A “Garbage Can Model” of UN Peacekeeping

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To explain the post–Cold War transformation of peacekeeping, I employ a “garbage can model” of agenda-setting to explain how peacekeeping came to be considered, in the context of the UN Security Council’s agenda, an appropriate solution to problems for which it had previously been regarded as inappropriate. The UN fits the defining criteria of an organized anarchy, to which the garbage can model can be expected to apply: unclear preferences, opaque organizational processes, and fluid participation. Drawing on John Kingdon’s adaptation of the garbage can model, I explain changes in peacekeeping as the result of policy entrepreneurs’ linking of a solution (peacekeeping) to a problem (intrastate conflicts) in the context of a policy window created by the ending of the Cold War.

KEYWORDS: garbage can model, peacekeeping, agenda setting, United Nations, international organizations.

The period since the end of the Cold War has been a turbulent one for United Nations peacekeeping. As the Cold War came to an end, the UN Security Council rapidly and dramatically transformed the practice of UN peacekeeping. Between 1988 and 1995, the Security Council authorized twenty-seven missions, compared to thirteen in the preceding forty years. From fewer than 10,000 troops deployed in five missions in 1988, the number of personnel deployed in the field in peacekeeping missions peaked in 1994 at 77,783, with an annual cost of $3.6 billion as compared to $230 million six years earlier. Missions were deployed to settings that were considered unsuitable for peacekeeping under the traditional principles of peacekeeping formulated during the Cold War. Accompanying these quantitative changes was a qualitative shift in the nature of peacekeeping: the development of complex or “second-generation” peacekeeping missions in which peacekeepers were sent to intrastate conflicts and the traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, neutrality, and limited use of force were stretched. These missions involved significant nation-building activities in addition to the traditional truce observation role of peacekeepers. This article argues that the development of second-generation peacekeeping has been inadequately explained to date, and proposes an explanation in terms of a modified “garbage can model.”

Existing research on second-generation peacekeeping has focused on questions of effectiveness, to the neglect of explaining its origins. Yet the
dramatic changes in peacekeeping practice that coincided with the end of
the Cold War remain puzzling, and unsatisfactorily explained. And under-
standing how and why peacekeeping was transformed, with mixed results,
in the past is important to shaping its future. While existing studies rou-
tinely note a number of relevant factors, they do not identify causal mech-
_isms through which these factors produced second-generation peacekeep-
ing, or trace how peacekeeping came to be placed on the Security Council’s
agenda as a solution for problems previously considered not amenable to
peacekeeping.4

This is essentially a question about agenda setting, but has not been
analyzed in terms of agenda-setting models. A large literature in organiza-
tion theory addresses agenda-setting processes, and has been applied exten-
sively to domestic decisionmaking, but only rarely to multilateral settings.5
The UN is particularly amenable to models focusing on agenda setting and
decision making in “organized anarchies,” or settings characterized by
uncertain preferences, unclear organizational processes, and fluid partici-
pation in decisionmaking—features typified by the UN. These so-called
garbage can models (GCMs) explain organizational decisionmaking under
conditions of ambiguity as the result of the partially random coupling of
independent streams of problems, policies, and politics.6 Problems are
joined to policies, in such settings, as a result of their coming to the fore at
the same time, rather than due to a rational calculation that the solution was
an optimal response to a preexisting problem. This article proposes an
analysis of peacekeeping-related agenda setting in the Security Council in
the period 1988–1995 in terms of a modified GCM, hypothesizing that con-
ditions at the end of the Cold War produced a “policy window” that allowed
peacekeeping to be coupled to the problem of intrastate conflict.

The Puzzle

Existing accounts of the development of second-generation peacekeeping
typically recite a list of factors that were permissive of or favorable to the
deployment of missions into conditions not meeting the criteria for tradi-
tional peacekeeping. These include: the end of the Cold War; foreign policy
shifts by both the Soviet Union and the United States; increased cooperation
among the permanent members of the Security Council (P-5); the effective-
ness of Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar; the “ripeness” for settlement of
superpower proxy wars; the increased willingness of Western states to assert
a right to intervene in the domestic affairs of developing countries; the rise
in prominence on the international agenda of intrastate conflicts; success in
early multifunctional missions in the waning years of the Cold War; and a
“sense,” or “mood,” or “atmosphere” of optimism and enthusiasm for UN peacekeeping. As Peter Viggo Jaksobsen has noted, “Existing explanations generally have three things in common: they are only a couple of paragraphs long, they emphasize the end of the Cold War and they fail to specify the causal mechanisms linking the end of the Cold War to the transformation of peace operations.”

Such typical explanations of the emergence of second-generation peacekeeping are exemplified by the following passage in the UN’s official review of peacekeeping, *The Blue Helmets*:

> The easing of the East-West confrontation enhanced cooperation in the Security Council and provided excellent opportunities to resolve long-standing conflicts. But the end of the Cold War also saw other conflicts erupt, giving rise to fierce claims of subnational identity based on ethnicity, religion, culture and language, which often resulted in armed conflict. Responding to the new political landscape, the international community turned to peace-keeping, which grew rapidly in size and scope.

But conventional accounts such as this one do not explain why the UN turned to peacekeeping, or elucidate the politics or decisionmaking process underlying the transformation of peacekeeping they describe. While the factors included in these rote listings were indeed permissive conditions, they do not explain the shift from traditional to second-generation peacekeeping. Until not long before, peacekeeping had been considered an inappropriate solution to such conflicts. And alternative responses—ranging from doing nothing to full-scale military intervention—were possible. Thus, it is not enough to note the favorable conditions at the end of the Cold War as if they were sufficient explanation of the contemporaneous transformation of peacekeeping. This transformation requires further explanation.

**Garbage Cans and Policy Streams**

The garbage can model of organizational choice, originally proposed by Michael D. Cohen, James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen, and prominently adapted by John Kingdon in his “policy streams” model, has been highly influential in the study of organizational behavior and public policy. Cohen, March, and Olsen proposed the GCM to explain decisionmaking in what they termed “organized anarchies,” which are defined by three characteristics: problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation. “Problematic preferences” refers to ambiguity regarding problems and goals. Organizational actors may be uncertain as to both the nature of problems they face and what they hope to accomplish; inverting rationalist
models of decisionmaking, they may discover their preferences through acting, rather than acting to achieve their preferences.

In organizations with unclear technology, organizational members are uncertain of the rules, structures, and processes by which decisions are made. The term technology refers here, following standard usage in organization theory, not to technological artifacts but rather to organizational processes and methods. Thus, in organized anarchies, organizational members do not fully understand the workings of their organization. Finally, fluid participation means that different actors are involved in different decisions, or in the same decision at different times. The mix of participants interacts with problematic preferences and unclear technology to produce distinctive patterns of decisionmaking.

The GCM conceives of decisionmaking in organized anarchies in terms of independent streams of problems, solutions, participants, and choice opportunities.¹² Problems are issues requiring attention, but under conditions of ambiguity their meanings and interpretations are poorly defined. Therefore solutions, rather than being clear means to well-defined ends, comprise ideas, technologies, policies, and other options available for linkage to problems. A solution, in this perspective, may be “an answer looking for a question.”¹³ Participants—those involved in a decision process at a particular time—vary over time and across issues. And choice opportunities—“occasions when an organization is expected to produce behavior that can be called a decision”—can be a function of routine activities, such as an annual budget process, or the result of specific events or circumstances.¹⁴

In contrast to rational choice theory, in which solutions are chosen for their optimally efficient resolution of preexisting problems, garbage can theory sees the streams—including problems and solutions—as, for the most part, independent. “Solutions,” or inherently preferred policies, may exist prior to and independent of any problem, and advocates of particular solutions will seek to attach them to any problem and choice opportunity that promises to serve as a vehicle for the policy’s adoption. The linking of problems and solutions is determined more by “temporal sorting”—in which problems and solutions that arise at the same time become linked in choice opportunities—than by rational fitting of solutions to problems.¹⁵

The model’s name derives from an awkward metaphor. As Cohen, March, and Olsen put it:

To understand processes within organizations, one can view a choice opportunity as a garbage can into which various kinds of problems and solutions are dumped by participants as they are generated. The mix of garbage in a single can depends on the mix of cans available, on the labels attached to the alternative cans, on what garbage is currently being produced, and on the speed with which garbage is collected and removed from the scene.¹⁶
Cohen, March, and Olsen originally applied the model to decision-making in universities. It was subsequently used in analyses of government agencies, grade schools, and military operations.\(^\text{17}\) The model has received the widest attention, however, through its adaptation in Kingdon’s landmark study of US national policy agenda setting.\(^\text{18}\)

Kingdon modified the original GCM in three significant ways. First, he reduced the four streams (problems, solutions, participants, and choice opportunities) to three: problems, policies, and politics. Kingdon’s politics stream, encompassing factors such as elections, interests groups, and the “national mood,” subsumes the participants and choice opportunities streams of the original model. Second, Kingdon added the concepts of policy windows and policy entrepreneurs. Kingdon’s model seeks to explain change in policy agendas, rather than organizational choice more broadly. According to Kingdon, agenda change occurs only when the opportunity arises with the opening of a policy window, an infrequent and fleeting opportunity to connect problems and solutions and move them onto the government’s agenda for decision. Kingdon defined policy windows variously as “opportunit[ies] for advocates of proposals to push their pet solutions, or to push attention to their special problems,” and as “opportunities for action on given initiatives.”\(^\text{19}\) Policy windows may open due to regular events, such as a budget deadline or election, or due to irregular occurrences such as crises or major shifts in political power. Kingdon describes two categories of policy windows: problem and political windows. The former result from problems that arise from sources exogenous to the political stream and demand a policy response. The latter occur due to political events: changes of government, shifts in the national mood, and the rise and fall of political fortunes.

Open policy windows do not automatically bring policy change, however. “Policy entrepreneurs” play a critical role in “coupling” problems and solutions during such windows of opportunity. If policy entrepreneurs do not take advantage of the opportunity, it will pass. Even if policy entrepreneurs are present and act promptly, their efforts may fail. Though a window may arise due to a particular problem or event, when windows open they become focal points for the efforts of many policy entrepreneurs seeking to advance solutions and address problems that may be little or not at all related to the proximate cause of the particular window. Kingdon explains that “[m]ore solutions are available than windows to handle them. So when a window does open, solutions flock to it.”\(^\text{20}\) This produces overloading, which can result in failure of all proposals, or selection of some for attention while others are ignored or abandoned.\(^\text{21}\)

Finally, Kingdon added an evolutionary component to the model by reformulating the solution, or policy, stream. In Kingdon’s version, the policy
stream corresponds to a “policy primeval soup.” Within this soup, policy alternatives originate, mutate, and recombine into new forms. Kingdon sees mutation and recombination of existing policies, rather than the generation of entirely new policies, as the main processes by which new policy alternatives develop. Policy communities select alternatives from the soup according to criteria of technical feasibility, consistency with the policy community’s values, and judgments of what is acceptable in the larger political system. Kingdon’s reformulation of the four streams into three, his evolutionary conception of the policy stream, and the addition of the concepts of policy windows and policy entrepreneurs constitute a significant modification of the original GCM. The model applied here is adapted from Kingdon’s, with the politics stream redefined in a manner more appropriate to the context of international, rather than domestic, policymaking. Specifically, in place of the solely domestic factors that make up Kingdon’s political stream, the political stream is conceived of here as consisting of actors, interests, and ideas at three levels: (1) the multilateral setting; (2) politics within UN member states (e.g., support or hostility toward UN peacekeeping, and willingness to pay dues); and (3) politics and organizational culture within the UN.

A Garbage Can Model of UN Peacekeeping: The UN as Organized Anarchy

The United Nations is an organized anarchy. It is characterized by all three of the defining characteristics of organized anarchy: problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation. Therefore, the GCM should be applicable to decisionmaking within the United Nations. This section presents a plausibility probe of a GCM explanation of the development of second-generation peacekeeping.

Only a preliminary account of a garbage can explanation of the development of second-generation peacekeeping can be presented here. There was never a discrete decision to create a new generation of peacekeeping. Rather, the new practices of peacekeeping were developed on an ad hoc basis through the planning of individual missions through the late 1980s and 1990s, changing the nature of peacekeeping incrementally over time. Therefore, a study of the development of second-generation peacekeeping must proceed through analysis of individual missions. Space precludes a comprehensive analysis of all twenty-seven missions established between 1988 and 1995. However, this section provides a general overview of the development of second-generation peacekeeping in this period, through the lens of the GCM.
Problematic Preferences

The United Nations is not a unitary rational actor. Even if we focus on the core bodies of the UN, rather than the United Nations system, it is still a set of more or less loosely coupled elements. To the extent that it makes sense to talk of elements such as the Security Council, General Assembly, and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) having preferences, these preferences are primarily a function of the preferences of UN member states. Differences in member-states’ preferences render the identification and existence of collective UN preferences problematic. Further, the preferences of the Secretariat or its constituent elements, while influenced by member states, are also a function of the Secretariat’s organizational culture. Preferences vary across different UN bodies. Even within a single UN body, such as the Security Council, ambiguity regarding problem definition or conceptions of policies may inhibit actors’ ability to determine their own preferences. Thus, the UN is characterized by problematic preferences along several dimensions.

Unclear Technology

The United Nations is similarly characterized by unclear technology. This is captured by a participant observer’s assessment that “although it was possible to sit down with paper and pen and draw a coherent organizational chart, what was reproduced on paper bore little resemblance to practice, which itself was an ever-changing reality.” Expressions of bewilderment at the UN’s Byzantine procedures by high-level UN officials clearly demonstrate the extent of uncertainty about the UN’s procedures by its own personnel. Former Undersecretary-General Marrack Goulding recounts that, as head of the Department of Political Affairs, his lack of familiarity with the UN’s procedural intricacies was a handicap. Similarly, Boutros Boutros-Ghali notes that when he met senior US diplomatic officials shortly after taking office as secretary-general, the Americans “were far more familiar than I with the intricate mechanisms of the United Nations.” Lack of familiarity with the UN’s organization and procedures has also been a problem for senior leadership in integrated peacebuilding missions. Thus, the organizational “technology” of UN decisionmaking is largely opaque even to high-level UN personnel.

Fluid Participation

Decisionmaking regarding UN peacekeeping is also characterized by fluid participation. This was particularly the case during the 1988–1995 period in question. Fluid participation is, of course, institutionalized in the system of rotation of nonpermanent members of the Security Council. But there are
many other sources of changes in participation in peacekeeping decisionmaking. The organizational apparatus of the Secretariat has been changed several times, for instance through the replacement of the Office for Special Political Affairs by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the creation of the Department of Political Affairs, and the creation and subsequent replacement of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Such restructuring has continued with the implementation of the influential August 2000 Brahimi Report on peace operations reform.

Personnel change also takes place as new or sitting secretary-generals appoint or overhaul staff and reorganize the staff’s structure, and shift decisionmakers within the Secretariat. Similarly, changes in national governments produce new permanent representatives to the UN, and new faces in the Security Council and in other UN bodies such as the General Assembly’s Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Even permanent members of the Security Council change, as with the Russian Federation’s assumption of the Soviet Union’s seat, and the shift of China’s seat from Taiwan to the People’s Republic of China.

As peacekeeping expanded in the 1980s and 1990s, countries that had not previously participated in peacekeeping—both major powers and developing countries—became troop contributors, introducing a further set of participants into the mix. As the particular mix of contributing states varies from mission to mission, participation becomes even more fluid. This fluidity was exacerbated by the increased role of regional organizations and nongovernmental organizations in peace operations of the 1990s.

Ambiguity

In organized anarchies such as the UN, organizational choice takes place under conditions of ambiguity, in which alternative interpretations or perspectives on the situation are available, and the basis for choosing among them is unclear. Nikolaos Zahariadis distinguishes ambiguity from uncertainty because additional information may reduce uncertainty but does not resolve ambiguity. Ambiguity arises from the defining characteristics of organized anarchies—problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation. Ambiguity short-circuits the operation of comprehensive rational decisionmaking. Instead, decisions are determined by the temporal sorting of the streams and the attention of decisionmakers, with attention itself a function of contextual factors.

Peacekeeping-related decisionmaking in the Security Council, Secretariat, and among member states during the period 1988–1995 was strongly characterized by ambiguity. There was widespread perplexity regarding the nature and sources of interstate, ethnic, and civil conflicts, the nature of
post–Cold War order, the role of the United Nations, and the implications for peacekeeping.

**The End of the Cold War as a Policy Window**

The thawing of the Cold War is almost universally described as the primary factor making possible the shifts in peacekeeping practice that occurred at the end of the 1980s, and is sometimes portrayed as their direct cause. As a dramatic development that opened up previously foreclosed policy options, a clearer example of a policy window is hard to imagine. It had sources in both the problem and political streams. The increased visibility of ethnic and tribal conflicts in the early post–Cold War period opened a problem window through which the solution of peacekeeping was linked to the problem of intrastate conflict. The thawing of superpower relations and increased P-5 cooperation marked a dramatic turn in the politics stream, and created a political window. Changed understandings of the relationship between sovereignty and international order constituted another change in the political stream. Adapting Kingdon’s framework to the UN context, the transformation of UN peacekeeping can be explained in terms of the coupling of a problem (intrastate conflict, and the need of national political elites to be seen as “doing something” about it), a solution (peacekeeping, with nontraditional elements) and politics (the unsettled configuration, increased cooperation, and general optimism of the early post–Cold War period) in the context of the policy window created by the ending of the Cold War. These streams were interdependent, though loosely so.

**The Problem Stream**

Developments in the problem stream in the late 1980s and early 1990s included peace processes in Central America, southern Africa, Cambodia, and Western Sahara; political upheaval, famine, and tribal war in Somalia; the breakup of Yugoslavia, and accompanying ethnic conflict; a peace process, then genocide and civil war in Rwanda, followed by a refugee crisis in Zaire/Congo; the resolution of the Iran-Iraq War; the 1991 Persian Gulf War; and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the frequency of ethnic conflict did not increase with the end of the Cold War. However, civil and ethnic conflicts became more salient as the Cold War receded, and media attention and evolving norms of humanitarianism helped connect the newly critical problem of intrastate conflict to the solution of humanitarian intervention. This constituted an important change in the problem stream. At the same
time, liberal norms promoted an emphasis on elections and economic liberalizations in peacekeeping missions, facilitating an expanded role for peace operations.\textsuperscript{36} Thus, the rapidly changing international situation as the Cold War drew to an end constituted a rapidly changing problem stream.

The Policy Stream

Second-generation peacekeeping was a change in the solution, or policy, stream. It involved the addition to peacekeeping’s traditional functions (interposition and truce observation and monitoring) of activities such as establishing and monitoring elections; overseeing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DD&R); providing humanitarian relief; protecting “safe areas”; and providing the political foundations for transition governments.

Many of these roles and functions had precedents in past activities of the League of Nations and the United Nations. After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles assigned the League of Nations roles in the Saar Basin and the city of Danzig that prefigured UN second-generation missions and transitional administrations in Namibia, Cambodia, Kosovo, and East Timor.\textsuperscript{37} And in what Ratner terms the UN’s “aborted cases,” in Trieste, Jerusalem, Korea, and (prior to 1978) Namibia, plans that foreshadowed the later development of multidimensional peacekeeping were floated, but not implemented, calling for the UN to play a direct role in several peace settlements.\textsuperscript{38} In the Congo and in West Irian, the UN undertook missions that involved nation-building and peace-enforcement actions. Because these missions were regarded as failures, however, the precedent they set was a negative one, and they were held up as object lessons in the need to adhere to core traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, impartiality, and nonuse of force except in self-defense.\textsuperscript{39} By 1990, however, Brian Urquhart, who had helped define the traditional principles, could confidently state that, “it seems likely that one result of the new unanimity among the permanent members of the Security Council will be a considerable broadening of the range of situations in which the council may agree on the use of peacekeeping operations.”\textsuperscript{40}

The development of second-generation peacekeeping conformed to Kingdon’s model of policy ideas and alternatives developing largely through mutation and recombination in a policy primeval soup. Second-generation peacekeeping was not a wholly new creation, but a novel recombination of elements that had been present in the “soup” of peacemaking and collective security policy alternatives at least as far back as the interwar years. The establishment of the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) for Namibia was a critical element of this process. Negotiations aimed at producing agreement on Namibian independence proceeded from
the mid-1970s through 1991. In 1978, Secretary-General Waldheim formulated a plan for Namibia’s independence in response to a proposal resulting from negotiations between South Africa, the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO), the Contact Group (consisting of the UK, Canada, France, West Germany, and the United States), and the so-called Frontline States (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, with the sometime participation of Nigeria). Waldheim’s plan called for the deployment of a Transition Assistance Group to oversee the process leading to Namibian independence. This plan, endorsed by the Security Council in Resolution 435 of September 1978, stalled for over a decade, caught up politically in the conflict in neighboring Angola, and the broader Cold War struggle. Goulding observes that “because of the delay in implementing SCR 435, UNTAG was more thoroughly planned than any previous peacekeeping operation—and any since.”41 The decade of planning contributed to UNTAG’s success.42 UNTAG was the prototype of the multidimensional missions of the period, establishing an important precedent as subsequent missions adopted the extensive civilian and peacebuilding components included in UNTAG’s mandate. Planning for a UN mission in Namibia between 1977 and 1989 was a key instance of recombination taking place in the policy primeval soup.

The Politics Stream

As outlined above, the politics stream with respect to UN peacekeeping includes multilateral, national, and organizational elements. The multilateral politics of the Security Council were transformed by the thawing of the Cold War. This opened a political window within which the problem of intrastate conflict was linked to the solution of complex peacekeeping. The atmosphere of optimism prevailing in the Security Council until about 1993 is analogous to the “national mood” that Kingdon identified as an element of the political stream in the context of US government agenda setting.

National-level politics were important in the multilateral shift. For example, the Soviet shift toward supporting peacekeeping and its expansion was tied to both ideational changes within the Gorbachev regime and, more loosely, to Gorbachev’s perestroika reforms, themselves a response to recognition of Soviet economic decline.43 The decline of Reagan-era US hostility toward the UN, and the first President Bush’s “New World Order” rhetoric, also facilitated an expansion of the role of peacekeeping, furthered by early Clinton administration enthusiasm for “assertive multilateralism.” These shifts likewise had bases in domestic politics.

Normative-ideational shifts—changed understandings of the relationship between sovereignty and international order, and the acceptance of liberal democracy as the standard of legitimate governance—can be conceptualized
as elements in the political stream.\textsuperscript{44} These ideational changes occurred among elites who were key actors in the political stream. They had the effect of coupling elements—intrastate conflict and peacekeeping—in the problem and solution streams. Adopting the view that internal (empirical) sovereignty is necessary for international peace and security implies nation building. Viewing liberalization as a necessary element of conflict resolution and prevention implies international interventions promoting democratization and market economics.\textsuperscript{45}

Finally, organizational culture and politics are a central consideration in analyzing change in international organizations. Factors internal to the UN Secretariat—the division of bureaucratic “turf” between different offices and officials, the personal initiatives of Secretaries-General Peréz de Cuéllar and Boutros-Ghali, and the organizational culture of the Secretariat and its different departments—constituted important elements of the political stream. In particular, Boutros-Ghali’s \textit{An Agenda for Peace} report was both a reflection and catalyst of developments in the political stream.\textsuperscript{46}

\textbf{Policy Entrepreneurs}

Stephen Solarz and Gareth Evans exemplify the role of policy entrepreneurs in the formation of second-generation peacekeeping. Solarz, a US Congressional Representative with extensive experience in Cambodian issues, and chair of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, conceived of a UN “trusteeship” in the spring of 1989 as a solution to the power-sharing dilemma that had stalled negotiations prior to the Paris peace conference.\textsuperscript{47} He proposed the idea to Evans, Australia’s Foreign Minister, who adopted it in modified form as a fall 1989 Australian proposal for a UN transitional administration. Evans’s deputy, Michael Costello, then engaged in marathon diplomacy in December 1989 and January 1990 to secure internal commitment to the plan. The Australian initiative became the basis of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), a landmark second-generation peace operation in which the UN took on unprecedented authority in an independent state, an idea that had been considered unfeasible before Solarz’s intervention.\textsuperscript{48} Thus, Solarz and Evans’s efforts coupled a new, multidimensional form of peacekeeping as a solution to the problem of resolving civil conflict.

Identifying policy entrepreneurs in the development of the mandate for UNTAG is more complicated, as the eventual shape of the mandate emerged over the course of a decade-long impasse in the peace process. However, US Ambassadors to the UN Andrew Young and Donald McHenry acted as key policy entrepreneurs in the Namibia case, establishing and leading the Western contact group in the formulation of a UN plan for Namibian independence.\textsuperscript{49} US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance notes in his memoirs that
it fell to the contact group to develop much of the planning for the UN’s operational role prior to the 1978 passage of Resolution 435 because the UN did not want to explicitly plan for a UN deployment without all the parties’ consent. Upon his 1978 appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Namibia, Martti Ahtisaari also had input into the operational requirements of the mission, influencing the evolution of UNTAG planning throughout the decade-long delay in its deployment. Through such efforts, peacekeeping, civilian police, and elections monitoring were recombined in novel ways within the policy stream, and coupled to the problem of the Namibian conflict.

Policy entrepreneurship can arise from many sources. William Durch identifies three sources of initiative for UN peacekeeping operations through 1991. Of those initiated between 1988 and 1991, he identifies two—UNIIMOG (UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group) and UNIKOM (UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission)—as missions arising from initiatives of the Security Council, and ten other missions as resulting from “brokered requests for UN assistance,” or calls for peacekeepers arising from mediated peace settlements. The third source of initiative—unbrokered local requests for peacekeepers—led to the establishment of five missions between 1947 and 1964, but did not account for any of the 1988–1991 cases. Thus, the locus of political entrepreneurship promoting peacekeeping as a solution varies from case to case, and can lie in the Security Council, the Office of the Secretary-General, third party mediation, or the initiative of local parties to the conflict.

Complex multiparty peace negotiations led to the establishment of UNTAG and UNTAC. The UN Observer Mission to Verify the Electoral Process in Nicaragua (ONUVEN) and the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) were initiated by the parties to the Esquipulas II agreement, with Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar taking a proactive role. The election monitoring mission in Haiti (ONUVEH) was instigated by a request from the Haitian provisional government, while a request from the Salvadoran government and the FMLN as part of a negotiated settlement gave rise to the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). Missions in the Western Sahara (MINURSO) and Angola (UNAVEM II) similarly arose from mediated settlements.

The Gorbachev regime also acted as an important political entrepreneur in the late 1980s revival of peacekeeping. After decades of opposition to and obstruction of UN peacekeeping operations that it regarded as supportive of Western interests, the Soviets in 1986 began to shift toward a supportive posture. In addition to payment of Soviet arrears and current dues and Gorbachev’s rhetorical support, the Soviets began to advocate more expansive use of peacekeeping as a collective security instrument beyond the scope of traditional peacekeeping.
Finally, while the transformation of peacekeeping began with his predecessor, Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s advocacy of an expanded role for the UN in peace and security, as articulated in *An Agenda for Peace*, was an important attempt at entrepreneurship, though one with mixed results. *An Agenda for Peace*’s advocacy of an expanded role for the United Nations across the range of peace operations contributed to the high point of second-generation missions in 1992–1993. However, failures in Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda led to retrenchment, reflected in the 1995 Supplement to *An Agenda for Peace*. A secretary-general less enamored of peacekeeping might have been more reticent about expanding the UN’s role in intrastate conflict.

**Conclusion**

While existing accounts routinely identify the end of the Cold War as the main cause, or permissive condition, accounting for the rise of second-generation peacekeeping, the GCM of UN peacekeeping adds to our understanding of how the end of the Cold War contributed to the transformation of peacekeeping: it opened a policy window within which the solution of second-generation peacekeeping was coupled with the problem of intrastate conflict. This happened incrementally through the establishment of successive late- and post–Cold War peacekeeping missions. Different “policy entrepreneurs” played varying roles in the different missions.

Furthermore, in contrast to accounts that present the transformation of peacekeeping as a natural or inevitable consequence of the end of the Cold War, the GCM highlights the contingency of the process, emphasizing temporal sorting over rational fitting of solutions to problems. Second-generation peacekeeping emerged through the coupling of the problem of intrastate conflict with new (or in some cases, old) roles and functions—such as election observation, disarmament and demobilization supervision, and peace enforcement—that were incorporated into peacekeeping through mutation and recombination within the policy stream. Coupling and agenda change was largely a function of simultaneity: the rise of the problem of intrastate conflict and the availability of complex peacekeeping as a solution corresponded with the end of the Cold War policy window. The simultaneous presence of all three factors was required.

This account of the development of second-generation peacekeeping goes beyond the standard superficial listing of factors that contributed in some way to the transformation of peacekeeping by developing a more complete causal narrative of the process by which these factors led to changes in peacekeeping. It also suggests conditions under which policy agendas will be successfully changed. The peacekeeping reform proposals contained in the August 2000 Brahimi Report were for the most part not
new, but were advanced by effective policy entrepreneurs in the context of a political window created by a recognition of peacekeeping failures in the 1990s. In accordance with the model’s predictions, the Brahimi Report has had greater impact than previous efforts to implement such reforms.58

However, future reforms are likely to fail in the absence of a policy window, appropriate problems and solutions available for coupling, or a suitable policy entrepreneur. A policy entrepreneur without a policy window is likely to be frustrated, and policy windows pass if no one seizes the opportunity. Moreover, to the extent that garbage can dynamics characterize UN agenda setting, the future development of peacekeeping will not be as susceptible as practitioners and reformers might hope to the rational matching of means to ends. Instead, “solutions” may be adopted, or not, primarily because of the political conditions under which they arise. Thus, the lessons of the transformation of peacekeeping at the end of the Cold War are both illuminating and sobering for those seeking to enhance the capacity of peace operations in the twenty-first century. ♦

Notes

Michael Lipson is an assistant professor of political science at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. His current research employs organization theory to analyze the role of international organizations in addressing threats to international peace and security. I am grateful to Melanie Anestis for research assistance, and to Nathan Funk, Matthew Hoffmann, Sean Byrne, and the anonymous reviewers for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article. The Centre d’Études des Politiques Étrangères et de Sécurité (CEPES) provided funds for research assistance.


3. I use the term second-generation peacekeeping to encompass the entire spectrum of what others call multidimensional, second-generation, and third-generation peacekeeping operations. In this article, the term refers to post–Cold War missions that, to a significant extent, undertake peace enforcement or peacebuilding activities in addition to traditional interposition and truce observation functions. Typologies of peacekeeping generations include Michael W. Doyle, UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia: UNTAC’s Civil Mandate (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995), pp. 25–26; Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, The United Nations in the Post-Cold War Era, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), pp. 78–108; Ramesh Thakur and Albrecht Schnabel, “Cascading Generations of Peacekeeping: Across the Mogadishu Line to Kosovo and Timor,” in Thakur and Schnabel, eds., United Nations


10. A few studies have acknowledged and addressed the problem of explaining the emergence of second-generation peacekeeping, going beyond what Jakobsen calls the “conventional ‘end of the Cold War explanation.’” These analyses fall into three broad categories: normative and ideational explanations, offered by Michael Barnett and Roland Paris; incrementalist and rationalist models of organizational


14. Ibid.


20. Ibid., p. 185.

21. This may partially explain the early 1990s overloading of UN peacekeeping.

22. Ibid., pp. 122–151.

23. Ibid., pp. 138–146.

24. These characteristics should be particularly evident in open system organizations like the UN, which should be especially prone to garbage can processes. On open systems, see W. Richard Scott, Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998).

25. Michael N. Barnett, Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and
32. In some discussions ambiguity is defined in terms of these characteristics. March and Weissinger-Baylon, eds., *Ambiguity and Command,* p. 1; March and Olsen, *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations,* p. 12.
44. The incorporation of normative-ideational factors within a garbage can model points to the connections between the GCM and social constructivist theories. Intersubjective environments, within which garbage can processes operate, can constitute actors as empowered to couple streams, constrain which streams may be appropriately coupled, and socialize actors in ways that reduce the randomness characteristic of garbage can processes. I thank Matthew Hoffmann for suggesting the last point. The others are discussed by Charles R. Perrow, *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay,* 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1986), pp. 137–140; Charles R. Perrow, *Normal Accidents: Living with High Risk Technologies,* updated


55. Ibid., pp. 126–132.

