a predatory peace that started with internationally monitored elections but ended with successive gamed elections that only one party could win, the party of Hun Sen, a “reformed” commander of the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Rwanda was Africa’s UN poster case of this kind. Its genocide cost almost a million lives. Today, it also has a comparatively prosperous society, a moderate crime rate, and the pretense of democratic elections (that only one leader can win). The reality of Rwanda is another “inspiring” case that is actually a predatory peace.

Any round-up of the great transitions to peace and democracy of modernity must include the rise of Solidarity in Poland that ushered in genuine democracy not only for Poland but ultimately for much of the Soviet Union. Today, Poland and Russia have transitioned to authoritarian pseudodemocracies in which fundamental freedoms are trampled. Poland more than Russia does have peaceful streets with a homicide rate way below the world average, with much less poverty than in its past, and Poland does not invade other countries. Yet Poland is still a predatory democracy lacking an independent judiciary.

Other commentators would have quibbles with it, but I submit that a well-curated list of the most inspiring UN transitions of violent societies to peace, democracy, and transitional justice since the Cold War have been (in historical sequence) Poland, the Philippines, the Soviet Union, South Africa, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Indonesia (including Timor-Leste and Aceh). These are all cases of predatory peace. One challenge to my curation of lauded transitions that are in fact predatory would be to shift the historical lens a decade earlier to the mid-1970s transitions of Portugal and Spain. These are inspiring cases of nonviolent transitions, of citizens putting flowers in the gun barrels of fascist armies. Spain and Portugal can fairly be described as transitions to genuine democracies rather than predatory democracies with criminalized markets. This would not really be a fair challenge because Spain and Portugal were not even caught up in World War II, so these were not transitions from war and despotism to peace with democracy. Rather they were transitions from peace with despotism to peace with democracy. Germany, Italy, and Japan in 1945 are the stronger examples of transitions from war, despotism, and genocide to a relatively non-predatory peace. These societies share an embeddedness in the Marshall Plan, which was the finest moment of the American century. Spain and Portugal share with Germany and Italy embeddedness in the European dream, that twentieth-century institutional project of collective nonpredatory pacification.

For the moment, I hypothesize that a key guarantee offered by European Union institutions and long transitional administrations to democracy at the end of World War II was democracy with well-tempered separations of powers. Unfortunately, many peace agreements since 1990 institutionalized peace and democratic elections, but only weakly institutionalized separations of powers. That allowed electoral systems to be gamed. Hence, the following are hypotheses that will be explored using the full Peacebuilding Compared data set:

1. Peace with democracy, but without tempered separations of powers, tends to be predatory peace.



2. Predatory peace tends to be peace with moderate crime in the streets but high crime in the suites of those who criminalize markets and criminalize the state.
3. When peace is nonpredatory, it tends to be peace with low crime in the streets, low criminalization of markets, and low criminalization of the state.
4. Networked governance of predation from civil society and networked governance for institutions that temper power are key ingredients for long-term peace without predation. Initially, this requires civil society organizations that are capable of rendering the society ungovernable until civil society is embraced in constitutional negotiations to grow separations of powers.

The essence of these ideas is that predatory peace is normal in the transition from war to peace. Pacification of militaries and pacification of crime in the streets, combined with rights and justice, are not so normal. Yet the exceptions are many, important, and can be the light on our hill. With help from international peacebuilding institutions that learn and better encourage cooperation among great powers, nonpredatory peace could one day become the norm.

### TEMPERING PREDATORY PEACE

*Predatory Peace* aims at clustering regional patterns and building theory on what gives rise to patterns, integrated with normative theory on what is to be done about peace and predation. The qualitative empirical exceptions to these patterns are proving more historically instructive than the patterns themselves.

The worst regional clusters of crime–war are cockpit societies. Cockpits are societies and clusters of societies where many armies find it safer to inflict damage on a hated enemy than to take them on close to home. Cockpits are zones of forward defense of many armies against many enemies. An armed conflict might start in a locale for quite limited local reasons, but when local armed groups draw in support from foreign forces, enemies of those foreigners then seize the low-cost opportunity to attack them and weaken them when they become exposed in the cockpit society. These are cases in which more than a dozen foreign powers fight one another on the soil of the cockpit as they participate in the cockpit war. Examples are the region of Central Europe that we mainly call Germany today where all the great powers of the time piled into the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). The enduring contemporary cockpit societies (since the 1990s) have been Afghanistan, Syria–Iraq, and the Democratic Republic of Congo and its Great Lakes region. Vietnam–Cambodia–Laos was the most important from the 1950s until the end of the Cambodia genocide. When bordering states pour their armies into the cockpit, they deliver tight high-crime, high-suicide, high-war regions around the cockpit that have regional and geopolitical implications.

Regional powerbrokers such as Japan up to 1945 can destabilize peace and fire up predation widely across a region. The US War on Drugs had a similar impact across the Americas from the 1960s in ways that can be specified (Braithwaite 2022a), although there were pacifying and antipredatory US regional influences as well. The Cold War destabilized peace and expanded predation across the Global South. Positive examples of reversing to stabilization of peace are the European Union's efforts to stabilize its Eastern members and New Zealand and Australia's successes in assisting to stabilize the Arc of Instability, which stretched from Aceh to Bougainville, Guadalcanal, and Fiji, after the end of the Cold War (Braithwaite et al. 2012). Such regional cascades of peace and nonpredation matter geopolitically and criminologically.

Patterning also arises from the fact that war makes for powerful states and powerful states make war (and crime) (Tilly 1975). At the same time, states pacify their internal spaces, proactively prevent crime, and make peace with trading partners (Morris 2014, Pinker 2011). The UN



and regional institutions like the European Union, ASEAN, and the Pacific Islands Forum have contributed greatly to regional peace, even if they frequently settle for predatory peace. In contrast, I hypothesize that geopolitical groupings like NATO and the G7 that were designed to divide and exclude great powers increase the risks of proxy wars. It may have been a grave mistake of George H.W. Bush not to embrace the entire former Soviet Union, including Russia, into NATO, nor to consider the alternative arguments of Russians and many others to tear down NATO as the last wall and weave an alternative fabric of security for Europe that was inclusive toward Yeltsin's Russia. The most significant European wars since may not prove to have been helped by that mistake.

The last paragraph was written in late 2021 before Ukraine reached its 2022 boiling point. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is not as acute a crisis as the Cuban Missile Crisis, but it is shaping up as a much more protracted and brutal one that is being fought with increasing recklessness along the border of a nuclear power. As with Cuba, let us hope for a quick end to it, with both sides making concessions to pull missiles back from each other's borders, plus a more creative architecture for peace akin to the strategic arms reduction treaties that did follow in the wake of the Cuban crisis.

Ukraine is also a tipping point in how historical patterns of modern war must be described. We used to say that since 1945, Europe, for centuries until then the most war-torn region of the planet, had become the region least afflicted by war. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 that has progressively become less true. This is because of the cascade of many wars across the former Yugoslavia, the Russia–Chechnya war, Georgia, recurrent Armenia–Azerbaijan conflicts over Nagorno-Karabakh, separatism of Transnistria from Moldova, and now Ukraine, which threatens risks of cascading back into Moldova at the time of writing. Tajikistan had a major civil war that fed into the Afghanistan war. Tajikistan was a Soviet republic in Asia rather than Europe, and Afghanistan was part of neither the Soviet Union nor Europe, but a Moscow vassal when Afghanistan's never-ending 40+ years of war spun out of control. One of the reasons Afghanistan staggered through endless war, on the predatory peace analysis, applied to all these other peripheries of the Soviet Union. There was no Marshall Plan for Afghanistan when Moscow pulled out of its Afghanistan war or when the United States withdrew from that Afghan war by using proxies like Osama bin Laden against the Soviets (Braithwaite & D'Costa 2018). The United States fought a war on cocaine after proxy wars against communism in Latin America morphed some armies from these civil wars into cocaine cartels. But the United States fought no “war on opium” in Afghanistan after the proxy Cold War conflict there made Afghanistan the source of more than 80 percent of the world's heroin.

We are no longer in an era when bank robbery, car theft, and burglary dominate property crime statistics, either in their frequency or cost. The hypothesis is that cybercrime does. The former Soviet Union accounts for the criminal groups that are most organized for both cybercrime and privatized cyberwarfare. Other Russian groups still traffic drugs from Afghanistan and beyond. As with the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo, protracted conflict in Ukraine is increasing human trafficking of refugee children and women. Some of the leaders of organized crime groups have morphed into oligarchs loyal to Putin. Russian organized crime probably cascades more death and destruction of persons and property outside Russia than within. So one way for articulating an ambition for *Predatory Peace* is to improve our diagnoses of why the Marshall Plan was the finest moment of the American century that assisted outcomes so different in Western Europe and Japan in terms of crime and war compared to Latin America, which has been an even greater US aid beneficiary since World War II, and compared to the Soviet Union and its periphery after the Cold War.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Europe is far from becoming a widely crime-afflicted region. Yet Europe has become a more war-afflicted region than the home regions of the



other two great powers post 1991: East Asia (the region with the most war deaths between 1945 and 1980) and the Americas. The hypothesis is that the former Soviet empire has progressively become more of a transnational spreader of war and crime since 1991. The Russian crimes of aggression in Ukraine have made it clearer that Russia would face defeat in a conventional war against NATO that happened by accident or design. It has also become clearer, however, that Russia would “escalate to de-escalate” rather than face such a defeat. Putin seems committed to taking NATO down with it in such a war, perhaps meaning the use of tactical nuclear weapons, which would likely be Hiroshima-size, presumably at sites like the border with Poland where NATO tanks surged into Ukraine. Threat and doctrine frequently do not translate into action, so this may not be right. It is certainly not very rational because nuclear scenario gaming suggests escalation is more likely to cascade to NATO nuclear escalation than to de-escalation. Yet Putin’s invasion of Ukraine was not very rational.<sup>6</sup>

The West has not responded as preventatively as it might have and China exploits this situation to position itself as the potential savior of a Russia flailing in dangerous decline. Braithwaite & D’Costa (2018) argue that Moscow, Washington, and European capitals might all have extended more magnanimous support to Afghanistan after its Soviet withdrawal to help the former communist regime undertake a transition to the Afghan social democracy that it at first unsuccessfully sought to achieve (Braithwaite & D’Costa 2018). For all the propaganda of some side being the “winner” of the war in Ukraine, reality could be more like Afghanistan in the costs of lost opportunities for prevention. Ukraine, Russia, and Europe already have lost a lot, although to varying degrees, as war and crime cascade into economic, ecological, worldwide hunger, and other catastrophes. As usual, peacemaking is the imperative, “winning” the illusion. Russia is incapable of taking and holding Ukraine. Ukraine is incapable of driving Russia out by military means, though a peace settlement is always possible if great powers become energetic in supporting this. The paradox of peacemaking is that it requires all sides to allow their enemies to save face; it requires all sides to show generosity to enemies. Restorative justice with common crime is also like this; in preference to escalating punishment, we escalate social support and redemptive face-saving to both offenders and victims who are helped to heal (Braithwaite 2022a).

Another way of putting this hypothesis is that international institutions backed by great power cooperation hold the keys to future peace that prevents cascades of crime by being a nonpredatory peace. The collapse of great power cooperation, in contrast, leads to proxy wars in cockpit societies, climate catastrophe, cybercrime cascading to nuclear war, global financial crises, and unregulated pandemics.

The Peacebuilding Compared project lacked clear starting hypotheses. These hypotheses were inductively generated, shaped by the project’s first 18 years of fieldwork. That is not to deny that many will be proved wrong by future histories of war or the remaining decade of data collection.

## CONCLUSION

Data in Braithwaite & D’Costa (2018) suggest the conclusion that democracy is often a cause of domination, war, and crime. Putin’s grab to regrow his fading popularity in Russia through the 2014 occupation of Crimea, then again in 2022 in Ukraine, were instances of this, attempts to recover the electoral popularity he won after his war crimes in Chechnya. Democracy must counter this outcome by growing many well-tempered separations of powers that work to check predation. Braithwaite (2022a) argues that this means tempered democracy that predicts low war and low

<sup>6</sup>For a discussion of all these issues, including so-called “escalate to de-escalate” thinking, see Atwood & Kortunov (2022).



crime. Collier (2009) demonstrated how democracy without robust checks and balances creates incentives for governing badly, destroying the inclusive institutions that protect against predation.

It is critical for Western leaders to confront predation by major powers without stigmatizing China, Russia, Iran, and “rogue states.” Ronald Reagan was a model of how to be tough but meticulously polite and respectful to leaders of Russia and China. This is why we might hope that a new generation of leaders will work constructively with the predators of geopolitics to rebuild an international order that secures us from risks that might cascade accidentally to nuclear war, climate catastrophe, financial crises, and new pandemics.

War, crime, and predatory peace are found to be regionally patterned. This patterning arises from the fact that war and crime are cascade phenomena that generate regional clusters of war, peace, and predation pockmarked by cockpit societies. Patterning also arises from the fact that war makes for powerful states and powerful states make war. At the same time, states pacify their internal spaces and proactively make peace with trading partners. Hence, predatory embers of past state formation can be extinguished hot-spot by hot-spot to cascade ink spots of nonviolence that connect up to form wide spaces of nondomination. International institutions backed by great power cooperation hold keys to peace that prevents cascades of crime by being nonpredatory. Criminologists can make modest contributions to prevention of global catastrophes.

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author is not aware of any affiliations, memberships, funding, or financial holdings that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this review.

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