

Margit Bussmann\*, Han Dorussen and Nils Petter Gleditsch<sup>a</sup>  
**Against All Odds: 2013 Richardson Award to  
Mats Hammarström and Peter Wallensteen**

**Abstract:** The institutionalization of peace research has been a tortuous process and it has proven particularly difficult to establish separate departments for peace research in the universities. The Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University is a spectacular exception. This article honors two outstanding scholars who made it happen against all odds and who received the 2013 Lewis Fry Richardson Lifetime Achievement Award for their contribution to the scientific study of armed conflict. Peter Wallensteen and Mats Hammarström were awarded the prize for their individual scholarly output but above all for their joint achievement in establishing peace and conflict research at Uppsala University with its two pillars, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program and the training program for young scholars. They have made a lasting contribution to an institution of world-wide renown that pursues research in the scientific tradition of Richardson.

**Keywords:** conflict data, laudation, peace research, Richardson Award

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<sup>a</sup>The authors are listed in alphabetical order. Bussmann was, together with Erik Melander and Anja Shortland, a member of the committee that awarded the prize to Hammarström and Wallensteen; Gleditsch and Dorussen nominated the two for the prize. We would like to thank in particular the roundtable participants Erika Forsberg, Magnus Öberg, and Joshua Goldstein, for their contributions and comments.

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## 1 Introduction

The Lewis Fry Richardson Lifetime Achievement Award, which was awarded for the 5th time at the annual meeting of the Conflict Research Society in Essex, is presented on a tri-annual basis to a scholar “who has made exemplary scholarly contributions to the scientific study of militarized conflict” and who has spent

most of his/her academic life in Europe.<sup>1</sup> This year the award was given jointly to two individuals for their common achievement. Peter Wallensteen and Mats Hammarström were given the 2013 award for their personal record in scholarly research but above all for their joint achievement in raising the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University to a world-class environment in teaching and research. Lewis F. Richardson contributed new data to the study of war and peace, particularly in his posthumously published book *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels*, and also innovated in the analysis of the data.<sup>2</sup> These two candidates provide an excellent fit as the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies in Uppsala and most of all the Uppsala Conflict Data Program provides ample testimony that the tradition of scientific study of peace and conflict in the spirit of Richardson is well established in Europe.

## 2 Careers and individual scientific outputs

Peter Wallensteen's accomplishments are well known. He was the first full Professor of Peace Research in Sweden and the second in Scandinavia. He has established himself as a leading authority on the study of conflict, conflict resolution, mediation, and economic sanctions. Having received his licentiate degree at Uppsala University with a thesis on economic sanctions, Wallensteen was hired for the only full-time research position in 1971 at the new Department of Peace and Conflict Research.<sup>3</sup> He was Head of the Department from then until 1999, and since 1979 has been the founder and Director of the Department's prominent data collection on armed conflict. In 1985 he became the holder of the newly established Dag Hammarskjöld Professor of Peace and Conflict Research, a position that he held until his retirement in 2012. He has taught at several universities world-wide and has consulted with a number of governmental and nongovernmental organizations. He is now senior Professor in Uppsala and since 2006 Richard G Starmann Sr Research Professor for Peace Studies at the Joan B. Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Most relevant in regard to the Richardson Award is his stewardship of the armed conflict data project, which has grown into the Uppsala Conflict Data

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**1** For more information on the Lewis Fry Richardson award and a list of previous winners please see the award's homepage [http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/richardson\\_award.html](http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~ksg/richardson_award.html). See also Bove and Gleditsch (2011) on the previous Richardson award winner.

**2** See Richardson (1960). For more information on Richardson's contributions to the study on the causes of war see Nicholson (1999).

**3** For the history of the early years of peace research at Uppsala University, see Wirmark (2012) and Frängsmyr (2013).

Program. He has succeeded in making the Uppsala data into a standard tool for the empirical study of conflict. An indication of the success of the program is the impressive number of citations to the annual article in the *Journal of Peace Research* reporting updates to the state conflict dataset. As of 10 January 2014, these 21 articles had a total of 1127 citations on ISI Web of Science.

Peter Wallensteen has published and edited numerous books and more than 200 articles and book chapters on a wide spectrum of topics. His early research questioned the success of trade sanctions based on an in-depth analysis of a carefully selected set of 10 cases. Here, in his first major research project he systematically assembled information on all the available cases and identified statistical patterns (Wallensteen 1968a,b). Wallensteen's work on the resolution and management of conflicts is equally prominent. His widely cited book *Understanding Conflict Resolution* (3rd ed., Wallensteen 2012) provides a general survey on the topic covering the basics as well as approaches to more complex questions of managing different types of conflicts. In his empirical work he has taken a sophisticated and critical stance on issues like mediation by third-party actors or power-sharing agreements after civil wars (e.g., DeRouen, Lea, and Wallensteen 2009; Möller et al. 2007).

Although Mats Hammarström is not nearly as well known in the profession generally, he has come to emerge as an equally important figure in the Department as an anchor of the research program and as a mentor to young professionals. Like Wallensteen, Hammarström has been associated with the Department since the 1970s until his retirement in 2012. He joined the faculty in 1976, has contributed to building the teaching program in the Department at all levels and from 2001 he directed the PhD program. In Hammarström's dissertation (on imperialism) (1986), and in Peter Wallensteen's (1968a) licentiate thesis (on economic sanctions) and PhD dissertation (on structure and war) (1973) one can see the value of the lessons passed on to younger academics in their Department: Do not hesitate to tackle big issues, but avoid ideological sermonizing, reduce the broad topics to researchable questions, and test them with an open mind.

Hammarström's PhD dissertation (1986) was a carefully crafted empirical study of some of the central tenets of imperialism theory. At a time when many scholars, including some leading peace researchers, were strongly committed to theories of dependence and imperialism, Hammarström's approach was to try to synthesize some of these beliefs into precise propositions and to test them using the best data available at the time.<sup>4</sup> In addition to his work on raw materials and military intervention, Mats Hammarström was among the first scholars to

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<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the dissertation was never published except as a report, and only 11 years later a condensed version found its way into an edited volume (Hammarström 1997).

research empirically the diffusion of conflict and forced migration (Hammarström 1994; Hammarström and Heldt 2002).

Mats Hammarström and Peter Wallensteen have also contributed valuable advice to dozens of scholars worldwide in their work for the *Journal of Peace Research*. Peter Wallensteen was a member of the Editorial Committee of the *Journal of Peace Research* from 1971 to 1989 and subsequently a member of the International Advisory Board. Mats Hammarström served as Associate Editor (with editorial decision-making power) from 1999 until 2012.

### 3 The two pillars of the Uppsala Department

The award recipients followed the spirit of Richardson in more than one way. Besides their individual scholarly contributions, Hammarström and Wallensteen left a lasting impact by developing an institution where research on peace and conflict continues to be carried out on the highest scholarly level. Many have had similar ambitions in institution-building.<sup>5</sup> Few have succeeded, and even in Uppsala it was a close call (Frängsmyr 2013). In 1971 when the Department in Uppsala was founded, other departments for peace studies were also established in Lund and Gothenburg. Whereas the Department in Uppsala continuously grew from a student-run seminar to a mid-sized department with 18 permanent faculty positions (as of 2012) and about 20 PhD students, others stagnated or were closed down as independent units.

Wiberg (2005) describes peace research in Europe and elsewhere as a history of crises about the legitimacy and breadth of research agendas and the identity of peace research. A few institutes were able to grasp such crises as an opportunity for development. Entities like the Department in Uppsala, that had a clear and specific focus, emerged out of the crises even stronger. It is one of the few research institutions within a university setting in Europe that rose to global prominence in the study of peace and conflict.<sup>6</sup> Other university departments did not cope as well.<sup>7</sup> The University of Oslo Chair in Conflict and Peace Research, after its first occupant Johan Galtung retired, has been so thoroughly

<sup>5</sup> For a brief recent history of the institutionalization of peace research, see Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, and Strand (2014).

<sup>6</sup> Other prominent research institutes, such as the Peace Research Institute in Oslo or the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute are completely independent from universities and do not include a teaching program.

<sup>7</sup> For a short history of a critical phase in the development of peace research at Uppsala University, see Fetscher (2013, p. 424 ff.) and various sources cited by this author. See also Frängsmyr (2013), Wallensteen (1988, 2011a) and Wiberg (1988).

integrated into the Political Science Department that it has effectively vanished.<sup>8</sup> Although the study of war and peace is blooming, inside and outside institutions with peace research in their name, several other peace research institutions have suffered similar fates. Uppsala has endured. The recipe for the success in Uppsala is having the two pillars and combining scholarly quality with global visibility.

### 3.1 Uppsala Conflict Data Program

Wallensteen's most important and visible contribution to the international peace research community was the development of the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). He has developed the collection of conflict data to a point where "Uppsala" is now a household term. Starting out in 1978 (Wallensteen 2011b), together with Ken Wilson who had made it a habit of listening at night to the BBC World Service and making notes of new conflicts, Wallensteen consistently pursued and developed what is now one of the most frequently used data collections on armed conflicts worldwide. The UCDP started out with its flagship, the Uppsala Armed Conflict Data with data publications appearing regularly in the *SIPRI Yearbook* but more importantly for the scholarly community in *Journal of Peace Research* (e.g., Wallensteen and Wilson 1988; Wallensteen and Axell 1993; Gleditsch et al. 2002, and most recently Themnér and Wallensteen 2013). The dataset is updated annually and has been even more widely used since it was backdated to 1946 (in a joint effort with the Peace Research Institute Oslo). What started out essentially as a two-person enterprise was further developed with the assistance of Birger Heldt and Margareta Sollenberg, as well as one to two full-time coders in the 1990s to a data program which currently includes Wallensteen, Erik Melander, Margareta Sollenberg, three additional project leaders and five to ten coders. The UCDP now comprises data on the outbreak of armed conflict, its most widely cited resource, but also datasets on conflict termination (Kreutz 2010) and on violence against civilians (Eck and Hultman 2007), to name just a few. The most recent, and for the future most promising endeavor, is the geo-referenced event data collection (Sundberg and Melander 2013), demonstrating that the UCDP is at the forefront of newly emerging research developments. Unlike other conflict data collection efforts in Europe, it has become a resource that is well-known and widely used among

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<sup>8</sup> For a detailed story of the rise and fall of the Chair in Conflict and Peace Research at the University of Oslo, see Fetscher (2013).

peace researchers and practitioners alike.<sup>9</sup> Wallensteen had the vision, secured permanent funding, and made it internationally renowned through his excellent networking skills.

### 3.2 Training the younger generation

In addition to generating the UCDP data as a valuable data resource, the Department in Uppsala has the capacity to use the data to answer pressing questions and to provide in-depth analysis. The next generation of Uppsala researchers is extremely well-trained and possesses the analytical skills to exploit the rich data source and to conduct empirical analyses on the causes and dynamics of conflict at the highest level. Wallensteen, together with Hammarström, who can be considered the architect of the educational program, played a decisive role in expanding the teaching in the Department of Peace and Conflict Research to a full-fledged program from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. In particular, Hammarström shaped the educational structure of the Department. He was instrumental in emphasizing rigorous methodological training for researchers to acquire the skills for analyzing the data and to publish in high-ranking international journals. His work behind the scenes perfectly complemented Wallensteen's more public and visible contribution.

The two Richardson award recipients played crucial mentoring roles in the Department. Hammarström has served as a leading mentor for the many younger scholars that the Department has recruited and who are now making their mark in prominent professional journals. Many of them are now, among other projects, publishing analyses using the UCDP data in major journals. Among the PhD students for whom Hammarström has served as the chief advisor are Kristine Eck, Erika Forsberg, Lisa Hultman, Desirée Nilsson, Magnus Öberg, Margareta Sollenberg, and Isak Svensson, all of whom are well on their way to becoming household names in the empirical study of conflict. Similarly, Wallensteen has supervised over 20 PhD students including Birger Heldt, Thomas Ohlson, Erik Melander, Anna Jarstad, Svante Cornell, Louise Olsson and Karen Brounéus.

In the Uppsala Department of Peace and Conflict Research, young researchers work in a stimulating and cooperative environment with very active peer-supervision. In 2005, Mats Hammarström received Uppsala University's Award for Excellence in Teaching (Pedagogiska priset) for developing a new model of

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<sup>9</sup> For a comprehensive survey on data developments in peace and conflict research see Gleditsch, Metternich, and Ruggeri (2014).

group tutoring for the PhD program. A small group of PhD students meets once a week for a joint session providing and receiving feedback on work in progress from their peers and their supervisors. Hammarström has also organized and led the research paper seminar in the Department for many years and in this capacity was instrumental in shaping the research environment.

## 4 Conclusion

Johan Galtung, who was one of Peter Wallensteen's mentors but hardly Mats Hammarström's, contrasted in an essay called "The Skeptic and the Enthusiast" (Galtung 1960) two archetypal figures that he had encountered in academia, in politics, and in daily life. The enthusiast would have a dream, a vision of the future. It might contrast with reality, but the dream would become his reality. In any case, the enthusiast rises above the triviality of the present and draws strength from his alternative future world. The great leaps of history, according to Galtung, are made by these dreamers, who realize that the present world is just one of many possible alternatives. The skeptic on the other hand, prefers to rely on empirical observations of the present. When confronted with an enthusiast, his reaction will often be to mutter that "this probably will not work" or "this has been tried before and it didn't lead anywhere". Democracy, Galtung argues, is a form of government more suited to fostering skeptics than enthusiasts.

In this essay, Galtung is markedly more enthusiastic when he describes the enthusiast than when he describes the skeptic. Yes, he does acknowledge that we need both. Indeed, the two need each other and in large part they receive their identity from the other. Although both of them may well object to the label, there are elements in Wallensteen and Hammarström that fit these two ideal types. Wallensteen had the vision, as did Galtung, to build peace research as a separate discipline. Hammarström was more skeptical, and he was not the only one. Indeed, a history of peace research suggests that the skeptics were largely correct. It was generally *not* possible to build peace research as a separate discipline in the universities. It should not have been possible even in Uppsala. While Wallensteen was pursuing his dream with great success, Hammarström was working at the foundations, building the teaching program, and training the students. His down-to-earth empiricism has served to keep the enthusiasm within the bounds of realism. Together, the two have made the dream a reality.

The work of Peter Wallensteen and Mats Hammarström in peace and conflict research at Uppsala University is very much in the spirit of Richardson's undertaking. As they have now reached the mandatory retirement age for Swedish

university faculty, they can look back on a lifetime achievement that promises to maintain the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at the forefront of the international study of conflict.

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