# K: Security—Aff

# Core

### Core: 2AC Note

This is just a basic outline of what a 2AC to security could look like---supplement as desired/depending on the 1NC shell read (for example, there isn’t specific link defense in this 2AC F/L)

### Core: 2AC Frontline

#### Framework---the neg has to prove the plan is bad on balance---key to clash and fairness by providing a stasis point for the debate---anything else moots the 1AC and means the aff starts behind

**No prior questions---err aff on empirics and concrete action---the neg’s endless questioning causes paradigm wars and means we never take action**

**Isacoff 15** (Jonathan, Associate Professor of Political Science and the Chair of Environmental Studies @ Gonzaga, “Why IR Needs Deweyan Pragmatism,” Perspectives on Political Science, Vol. 44, No. 1, 2015, pg. 26-33)

The well-known RCT scholars Shepsle and Bonchek humorously note that while it might not be “rocket science,” the study of politics should be scientific.46 Others, especially postmodernist critics, argue against the notion of political science and IR as science. A Deweyan pragmatist approach would suggest that this debate is not useful. By that, I mean that **what IR is or is not is not nearly as important as what it achieves**. So the question should not be whether IR is scientific, but rather, how scientific does it need to be to get the job done? To this, there are many answers, but I suggest a line of reasoning: the scientific method in the most general sense is useful in helping to explain how and why, all else equal, causal processes work. Put differently, **if we want to know how and why some states go to war and others do not, it would be more useful**—**in** the sense of **getting logically coherent, empirically verifiable answers**—**to analyze historical cases systematically** than it would be to consult with a shaman or use a crystal ball to obtain an answer. **This is not say that there is not an important role for textual interpretation in the process of studying war and other international phenomena**. Indeed, I elsewhere argue that interpretation of historical texts is crucial to making valid claims about wars.47 **But** the main point here is that **interpretation is a means toward an end**, namely, the process of coping with the world via human experience. **Toward that end, interpretation is** necessary and useful, but it is **not the end itself**. A second point is that **there is clearly a pragmatic and justifiable need for certain types of quantitative methods**, namely, statistics, though not necessarily formal models, in some segments of IR. Taking a simple example for illustrative purposes, if one wished to study the effect of speed limits on motor vehicle fatalities, the use of aggregate data statistically analyzed would be far superior to standing on the corner waiting for an accident to observe or reading several diary accounts of individual accidents. **The key point** here, however**, is not that** statistical **methods are inherently better, or more “rigorous”** than any other type of method. Rather, **the use of statistically analyzed data to find answers to problems** of highway fatalities **creates knowledge that if properly applied, would alleviate “concrete human woes,”** which is to say it would help to save lives. That is pragmatic political science.48 What Is a Problem? **Many** political scientists **believe in** the idea of having **a “problem orientation”** for the field. For example, Atul Kohli asserts that there is a strong consensus among leading experts “that comparative politics is very much a problem-driven field of study.” “What motivates the best comparative politics research are puzzles of real-world significance,” writes Kohli, in “The Role of Theory in Comparative Politics: A Symposium.”49 Similarly, Ian Shapiro, **responding to the question of what would be a better alternative** than RCT **asks** the question: “**What is the phenomenon to be explained?**… **The formulation of alternative explanations**, in other words, **should be a problem-driven activity**.”50 This is clearly consistent with Deweyan pragmatism; in fact, it is inherently pragmatist. “A Deweyan pragmatic approach to political inquiry,” writes Maurice Meilleur, “would transform political science from a discipline, based on a set of methods, into a profession, based on a set of problems.”51 But what, more specifically, is a “problem orientation?” First, it is clear that Kohli and his colleagues mean an empirically driven problem orientation. That is, the study of **politics should be driven by empirical, not theoretical or methodological problems**. Careful not to push this point too far, a Deweyan pragmatist would suggest that **theorization is** an **important** activity, **but it must not lose its link to** problems of human experience, which is to say **empirical problems**. However, Kohli and **others advocating** an empirically driven **problem orientation have little to say about how to identify and value problems**. After all, there is a limitless supply of political problems only a fraction of which can be studied. In response, I would argue that **some problems are more significant to the detection and response to human suffering and thus more deserving of study, than others**. This is itself a tricky ethical problem, for who is to say what is or is not a “real problem?” One reader of this manuscript suggested that “What is really going on here, when one scratches the analytical surface, is not that IR theorists aren't discussing problems; it's that they are discussing problems that the author does not feel are worthy of attention. But why should we accept that the author's “problems” are more important or privileged? Why does the author get to decide what a “real” problem is?” This is a good question but it is a misreading of the argument. **Nowhere does** Dewey or **this** author **imply that any individual could or should decide or dictate which problems matter and which do not**. To the contrary, **the question of “who decides” is** a **public** deliberation problem, a subject Dewey addressed exhaustively in his classic The Public and Its Problems.52 According to Dewey, **problems are the direct outcome of a public's determination of its common good**. A full analysis of how this works, or in some cases, fails to work in practice is beyond the scope of this article. But it is important to note that there is no argument here for the privileging of one private individual's notion of what constitutions “real problem” versus that of another. That is for the public to decide. Human Woe and Issues That Matter The final point to be made about reconstruction stems directly from the previous discussion: **some problems matter more than others with regard to the alleviation of concrete human suffering. Which issues matter** the **most** in our world? Ultimately, per Dewey's political philosophy touched on above, **that is for the public to decide**. Assuming that there ever could be a “common good,” we can hypothesize that **people might choose to focus on** issues that affect them daily, **issues such as climate change**, poverty, health care, education, racism, and sexism, as well as **war and peace**, all issues **that are of grave importance to humanity**. IR, especially in its American form, with its disproportionate emphasis on global security and great power war, has given scant attention to too many other issues, and when attention is given to the “lesser” topics, they are relegated to sub-sub-specializations within the discipline, “Gender and IR,” for instance. More problematic from the standpoint of pragmatism, **the approach-driven wing** of the discipline **is more concerned with which paradigm has scored more points in the epic contest for paradigmatic supremacy than with the matter of how the world could or should respond** to climate change or why hundreds of million of children lack basic nutrition and medical care. **The interpretivist/linguistic wing**, in contrast, **is more concerned with how texts are interpreted in graduate seminars than with the fact that children in inner cities cannot even read a text at all.**53 **Many** IR scholars are still fighting over whether and to what extent “unit-level variables” should be taken into consideration in understanding international politics (and if so, whether one might still rightly be accepted in the club of realism).54 Others **are trying to demonstrate** that IR constructivism is really “**liberalism in disguise**.”55 **This is** not a stab at “why realism is (yet again) wrong.” It is **a critique of the self-definitionally obsessed, paradigm-driven culture** of academic IR. I would not go so far as to claim that there are no scholars who study everyday politics; many clearly do.56 Rather, the problem is that that **the incentive structure to contribute to the “big debates” of the discipline**, namely, those **at the paradigmatic level, is a project that drifts ever afar from the problems of “concrete human woe” that affect** the other **millions** of people who happen not to have graduate degrees in IR.

#### Util comes first---extinction is the only *irreversible* threat and makes desecuritization impossible

#### Case turns the K---any risk we’re right about war means conflict is inevitable in the world of the alt---turns their impacts because hypersecuritization is more likely in times of warfare

#### PIKs are bad—they steal aff ground killing fairness and education and justify perm do the alt because it proves the plan is a good idea

#### No link and no root cause---prefer the particularities of how our reps were deployed

**Shim ‘14**

(David Shim is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations and International Organization of the University of Groningen – As part of the critique of visual determinism, this card internally quotes David D. Perlmutter, Ph.D.. He is Dean of the College of Media & Communication at Texas Tech University. Before coming to Texas Tech, he was the director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Iowa. As a documentary photographer, he is the author or editor of seven books on political communication and persuasion. Also, he has written several dozen research articles for academic journals as well as more than 200 essays for U.S. and international newspapers and magazines such as Campaigns & Elections, Christian Science Monitor, Editor & Publisher, Los Angeles Times, MSNBC.com., Philadelphia Inquirer, and USA Today. Routledge Book Publication –Visual Politics and North Korea: Seeing is believing – p.24-25)

Imagery can enact powerful effects, since political actors are almost always pressed to take action when confronted with images of atrocity and human suffering resultant from wars, famines and natural disasters. Usually, humanitarian emergencies are conveyed through media representations, which indicate the important role of images in producing emergency situations as (global) events (Benthall 1993; Campbell 2003b; Lisle 2009; Moeller 1999; Postman 1987). Debbie Lisle (2009: 148) maintains that, 'we see that the objects, issues and events we usually study [. . .] do not even exist without the media [.. .] to express them’. As a consequence, visual images have political and ethical consequences as a result of their role in shaping private and public ways of seeing (Bleiker. Kay 2007). This is because how people come to know, think about and respond to developments in the world is deeply entangled with how these developments are made visible to them. Visual representations participate in the processes of how people situate themselves in space and time, because seeing involves accumulating and ordering information in order to be able to construct knowledge of people, places and events. For example, the remembrance of such events as the Vietnam War, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 or the torture in Abu Ghraib prison cannot be separated from the ways in which these events have been represented in films, TV and photography (Bleiker 2009; Campbell/Shapiro 2007; Moller2007). The visibility of these events can help to set the conditions for specific forms of political action. The current war in Afghanistan serves as an example of this. Another is the nexus of hunger images and relief operations. Vision and visuality thus become part and parcel of political dynamics, also revealing the ethical dimension of imagery, as it affects the ways in which people interact with each other. However, **particular representations do not automatically lead to particular responses as,** for instance, **proponents of the** so-called **'CNN effect’ would argue** (for an overview of the debates among academic, media and policy-making circles on the 'CNN effect', see Gilboa 2005; see also. Dauber 2001; Eisensee/ Stromberg 2007; Livingston/Eachus 1995; O'Loughlin 2010; Perlmutter 1998, 2005; Robinson 1999, 20011. **There is no causal relationship between a specific image and** a **political intervention**, **in which a dependent variable (the image) would explain the outcome of an independent one (the act).** David **Perlmutter** (1998: I), for instance, **explicitly challenges**, as he calls it, **the 'visual determinism' of images,** which dominates political and public opinion. Referring to findings based on public surveys, he argues that the **formation of opinion**s by individuals **depends not on images but on** their **idiosyncratic predispositions and values** (see also, Domke et al. 2002; Perlmutter 2005).

#### Perm do both---we can do the plan and orient ourselves towards desecuritization

#### The alt fails---there’s no alternative model to IR offered and no reason the alt can desecuritize all international actors---even if they’re right that securitization isn’t perfect, it’s how policymaker make decisions

# Links

### L: No Prior Questions—1AR

#### No prior questions

**Jackson**, professor of IR – American University, **‘15** (Patrick Thaddeus, “Must International Studies Be a Science?” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* vol. 43, no. 3, p. 942-965, June)

These **diverse methodologies have different approaches to causation, to case comparison, and to explanation in general; those differences**, in turn, **mean** that **different** scientific **methodologies generate different kinds of valid claims with different epistemic statuses, and should not be regarded as poor approximations to or deficient forms of one another.** While neopositivists look for cross-case covariation as the truest mark of causation, critical realists look for dispositional causal powers, analyticists apply ideal-typical models to disclose the specific features of individual cases, and reflexive scholars ground their claims in their own social locations. There is no reason why this plurality has to lead to relativism, but neither should it be misunderstood as creating a simple, homogenous account of the world; translation challenges persist, and **the result of a pluralist science is a variety of warranted knowledge-claims.**22

But for all of this internal diversity, there are important commonalities among these varieties of scientific methodology that serve to distinguish them, as a group, from other forms of knowing. Following Max Weber, we might characterise all four of these scientific methodologies as aiming at a ‘thoughtful ordering of empirical actuality’,23 or, to put it another way, as participating in a form of knowing that emphasises systematic claims, public criticism intended to improve those claims, and a specific kind of ‘worldliness’ that excludes references to divine commands and magical forces. This is not to say that a claim has to achieve some specific level of systematicity, publicity, and/or worldliness in order to be regarded as ‘scientific’; the commonality I am highlighting here is not a candidate for a demarcation criterion that would allow us to distinguish science from non-science in any kind of definitive fashion.24 Instead, I am suggesting that in the space marked out by these methodologies, questions about a claim’s systematicity, its susceptibility to public criticism, and its worldliness are in some sense appropriate questions to ask. In effect, to regard ourselves as being engaged in scientific inquiry is to invite these questions, and to submit our claims to evaluation in terms of these criteria.

The kind of knowledge that is supposed to be produced by efforts to be as systematic, public, and worldly as one can be is knowledge of a particular kind: factual, propositional knowledge, or what we might call ‘knowing-that’.25 This is the kind of knowing that Wittgenstein had in mind when he suggested, in the opening sections of the Tractatus, that the world ‘is all that is the case…the totality of facts, not of things’.26 It is what Aristotle called epistemic knowing: ‘universal, invariable, context-independent’ and ‘based on general analytical rationality’.27 It prizes relative impersonality in connecting claims to their warrants, in that the validity of a claim is not subject to idiosyncratic impressions but is instead articulated in a way that is understood as generally established.28 In Weber’s formulation, the goal of this kind of knowing is to produce a set of factual claims that even someone who did not share our values would find compelling.29

Here again it is important to note that this is not some kind of absolute standard that these methodologies necessarily meet. **It is unclear to me that we ever have perfectly impersonal knowledge, or that any claim whatsoever achieves anything like universal generality. But this is not the point.** Instead, the point is that **epistemic claims advanced in the methodological modes of neopositivism, critical realism, analyticism, and even reflexivity are accompanied by standards of validity that purport to be something other than an arbitrary whim** binding only on the speaker. **The logical condition of possibility for** Sandra **Harding’s suggestion that** the accumulated body of what we call ‘**scientific knowledge’** **is thoroughly marked by cultural particularity and a colonial past**, and her call for a ‘strong objectivity’ that brings previously marginalised perspectives back into the conversation, **is precisely the notion that there is something illegitimate and untenable about this unacknowledged partiality**.30 **And the claim that some account of things is Eurocentric or androcentric is no more and no less reliant on similar definitions and procedures shared by a community of speaker and audience than is the claim that dyadic democracy and war frequency are inversely correlated**—and as such, **the very form of the claim** **opens the possibility of questioning just how impersonally, epistemically valid it is. ‘Epistemically valid for me/for us’ does not make any sense, because the very idea of epistemic knowing implies validity independent of any conceptual scheme**, **even if** **the** **vocabulary** within which the claim is made **is itself local and contingent.**31

### L: Realism Good/True—2AC

#### Realism is the most ethical paradigm—it accepts the inherent insecurity of the nuclear age as a precondition for genuine hospitality. Rejecting the nation-state lapses into liberal interventionism and global nuclear civil war.

**Lundborg, 19**—Swedish Defence University (Tom, “The ethics of neorealism: Waltz and the time of international life,” European Journal of International Relations, Volume: 25 issue: 1, page(s): 229-249, dml)

Conditioned by the trace, **survival is** thus **inseparable from** finitude and **the constant threat of erasure** (Derrida, 1976: 167). According to Derrida (1984b: 65, emphasis added): ‘it belongs to the trace to erase itself, to elude that which might maintain it in presence’. In this way, the trace also points to the elusiveness of life, and to the fact that nothing can ever guarantee the infinite existence of anything. It tells us that **life is nothing but a ‘play of traces’, which lacks an absolute origin and is inherently mortal** (Derrida, 1984a: 15). **This** play of traces brings us back to Hägglund’s notion of the ‘time of life’, which **highlights the central importance of temporal finitude for grasping the general conditions of life**. As he puts it: ‘This radical finitude of survival is not a lack of being that is desirable to overcome. Rather, **the finitude of survival opens the chance for everything that is desired and the threat of everything that is feared**’ (Hägglund, 2008: 1–2). There is, then, an important ‘double bind’ to the tracing of time. On the one hand, it is because nothing is infinite, immortal or present in itself that new life can emerge. On the other hand, the lack of self-presence means that life can never be immune to alteration, contamination and death. **In order for anything to live, it must consequently be mortal and open to unpredictable change** (Derrida, 1976: 143). Even if an infinite and immortal life, free from dangers, might seem desirable, it would be a self-refuting desire since it implies desiring the end of the possibility to desire anything at all. More precisely, it would be the same as desiring the end of the continuous flow of time that allows new life to emerge while exposing everything that lives to the threat of coming to an end. Immortality cancels out the time of mortal life and renders survival obsolete. Counterintuitively, Hägglund (2008: 32–33) thus notes, mortality can be seen as the ‘best’ or most desirable, while immortality is the ‘worst’ or least desirable. **While this may seem like a rejection of life, it is, in fact, an affirmation of life. It positively affirms the chance to live precisely on the condition that inherent in any movement of survival is the risk of life coming to an end. Refusing this risk would be the same as refusing to live, since to live is to negotiate the relationship between life and death.** Temporal finitude is significant, moreover, not only for grasping the general conditions of life, but for explaining why **any act of survival must encounter the uncertainty of the future**. Returning to Waltz for a moment, **it is precisely this uncertainty that makes it impossible to know if today’s friend will stay a friend or suddenly turn into an enemy**: ‘In the absence of an external authority, a state cannot be sure that today’s friend will not be tomorrow’s enemy’, writes Waltz (2000: 10). **If we were able to acquire full knowledge of if and when a friend becomes an enemy**, we would bring the future under our control. However, then the future would no longer be a genuinely open future, in which the chance of survival is inseparable from finitude and mortality. **Survival would then lose its value and become redundant as life turns into nothing but a calculable formula**. So, what are the implications of Derrida’s notion of survival and his critique of the ‘calculable’ for our understanding of ‘ethics’? First of all, it means that **ethics cannot be translated into static ethical ideals**. As Derrida has elaborated on in relation to a wide array of issues, including justice, responsibility, hospitality, friendship and the gift, **ethics** rather **depends on maintaining openness to the perpetual coming of the future**. This openness means that **none of these issues can ever be linked to something pure, uncontaminated and incorruptible that is immune to unexpected alterations.** To take one specific example, hospitality is, for Derrida, crucial for thinking about ethics (see Derrida, 2000). This is because an **act of hospitality suggests that the self does not simply exist in pure isolation of what lies ‘outside’ the self, but must always negotiate its relation with** the non-self, that is, **the other**. Ethics is, for this reason, inseparable from hospitality since both terms highlight the necessity of relating to and opening up space for others. At the same time, **hospitality cannot be ‘absolute’ or ‘pure’ in the sense of conforming to a static metaphysical ideal**. For Derrida, **not only would such an ideal be impossible to achieve** in the Kantian sense11, **it would be essentially undesirable**. This is because **the very aspiration towards a pure metaphysical ideal would have as its aim the closure of the uncertainty that makes the self–other encounter possible in the first place. The welcoming of strangers must therefore always involve a chance as well as a threat: the chance of some sort of positive and friendly transformation, and the threat that the other turns into an enemy doing harm to the host** (Derrida, 2000: 15; Hägglund, 2008: 103–105). The only way to eliminate the potential threat inherent in any act of hospitality would be to make the self completely immune to the other. Such immunity, however, would close down the self–other encounter before it could happen at all. Derrida (2003: 129) thus rhetorically asks: The visit might actually be very dangerous, and we must not ignore this fact, but would a hospitality without risk, a hospitality backed by certain assurances, a hospitality protected by an immune system against the wholly other, be true hospitality? Derrida’s point here is that **hospitality categorically cannot correspond to something pure, like a universal ideal situation beyond violence**. This is because **without the threat of violence, the very act of welcoming the other would not be possible in the first place**. In order for this act to be ‘possible’, it must simultaneously be ‘impossible’, in the pure metaphysical sense (see also Bulley, 2017: 12; Vaughan-Williams, 2007: 121). **While ethics is often linked to a seemingly self-evident desire to reach an absolute metaphysical ideal, Derrida’s philosophy contests the desirability of such ideals altogether and offers a stark warning against any attempt to immunize the ‘good’ from the ‘bad’, ‘peace’ from ‘violence’, ‘friends’ from ‘enemies’, and so on**. This is why, in Derrida’s view, **there has to be a violent or non-ethical opening of ethics** (Derrida, 1976: 140; 1978: 128). **To desire the closure of this opening would be the same as desiring the elimination of that which makes any ethics possible at all: its exposure to the uncertainty of the future, and the indestructible threat that inheres in all encounters with others**. Rather than linking ethics to a desire for the purely good, **ethics** in the Derridean sense **is** therefore **tied to an affirmation of the uncertainty of the future, which opens up to the ‘good’ as well as the ‘bad’.** The ethics of neorealism **Derrida’s notion of** the violent opening of **ethics fits remarkably well with** the two core assumptions of Waltz’s theory of international politics: **the anarchic structure of the international political system and states’ desire to survive within this system**. On this basis, it can be argued that **there is**, indeed, **an ethics of neorealism**. It is found in the ‘Waltzian baseline’ rather than in attempts to use that baseline to establish law-like patterns of behaviour.12 To grasp the ethics of neorealism, **it is** therefore **necessary to shift focus** from causal laws and testable hypotheses, **to the structural conditions that shape and affect the behaviour of states in a non-deterministic manner**.13 Hence, **the ‘structure’** in Waltz’s theory has **to be grasped as an open structure that leaves ample room for chance and contingency**. Crucially, **if we could know for certain what states will do on the basis of either the structure of the system or some predetermined motives of the subjects within the system**, the uncertainty of international life would disappear and **the ‘politics’ of international politics would lose its meaning**.14 Rather than trying to rectify the lack of certainty by creating a stronger sense of certainty, **it is** therefore **imperative to affirm the uncertainties created by the system. It is important**, moreover, **to oppose the distinction between ethical desirability and political possibility, since the reproduction of this distinction blocks from view the conditions of international life that make ethical thinking and action possible in the first place.** Positivist social science and liberal interpretations of Kant are thus, very crudely put, the main obstacles to grasping the ethics of international life. In resisting both moves, **neorealism does not seek to close down the violent opening of ethics inherent in the structure of anarchy**, for example, **by formulating metaphysical ideals informing states how they should act or how they ought to become friends rather than enemies. There can be no absolute friendship between states, and no state can ever offer absolute hospitality to another state. At the heart of every inter-state relation, there is mistrust, uncertainty and incalculability. To positively affirm the latter is not to say that uncertainty or incalculability is good per se. Rather, it implies that they are seen as basic and irrefutable conditions of international life, which, consequently, are not even desirable to overcome**. Hence, it also implies that as long as there is international life, there must be ‘the ominous shadow of the future [that] continues to cast its pall over interacting states’ (Waltz, 2000: 39). Crucially, Waltz’s reference to **this** shadow **should not be read as an expression of determinism. It expresses rather an affirmation of uncertainty: the ‘uncertainty of each about the other’s future intentions and actions’** (Waltz, 1979: 105). **In order to give friendship in international politics a chance**, so to speak, **the possibility that a friend suddenly becomes an enemy must never be eliminated. Attempts to create absolute trust in inter-state relations are therefore not only impossible to achieve in the practical sense, but essentially undesirable**.15 Along similar lines, Derrida explains how **friendship is possible only if one remains open to the deception of the other, since it is precisely the unconditional openness to whatever may happen in the encounter between self and other that makes it possible to develop any sort of friendship in the first place** (Derrida, 2005: 219). Even if we were to accept Alexander Wendt’s (1999) distinction between different ‘cultures of anarchy’, some of which are more ‘friendly’ than others, **it is not self-evident that a culture in which friendship is prioritized over enmity is actually a better one**. This is because in order to exclude the possibility that a friend may suddenly become an enemy, one must first eliminate the time of international life that makes the self–other encounter possible in the first place. For the same reason, the key message of democratic peace theory — that all states should become democracies in order to minimize or eliminate the possibility of wars — is not only practically impossible, but also ethically undesirable. It is impossible to verify because there is no democracy that is immune to corruptibility (Waltz, 2000: 10), but, in addition to that, it can be seen as undesirable since **the notion that all states must conform to the same universal ideal cancels out their freedom to act, to take moral responsibility and so on**. The undesirability of **a system that eradicates violence, borders and discrimination** is further underlined by Waltz (1979: 111–114) in his discussion of the ‘virtues of anarchy’. Therein, he attacks the idea of transforming the international system into a world government. Not only **would** such a transformation **‘be an invitation to prepare for world civil war’** (Waltz, 1979: 112), **but it would take away the constitutive violence at the heart of inter-state relations in the structure of anarchy.** **The constant possibility of war in the international system means that states will always be wary of provoking others in the search for security**. As he puts it: **The constant possibility that force will be used limits manipulations, moderates demands, and serves as an incentive for the settlement of disputes. One who knows that pressing too hard may lead to war has strong reason to consider whether possible gains are worth the risks entailed**.… The possibility that conflicts among nations may lead to long and costly wars has … sobering effects. (Waltz, 1979: 113–114) In this way, **the conditions of peace in the international system can be said to rest on the constant possibility of war**. In making this point, Waltz argues against moral universalism. Hence, unwittingly or otherwise, he also opens up space for ethical negotiation by recognizing the finitude of **the political subject**, who **is free to interact with others only on the condition that self and other do not have to conform to the ‘same’ universal ideal.** **The subject is thus able to take moral responsibility and ponder on how to make ethical decisions, which, without difference and alterity, would turn into a strictly formal procedure based on the ‘mechanical application of rules’** (Zehfuss, 2009: 146). **Responsibility and ethical decisions are**, thus, **made possible precisely by the impossibility of predetermining what is the ‘right’ decision in any given context**. As Derrida argues, **irrespective of how thorough the decision-making procedure is, and regardless of how much knowledge is acquired before taking a decision**: the instant of the decision, if there is to be a decision, must be heterogeneous to this accumulation of knowledge. Otherwise, there is no responsibility. In this sense only must the person taking the decision not know everything. Even if one knows everything, **the decision**, if there is one, **must advance toward a future that is not known, that cannot be anticipated**. (Derrida, 2002b: 231) **The impossibility of anchoring the decision in rational calculation is**, in this sense, **what creates the chance for any decisions to be taken at all**. The instant of the decision belongs, then, not to a fully present moment in which the subject calculates the future consequences of the decision, but to a future that is incalculable (see Derrida, 2002a). **It is precisely this incalculability, and the uncertainty of the future, that** Waltz’s conception of **anarchy positively affirms. Rather than making the instant of the decision obsolete by transforming the decision into a mere application of rules, anarchy makes the ethical decision ‘possible’.** Even if Waltz repeatedly claims that the desire to survive is a purely pragmatic assumption made strictly for the purpose of constructing an explanatory theory, it is not neutral or innocent. First and foremost, Waltzian **neorealism expresses an ethics due to the way it affirms states’ desire to survive by stipulating the necessary conditions of their survival**. More precisely, **it affirms the uncertainty of international life by refusing to reduce the play of relations between states to a calculable formula or a regulative ideal, and that rather embraces chance and contingency as central features of the anarchic system — features that make states simultaneously free and insecure**.16 In this light, **the primary significance** of Waltz’s theory **is not as an explanatory theory, but as a theory that affirms** the time of international life, defined by **the uncertainty of the future** and the logic of the erasable mortal trace.17 **It is this notion of the future that makes it possible for states, as finite political subjects, not only to survive, but also to try to take moral responsibility and make ethical decisions**. Why universal ethical ideals are both impossible and undesirable What are the implications of my reading of Waltzian **neorealism** as an ethics? First of all, it **contributes to a new understanding of the difficulties inherent in any attempt to theorize what it might mean to replace the structure of anarchy with an international or world political order that is supposedly ‘more’ ethical**. If ethics is inextricably interlinked with the structural conditions of survival, then **any attempt to challenge neorealism from an ‘ethical’ perspective must do so by replacing one structure of survival with another, and there can be no guarantees that the new structure will be less violent**. While this does not in any way prevent such attempts from being made, it does highlight the risky nature of trying to resolve problems of war and violence in international politics on ethical terms. For example, **the idea of creating a new form of political community that transcends the exclusionary borders of states may seem naturally desirable** (e.g. Linklater, 1982). **Yet, regardless of how sophisticated theories become in terms of articulating the content and meaning of such a community, there can be no guarantees that attempts to actualize it will not result in even more violence. There are no guarantees**, as John Mearsheimer (1994: 44) puts it, **that ‘a fascist discourse far more violent than realism will not emerge as the new hegemonic discourse’.** Moreover, it is important to point out that the value of a neorealist ethics is not that it provides a ‘coherent ethical theory’. One interesting attempt to create such a theory is found in Frost’s (2009) Global Ethics: Anarchy, Freedom and International Relations. For Frost, the point of developing a coherent ethical theory is to demonstrate how international relations can be grasped primarily in ethical terms, rather than as a struggle for power and survival. His assumption is that ‘to engage in international relations at all … is to make ethical claims for oneself and to recognize the ethical standing of others’ (Frost, 2009: 19). Frost links his theory partly to the diverse practices that shape international interactions, and partly to an ‘ethical background theory which justifies the whole set of rules which constitute the practice’ (Frost, 2009: 27). While the background theory is based on an English School-inspired notion of the anarchic system/society of states, the practices added to it have the potential to shape international relations in a direction that is ethically desirable. Arguing for and against the ethical standing of our interlocutors, ‘we construct and reconstruct the social practices within which international relations are conducted’ (Frost, 2009: 94). The main goal of these practices, according to Frost, should be nothing less than resolving the tensions within the current international system between citizen rights and global human rights (Frost, 2009: ch. 3). In contrast to cosmopolitan theories, however, he argues that this goal is attainable within the anarchic structure of the system, through the ethical adjustment of that system (Frost, 2009: 113). This adjustment involves renegotiating the relationship between citizen rights and human rights through practice. Frost (2009: 173) writes: ‘Participants in global civil society and the society of states need to take their own values seriously and need to attempt to make them real for everybody everywhere’. **According to Frost,** **the segregating borders of states are thus meant to persist, while the violent forms of exclusion** that these borders enable **are to gradually fall away through the aspiration of a common goal that embraces everybody everywhere**. From the perspective of my reading of a neorealist ethics, however, **the notion of a common universal goal underpinning Frost’s ethical theory is not only impossible, but also undesirable. This is not because the ideal itself is ‘bad’**. Rather, it is because **it is precisely the absence of a common goal beyond segregating borders that makes ethical negotiation possible in the first place.** **As soon as such an ideal has been formulated, and the guidelines for how to attain it have been articulated, the incalculable future in which the encounter between self and other is allowed to play out is cancelled out**. As previously noted, **while this encounter might result in more or less violence, it is the uncertainty of the future that makes the encounter possible in the first place.** Frost’s **attempt to formulate a universal ethical ideal that embraces everyone everywhere while, at the same time, retaining the** segregating borders of the **international system is thus problematic**. The primary reason for this, then, is that in articulating a universal ethical ideal, his theory works to undermine the conditions of international life. In brief, what Frost fails to recognize is that **what makes international ethics possible is also what makes impossible the aspiration of a universal ethical ideal that is applicable to everybody everywhere** — like that of a perfect alignment of citizen rights and human rights. **Rather than seeking to resolve these tensions, the tensions should be kept alive. Only in this way can we, moreover, maintain a distinctly international ethics without reverting to a ‘global ethics’**. For **the latter** to make any sense, it **has to be based on ideals that transcend** the **borders** of states, whether those ideals are linked to a specific goal or just to a general attitude of openness to political negotiation and contestation (Hutchings, 2010: 215). **Irrespective of what precisely they are supposed to entail, the ideals associated with a global ethics become problematic as soon as the attempt is made to transform difference and the plurality of wills into one and the same will**. It is problematic for the same reason that philosophical attempts to create a new metaphysics that is supposed to resolve the violence of metaphysics. **Such attempts can only have as their aim the ultimate destruction of the very possibility of philosophical thought** and writing, **which**, per definition, **are metaphysical and therefore violent** (see Derrida, 1978). The temporal horizon of neorealism **To argue against the desirability of universal ethical ideals is**, essentially, **to recognize the importance of finitude for thinking about international ethics**. Waltz’s neorealist **conception of international anarchy and of the desire of states to survive therein offers one way of affirming this notion of international ethics. This is not to say**, however, **that international anarchy** in Waltz’s theory **should be seen as a perfect ideal that all politics and ethics must aspire to maintain**. In order for my deconstructive approach to the ethics of neorealism to make any sense, **the international must also be seen as something finite and deconstructible, rather than as an end in itself**. To think of the finitude of the international, **we do not have to look for something that ‘transcends’ or comes ‘after’ the international, like a world government or cosmopolitan community**.18 **We only have to focus on the principles that**, according to Waltz, **are meant to keep the international order alive: the structure of anarchy and states’ desire to survive**. While these are mutually dependent, **they** also **point to a situation in which the struggle to stay alive might threaten the system in which this struggle takes place**. To illustrate this point, **consider** the issue of **nuclear deterrence**, which Waltz controversially saw as a possible method of creating a more peaceful international order (see Waltz, 1990b). For Waltz, **only if nuclear catastrophe remains a real possibility will states need to actively deter the nuclear threat**.19 Thus, **nuclear deterrence ‘works’ only if nuclear war remains a constant possibility, hence only insofar as the problem of nuclear war is not permanently resolved** (Waltz, 1990b: 743–744). **What creates the possibility of nuclear war constitutes**, in this sense, **the conditions of international security and peace. What makes the prospect of nuclear war different from other wars is**, of course, **the planetary scale on which its effects are likely to be felt**. As such, **it poses a threat** not only to individual states, but also **to the entire system of states**. On this point, there is another parallel to be drawn between Waltz and Derrida, for whom **apocalyptic discourses** on nuclear war are interesting because they highlight ‘the absolute effacement of any possible trace’ (Derrida, 1984c: 28). Hence, these discourses **raise the stakes of survival even further by pointing to the finitude of everything that lives, as well as to all those attempts at keeping the apocalypse at bay, deferring it through deterrence** and so on (Derrida, 1984d: 29). Understood as a global threat to the entire international order, nuclear war highlights the temporal horizon of the whole neorealist project as conceived by Waltz. This is the horizon of the horizon, or the structure of the structure, which gives meaning to the ‘international’ as a finite as opposed to infinite category shaping the behaviour of states. **Rather than simply reaffirming a static world-view, which perpetually reproduces itself in a circular fashion**, Waltz puts forward a notion of **the international** that **is both finite and mortal. The international continues to live on** in this sense, **but only on the condition that it is exposed to the threat of coming to an end**. Other examples of how the international system may come to an end relate to the increased impact of global capital and global warming. While these are often depicted as typical examples of transnational phenomena, they nevertheless emanate from a system in which states are free to make sovereign decisions, for example, on how to deregulate the emissions of pollutants and financial markets. **Individual states are** thus **free to actively contribute to setting in motion processes that might put an end to the system that conditions their survival**. In this way, **there is a self-destructive potential built into the system, which threatens to make it collapse from within and on its own terms** (see also Frost, 2009: 163–168). Crucially, the self-destructive potential of international politics does not contradict Waltz’s theory. After all, he argues that **the system shapes, not determines, state behaviour**. He recognizes that **as long as states interact within an anarchic structure, they are simultaneously free and insecure**. This freedom and insecurity mean that **survival in international politics can never become a predictable science that is able to ‘remove the uncertainty of politics’** (Waltz, 1990a: 37). **Sometimes, the struggle to survive does more harm than good to the ones seeking to survive. Sometimes, this struggle may even set in motion processes the effects of which will be felt on a planetary scale, provoking an irreversible decay of the entire system of sovereign states.** Conclusion The ethics of neorealism, as argued in this article, stems from the mutual interaction of the two core themes of Waltz’s theory: **the structure of anarchy and states’ desire to survive**. Together, they **affirm** Derrida’s notion of **the violent opening of ethics: the opening to a future that makes new life possible while exposing everything that lives to finitude and the threat of erasure. Ethics and violence are**, thus, **inextricably interlinked, which means that any attempt to immunize the former from the latter is untenable. Before any moral obligations, and before any normative commitments, the ethics of neorealism addresses the more fundamental problem of what it means for states to live and be free in a system that guarantees nothing**. In this way, Waltzian **neorealism articulates the basic conditions of international life, which all attempts to theorize international ethics**, either by remaining ‘within’ the international system or by arguing in favour of its transcendence, **must come to terms with**. One of the main challenges that springs from my reading of the ethics of neorealism relates to how **universal ethical ideals not only become impossible to achieve in the practical sense, but are also fundamentally undesirable**. They are undesirable because **the desire to fulfil them undermines the conditions that make international life possible in the first place**. On this basis, a whole range of **attempts to theorize the meaning and implications of international ethics, which** in various ways **hold on to the notion of ethical ideals beyond the violence of inter-state relations within an anarchic structure, become untenable**. This even includes classical realism and the thought of Morgenthau, whose sharp distinction between ethical desirability and political possibility dissolves in light of the neorealist ethics presented in this article. According to this notion of ethics, then, **the desirable cannot be placed beyond political possibility since it essentially is political possibility**: the possibility of whatever happens in the interaction among states in the structure of anarchy. As was pointed out in the penultimate section of this article, there is also a temporal horizon of neorealism. This horizon is best illustrated by the threat of **nuclear war** and **highlights the possible end of the entire** international political **system. The threat of nuclear war demonstrates why this system, just like the state, ought to be seen as a finite as opposed to infinite category. Stressing the finitude of the system means that there is no metaphysical truth, moral or otherwise, to which it either can or should conform. It also means that there is always space, and time, for an ongoing ethical-political negotiation**. While the latter might very well include efforts to produce a ‘lesser violence’, its main force is that of a perpetual coming of the future. **As long as this future is allowed to play out, there is**, I believe, **reason to be optimistic: optimistic not about the possible fulfilment of universal ethical ideals, but about the future itself, and whatever it holds for international life**.

### L: Realism Good/True—1AR

#### Realism is not interventionism

John J. **Mearsheimer**, 20**18**, Prof of Poli Sci @ UChi, The Great Delusion LIBERAL DREAMS AND INTERNATIONAL REALITIES, Yale University Press, e book page 220-221

**Most students of international politics associate realism with rivalry and conflict. This, of course, is one reason realism is so unpopular in liberal societies**.2 It is also disliked because realists consider war a legitimate tool of statecraft that can be employed to either maintain the balance of power or shift it in an advantageous way. Advocates of realpolitik downplay the prospects for cooperation among states, moreover, because they think countries have to provide for their own security, given that they operate in a world with no higher authority to protect them. To maximize their survival prospects, those states have little choice but to compete for power, which can be a ruthless and bloody business. Realism does not inspire a hopeful outlook for the future.

Nevertheless, **realists are generally less warlike than liberals**, who have a strong inclination to use force to promote international peace, even while they dismiss the argument that war is a legitimate instrument of statecraft. This point is illustrated by Valerie Morkevičius’s observation, in her comparison of the two bodies of theory, that **most realists opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, while America’s three most prominent just war theorists (Jean Elshtain, James Turner Johnson, and Michael Walzer) “viewed the war more positively.” She concludes that “conventional wisdom holds that realists support the recourse to war more than just war theorists. I argue that the opposite is true: just war theory produces a more bellicose orientation than realism.”**3

**Many realists actually believe that if states acted according to balance-of-power logic, there would be hardly any wars between the great powers**. These “defensive realists” maintain that the structure of **the international system usually punishes aggressors** **and that the push toward war usually comes from domestic political forces. Great powers, in other words, most often go to war for non-realist reasons**. This perspective is nicely captured in the title of Charles Glaser’s important article “Realists as Optimists.”4 Other prominent defensive realists include Jack Snyder, Stephen Van Evera, and even Kenneth Waltz, who is sometimes mistakenly said to argue that international anarchy causes states to act aggressively to gain power.5 Two other realists, Sebastian Rosato and John Schuessler, advocate a realist foreign policy for the United States that they describe as a “recipe for security without war.”6

The historian Marc **Trachtenberg, who looks at the world from the perspective of a defensive realist, explicitly argues that following the dictates of realism leads to a relatively peaceful world**, while acting according to what he calls “impractical idealism” leads to endless trouble. His reading of history tells him that “**serious trouble developed only when states failed to act in a way that made sense in power-political terms.” Conflict occurs when states “squander [power] on moralistic, imperialistic, or ideological enterprises.” Realism, he maintains, is “at heart a theory of peace**, and it is important that it be recognized as such.” In brief, “power is not unstable.”7

I do not share this sanguine understanding of realism. The structure of the international system often forces great powers to engage in intense security competition and sometimes initiate wars. International politics is a nasty and brutish business, and not just because misguided liberal ideas or other malevolent domestic political forces influence states’ foreign policies. Great powers occasionally start wars for sound realist reasons.

Still, **even if states act according to my harsher version of realism, they are likely to fight fewer international wars than if they follow liberal principles. There are three reasons why even hard-nosed offensive realists like me are less likely to advocate war than liberals.** First, because **great powers operating under realist dictates are principally concerned with maximizing their share of global power, there are only a limited number of regions where they should be willing to risk a war.** Those places include the great power’s own neighborhood and distant areas that are either home to another great power or the site of a critically important resource. For the United States, three regions outside the Western Hemisphere are of vital strategic importance today: Europe and East Asia, because that is where the other great powers are located; and the Persian Gulf, because it is the main source of an exceptionally important resource, oil.

This means the United States should not fight wars in Africa, Central Asia, or areas of the Middle East that lie outside the Persian Gulf. During the Cold War, for example, realists maintained that American policymakers should avoid wars in the “Third World” or “Developing World” because it was populated with minor powers that were of little strategic significance.8 **Almost every realist opposed the Vietnam War, because Vietnam’s fate held little strategic consequence for the global balance of power**.9

Liberals, on the other hand, tend to think of every area of the world as a potential battlefield, because they are committed to protecting human rights everywhere and spreading liberal democracy far and wide. They would naturally prefer to achieve these goals peacefully, but they are usually willing to countenance using military force if necessary. In short, while realists place strict limits on where they are willing to employ force, liberals have no such limits. For them, vital interests are everywhere.

Second, **realists are inclined to be cautious about using force or even the threat of force because they recognize that balance-of-power logic will compel other states to contain aggressors**, even if they are liberal democracies. Of course, balancing does not always work, which is why wars sometimes occur. Great powers are especially vigilant about their security, and when they feel threatened, they invariably take measures to protect themselves. This wariness explains why Russian leaders have stubbornly opposed NATO enlargement since the mid-1990s and why most American realists opposed it as well. **Liberals, however, tend to dismiss balance-of-power logic as irrelevant in the twenty-first century. This kind of thinking helps to make liberals less restrained than realists about using military force**.

### L: Security Good—Reflexivity

#### Their K is wrong---strategic studies is self-reflexive and transcends problem-solving/critical theorizing dichotomies by re-appropriating concepts for practical outcomes.

Pascal **Vennesson 19**. Professor of political science, Joint Chair RSCAS, the European University Institute, Social and Political Science Department and Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies. “Is Strategic Studies Rationalist, Materialist, and A-Critical? Reconnecting Security and Strategy.” Journal of Global Security Studies, 0(0), 2019, 1–17

Conclusion: Reconnecting IR, Security, and Strategy

By revisiting the conceptions of Carl von Clausewitz and Thomas Schelling, two central, yet distinctive, strategists, I have showed that **strategic studies helps transcend** **the** **rationalism/constructivism**, materialism/idealist, **problem-solving/critical theorizing** **dichotomies** **and bridges gaps** (see also Vennesson 2017). While reason certainly plays a central role in strategic studies, **the field is not dogmatically rationalist and combines material and nonmaterial factors**. **The quest for emancipation is not only compatible with, but** often **necessitates**, **the logics of strategy**. **These dimensions have never been hidden or suppressed (except perhaps in critical security accounts): they have always been constitutive of strategic studies**.

Although these dichotomies prove to be misleading, it does not mean that nothing has been learned by engaging with them. One lesson is that it is important to distinguish strategic studies from related, but distinct, bodies of thought. These dichotomies miss the mark in part because **strategic studies is** at times **conflated** **with weapon-systems-centered operational research**, system analysis, **or even** Kenneth Waltz’s **neorealism**. **Such reductionist perspectives** **lead to a distorted view of the field as a whole**. Critical security advocates are, nevertheless, correct that “hectic empiricism” and the permanent quest of the new fad has been a cause of strategic studies decline. Critics are also right to remind students of strategy that references to strategic thinkers such as Carl von Clausewitz or Thomas Schelling cannot remain shallow and ritualistic. While they should not become the exclusive focus of the field, conceptual and epistemological questions about strategy are important and deserve careful consideration (see for example Nordin and Öberg 2015).

**Breaking out of the conceptual jails in which strategy has been incarcerated makes it easier for students of security and IR to reappropriate strategy**, one of the oldest and central forms of practice and knowledge surrounding international security. **It offers** a distinctive conception of the very nature of world politics and, more specifically, **a theory of political action in international relations**. While I can only sketch a research agenda here, several promising dimensions [are noteworthy.] ~~stand out~~. First, **strategic thinking provides a versatile**, **not military-focused, view of security: it has a core—the threat and use of organized force for political ends—but it can go well beyond**. This is because **strategic thinking can be** (and has been) **used to analyze any security issue** when actors interacting in a conflicting environment are involved and use a range of coercive means. Second, **strategic studies is politics and polities-centered, not state-centric**: **any kind of political community**, large or small, **can develop strategic actions**. Political communities’ political ends provide guiding parameters that are connected to diverse means in myriad ways. Third, **strategy is global**, **not Western-centric**, **in its roots and manifestations** (Vennesson 2017). Fourth, **strategy is about real reason, how security actors actually think and feel, not rationalism**. Fifth, it is social-materialist: it recognizes the reciprocal determination of technology and society. Finally, **strategic thinking can make emancipations possible through problem-solving**.

Showing that **strategic studies is not intrinsically rationalist**, materialist, **and acritical** also **facilitates the intellectual reacquisition of, and critical reengagement with, strategic thought**. **The examination of strategic thought reveals a rich repository** **of insights, concepts, precedents, and categories profoundly well suited to probe current situations and needs in world politics**. Instead of dealing with strategic thinking at arm’s length, security and IR specialists can embrace a vast reservoir of ideas, concepts, and mechanisms available for theory building. **Strategic thinking provides an intricate set of information, knowledge, and concepts, which are partially universal and transhistorical and partially contextual historically and culturally**. This information crystalizes in the discourses of strategic thinkers and in the actions of strategists. Security and IR **scholars can profitably revisit this vast reservoir of concepts and mechanisms forged by strategists and strategic theorists and borrow and reformulate them to serve their purpose**. **Examples include polarity, escalation, grammar of war, freedom of action, stability, indirect approach, threat that leaves something to chance, and political-strategic expectation**.

Moreover, **by focusing on how states use their material resources, strategic perspectives offer a promising path to reconceptualizing power** (Biddle 2004; Seybert and Katzenstein 2018). They notably suggest that capability is not primarily a matter of material resources but how potential capacities are actualized in creative ways. Viewed through these lenses, **the concept of power itself requires more disaggregate treatment, as it is inherently multidimensional and not easily fungible across specific tasks and geopolitical contexts**. Strategic perspectives also suggest a careful examination of differences in the ways in which strategic actors actualize and employ their potential capacities. In addition, the strategic understanding of world politics emphasizes the logics of the situation and their interlocking features—including the tactics of the actors involved—and downplays preconditions, antecedents, or previously existing causes. It recognizes that **international interactions have logics of their own and tend to take off and become independent from the conditions of their genesis**. It seeks to explore what these critical events or processes are made of. In that sense, strategic thinking is indispensable for approaching what Lucia Seybert and Peter Katzenstein call “protean power”—that is, “the effect of improvisational and innovative responses to uncertainty that arise from actors’ creativity and agility in response to uncertainty” (Seybert and Katzenstein 2018, 4).

Finally, **going beyond conventional dichotomies helps reconnect practical and social scientific knowledge** (Desch 2019). **Strategic thought is a central form of enriched practical knowledge about conflict, and international relations** more broadly, **which finds its source over centuries of practical self-reflection and judgement**. **Emptying strategy out of security theories** and policies **that do not involve military force, such as poverty, famine, political oppression, and environmental degradation**— to name but a few—**is** proving **unwise**, **as well as unsustainable**. **These** security **issues might not directly implicate military power, but they** often **involve a set of** mental and physical **operations to calculate, prepare, and conduct finalized collective action in a conflictual environment**.

### L: A2 “AI”—2AC

#### AI is a real threat, but empirics prove that norms solve---legal apparatuses are key

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More often, **norms—implicitly the “nuclear taboo**” against the (first) use of nuclear weapons (Carranza, 2018), **and explicitly the norms encoded by international legal instruments, including the** Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (**NPT**) **and the** Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (**CTBT)—appear to have served as a factor in constraining nuclear proliferation**, though such norm enforcement is not without challenge (Knopf, 2018). Nonetheless, these global legal instruments can function, in part because they can provide shared normative frameworks that disseminate and promote non-proliferation norms, -interests and -identities at the domestic-political level, tipping the balance of domestic contestation towards coalitions seeking non-proliferation. While one might expect such effects of “norms capture” to be stronger in liberal societies than in non-liberal ones, some scholars have suggested that even in the latter case, state elites who are not accountable to their own publics simply come to internalize the normative characterization of a successful state as one that abides by its treaty commitments (Rublee, Bertsch, & Wiarda, 2009, p. 222), or at the very least, have incentives for compliance with international non-proliferation norms, to foster a reputation for reliability in the eyes of other states (Williamson, 2003, p. 81). Moreover, **global international regimes**—defined by Krasner (1982) as “**sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations**” (p. 2)—**can serve as Schelling Points around which global society can coordinate multilateral collective sanctions or rewards** (Müller & Schmidt, 2010).

To what extent have non-proliferation norms driven nuclear restraint? Of course, it can be hard to disentangle causal connections between membership in normative (legal) instruments such as the NPT and nuclear restraint, since such behavior could reflect existing policy preferences by the states. Some reviews of the nuclear (non-)proliferation records have suggested that “NPT membership and the NPT regime's norms have modest or marginal impacts on nuclear proliferation” (Jo & Gartzke, 2007, p. 185), though others found that, when accounting for states’ ex ante treaty commitment preferences, state ratification of the NPT treaty regime was “robustly associated with a lower likelihood of pursuing nuclear weapons” (Fuhrmann & Lupu, 2016, p. 530).

Intriguingly, while public norms seem to be able to strengthen the hands of (non-)proliferation coalitions, they do not seem to reliably shift state policymaking where these coalitions do not already exist in sufficient strength. For instance, in 1994 Ukraine chose to join the NPT and renounce its nuclear arsenal in spite of respectable Ukrainian public support for retaining the weapons (Sagan, 1996, p. 80). Conversely, in 1999 the U.S. Senate rejected the CTBT in the face of widespread U.S. public support.

As with all history, it can be hard to distill unambiguous causal chains; yet surveys of the distinct state rationales for nuclear proliferation and of –non-proliferation or the abandonment of ongoing nuclear programs (Garnett, 2012; Sagan, 1996, 2011; Solingen, 1994; van der Meer, 2011, 2014), suggests that, far from proliferation cascades fueled by security and strategic concerns, a far wider array of motives shaped these decision-making processes, with elements of all three models—security, domestic politics, and norms—playing different roles amongst different states, and often contributing to a decision to forego or abandon nuclear proliferation. For instance, Solingen has charted the role of ascendant liberalizing coalitions, in countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Argentina, in shifting towards nuclear restraint, because of the favorable impact of this decision on international trade, aid, technology and investment opportunities, as well as to reduce perceived wasteful budgets for such military programs (Solingen, 1994). The broad history of nuclear restraint suggests that, far from a foregone conclusion, arms races involving strategically appealing technologies can be slowed, channeled, or stopped. This suggests that halting, managing or containing military AI arms races is viable—and hints at a range of considerations for doing so.

In the first place, it suggests that security concerns are conducive but not decisive to arms races, and that a limited number of “first-mover” major powers may share an interest in supporting global legal regimes aimed at the non-proliferation of certain forms of military AI, such as cyber warfare systems, which might otherwise empower conventionally weaker (or non-state) rivals. Given that this group of “leading” states is initially small, bilateral agreements may suffice; however, the unevenly shared stakes in the technology may render eventual multilateral negotiations more difficult (cf. Picker, 2001).

In the second place, **the domestic-politics model suggests that strengthening the hand of domestic coalitions pursuing the non-proliferation of AI weapons is one pathway towards shifting state decision-making away from pursuing more problematic categories of military AI**, even in the face of clear national security interests. Of course, one caveat here concerns the fact that military AI may have far broader appeal than nuclear weapons did, such that it is harder to find domestic coalitions that are clearly opposed to its development in all cases. For instance, the strategic benefits of developing nuclear weapons are almost solely military and relatively discrete—a half-finished nuclear weapon is not even half as useful as a finished one, and the road from starting a nuclear program towards developing, not just a working weapon or small arsenal, but a credibly survivable and deliverable deterrent is long and potentially less useful (because more provocative to well-armed adversaries) than not initiating a nuclear breakout to begin with. In contrast, the benefits of pursuing military AI might be more linear and gradual, with intermediate advances in subfields (e.g., image recognition or drone swarming command and control) enabling not just immediate application to battlefield roles, but also economically productive spin-offs to civilian applications. These features, combined with the comparatively lower reputational costs, may make some forms of military AI more palatable. But not all. Exceptions may be found in high-performance adversarial contexts (such as cyber warfare or aerial warfare) where AI systems or platforms end up directly engaging with each other. In such cases, as Payne (2018a) has argued, “marginal quality might prove totally decisive” because “other things being equal, we can expect higher-quality AI to comprehensively defeat inferior rivals” (p. 24). In such domains, the incentives for parties to independently develop “second-rate” military AI capabilities might be lower. Conversely, where AI systems do not have to “fight their like” directly (e.g., logistics; facial recognition), second-best AI systems still offer military advantage, and could proliferate widely (Horowitz, 2018a, 2018b). This suggests that **the precise appeal of military AI systems to different parties may be more complex—which offers openings for tailored engagement with domestic coalitions**.

Thirdly, **the “norms”-model suggests that, while policy-makers may pursue the development of AI in general because of its “symbolic” value as a marker of global scientific leadership, this may not transfer to the development of AI for military purposes**. Instead, **the degree to which military AI confers status may be mixed**: Pursuing openly autonomous “killer robots” may indeed remain unappealing for states. For instance, over the past years, global surveys of public opinion show that in most countries (excepting India), majorities oppose the deployment of autonomous weapons (Open Roboethics Initiative, 2015; Roff, 2017). An opposition appears to be on the rise: an even more recent survey by Ipsos showed an increase in global opposition (from 56% to 61%) since 2017 (IPSOS, 2019). At the same time, other surveys have shown that public opposition to these weapons can be very context-dependent, and drops off if their usage is framed as being defensive and aimed at reducing casualties amongst friendly troops (Horowitz, 2016; West, 2018). In another U.S. survey, Americans generally expressed mixed support for the United States investing more in AI military capabilities, but also for the United States to cooperate with China to avoid the dangers of an AI arms race (Zhang & Dafoe, 2019, pp. 26–30).

Moreover, **advocacy efforts might well be able to shift these public norms on military AI further—and thereby alter the reputational penalties and rewards of deploying new systems or for complying with restrictive global regulation, respectively**. Indeed, it is important to recognize the considerable efforts that have been put into making “killer robots” normatively unpalatable, notably by movements such as the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, a coalition of 89 NGOs from 50 countries (cf. Joshi, 2019). In fall 2018, both the European Parliament as well as United Nations Secretary General António Guterres called for bans on autonomous weapons (European Parliament, 2018; Guterres, 2018); and at present at least two dozen states are pursuing such a legally binding ban—although states such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Russia still explicitly oppose such an initiative (Joshi, 2019). Even if such public advocacy efforts have not (yet) produced a ban on autonomous weapons, this does not mean they have not already influenced the normative space around military AI.

However, to what extent will a specific opprobrium on the—important, but narrow—category of autonomous weapons transfer to other types of military AI? Indeed, beyond “killer robots,” it is unclear to what extent states will face a meaningful or strong “military AI taboo” with the same strength as the “nuclear taboo.” After all, the latter norm was possible and potent, because nuclear weapons are a “single” technology with a single discrete, publicly visible and viscerally horrifying use mode. This created a natural and unambiguous “red line” in usage, not to be crossed. Conversely, **the deployment and use of AI in many (non-kinetic) military applications is already a fact**, such that this Rubicon has been crossed. Moreover, **the technology is moreover very heterogeneous, such that whereas visceral applications** (e.g., “killer robots”) **may generate public opprobrium and restrictive activism, more diffuse or less kinetic ones** (e.g., logistics systems; capabilities to track missile submarines) **may not**. **It would therefore be advisable that organizations pursuing bans of the technology, consider the degree to which framings of “killer robots” continue to correspond to developments in military AI, including other usages which are potentially unethical, unsafe, or destabilizing**.

Finally, while public norms or activism against military AI may strengthen domestic political coalitions already opposed to these weapons, they alone are not always able to sway policymakers in the first place. **A key route lies therefore in shaping policymakers’ norms (and indirectly the domestic political landscapes). This relies on the (top-down) norm-shaping influence exerted by global legal instruments and regimes**, but also on the (bottom-up) institutionalization of norms by “elite entrepreneurship in norm change” (Lantis, 2018), and specifically through “epistemic communities” of expert groups.

### L: A2 “China”—2AC

#### Securitizing China war is good---instills caution and risk-aversion in politics

**Wang 20**, Professor of Political Science at Western Michigan University. He holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Chicago. (Yuan-kang, 11/9/20, "Roundtable 12-2 on *Thucydides’s Trap? Historical Interpretation, Logic of Inquiry, and the Future of Sino-American Relations*", *H-Diplo | ISSF*, <https://issforum.org/roundtables/12-2-thucydides>)

Throwing the Baby Out with the Bathwater? **Chan warns that the discourse on Thucydides’s Trap and power transition can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. If leaders believe in Thucydides’s Trap and act accordingly, it may create the anticipated conditions that make war more likely.** **Talking and thinking in terms of Thucydides’s Trap will influence the state’s construction of its identity as well as its definition of interests and preferences**. The discourse is harmful because it encourages ‘othering’ the opponent and contributes to confrontation. Should we, then, throw out the proposition that war is more likely when the system is undergoing a power transition? It might be worthwhile to go back to what Thucydides’s Trap refers to: “the severe structural stress caused when a rising power threatens to upend a ruling one. In such conditions, not just extraordinary, unexpected events, but even ordinary flashpoints of foreign affairs, can trigger large-scale conflict.”[112] **Instead of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy, this statement should induce caution from leaders in Beijing and Washington.** **Understanding the danger of war is the first step to avoid being trapped in it**. Like Chan, **Allison seeks to offer** “a set of **principles** **and** strategic **options** **for those seeking to escape Thucydides’s Trap** and avoid World War III.”[113] Obviously, **historical analogies cannot completely capture an ongoing** event. Allison himself cautions against “facile analogizing” and emphasizes that “the differences matter at least as much as the similarities.”[114] **The purpose of analogizing Thucydides’s Trap is not to shoehorn China and the United States into the roles of Athens and Sparta** respectively, as Chan suggests (17-18), **but to underscore the enduring feature of international politics throughout the ages**. **The dynamics of conflict highlighted by Thucydides remain** as **relevant** today as it was two thousand years ago. **Many scholars accuse structural theory of determinism**, as Chan does, (14, 34), **even though structuralists do not adopt it. States can go to war for a variety of reasons**. **Attempting to isolate a single cause for all wars is impossible. T**he **proposition that war tends to break out during a power transition is better understood as a probabilistic—not deterministic—statement. The structural tensions cause by power shifts can substantially increase the probabilities of war, much like dry leaves waiting for a spark, but it does not mean that war will inevitably break out.** Properly understood, **Thucydides’s Trap cautions us to be prepared for the danger of war during a power transition.** Overall, Chan’s book provides a stronger critique of power transition theory than of Thucydides’s Trap. Students of power shifts should take his argument seriously and avoid the pitfalls he identifies. We should not, however, hastily dismiss the warnings of Thucydides’s Trap.

### L: A2 “China—1AR

#### Err aff---the China threat is real

Jacob **Stokes**, senior policy analyst in the China Program at the U.S. Institute of Peace, 8-14-20**20**, "The Chinese Military Threat Is Real," Democracy Journal, <https://democracyjournal.org/arguments/the-chinese-military-threat-is-real/>

**Taking seriously** the prospect of **Chinese aggression does not require viewing Beijing as an avaricious power that is seeking global domination**—the CCP is not the Nazis or the Soviets. China’s narrower goals, however, are still dangerous. **Beijing defines its sovereign territory expansively to include Taiwan**, disputed islands and rocks in **the East and South China seas** along with the waters themselves, **and land on the border with India.** Therefore, **even “defensive” goals seek to redraw the map**, **using force if necessary**, with major implications for the United States and its alliance commitments, **especially with Japan and the Philippines.** Xi told former U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis that China would not compromise on “even one inch” of territory it claims.

**Beijing’s** implicit **long-term goals are also fueling tensions. No one outside of Xi Jinping and his inner circle can know Beijing’s intentions with absolute certainty**. Plus, ambitions can expand over time. But a straightforward reading of China’s aspirations based on scouring statements from leaders and official documents includes revising the political and security order in Asia to reduce the role of Washington and its regional alliances, thereby removing the major constraint on Chinese power. In essence, **China seeks a tacit dominance in a hierarchical Asia** with Beijing at the top. When Xi talks about building an “Asia for Asians” and a “community with a shared future for mankind” that is what he means.

**If Xi succeeds, it would mean a region where power tramples rules**, where **rights are subordinate to Party dictates, and where markets are fixed** **for favored companies** instead of being open and competitive. **Beijing seeks to make the world safe for** the protection and consolidation of **its domestic autocracy**. So, a region and world under China’s sway will likely resemble its domestic system. **The brazen snuffing out of Hong Kong**’s autonomy in violation of Beijing’s treaty obligations, **systematic atrocities against the Uighurs** and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, **and universal crackdown on liberties** throughout the country **give us a preview**

JCS Consult

### L: A2 “Deterrence”

#### Deterrence is the most ethical military posture---it’s fundamentally defensive and views the use of force as exclusively a last resort---there’s zero chance of the aff spilling up to affect overall global peace which makes some middle-ground military solution imperative

Eldridge **Colby 7**, Adjunct Staff Member of the RAND Corporation, formerly a staff member in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and on the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2007, “Restoring Deterrence,” Orbis, Vol. 51, No. 3, p. 413-428

One might ask: **If deterrence is so effective at providing security**, then **why has there been a rush to abandon it in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse and 9/11?** Shouldn’t such a successful policy have earned greater loyalty? **The answer** to these questions **illuminates** the **serious divisions among Americans about** what **the purpose of** our **foreign policy** should be.¶ **Deterrence was not a policy that won** out in **the Cold War because it was the most loved**. **It was**, instead, **the best of a menu of bad options**. **Hard right anti-Communists** **thought deterrence weak**, **a concession of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe** and a failure of Western will. They called for the rollback of Communist suzerainty, even going so far as to advocate preventive strikes against the Soviet Union and China before they were able to field nuclear weapons. **The left**, meanwhile, **detested deterrence as an immoral use of terror as a threat**, **a reliance on weapons whose very existence they decried**. Believing that no state objective could justify the use of nuclear weapons, **the left advocated** reducing our strategic forces, **moving towards abolition**, and a conciliatory policy towards the Soviets. **Since neither the right nor the left could win out**—fortunately—**deterrence arose as an option few liked but all responsible parties could endorse**.20¶ **With the collapse of the Soviet threat, this agreement lost its raison d’être**. Interventionists left and right broke free of the restrictive bonds a deterrence and containment strategy had put in place. **For hard-edged advocates for U.S. primacy, like** Donald **Rumsfeld or** Dick **Cheney**, **a deterrence posture would prevent the U**nited **S**tates **from exercising regional hegemony in the Middle East or East Asia**. For neoconservative and liberal interventionists like Paul Wolfowitz, Tony Blair, or Michael Ignatieff, anxious to spread democracy, halt genocide and other humanitarian crises, and “end tyranny in our world,”21 deterrence was too hesitant about such interventions. And **for pacifist leftists**—and even a few old hawks—**deterrence was a system of terror itself**, one that could be discarded at the end of history. They, therefore, called for abolishing nuclear weapons, the end of using threats for security, and internationalizing security responsibility. **Deterrence was left with few friends**.¶ **Its erstwhile friends should now consider returning**. **Contrary to the arguments of the pacifist-inclined left**, a strategy of **disarmament and conciliation is** **morally irresponsible** in the face of Al Qaeda and its like. Despite what the neo-conservatives and the liberal interventionists had hoped, the high moral rhetoric of liberating Iraq has yielded to a grimmer sense of the moral duties of considering consequences, necessity, and proportion. We have relearned the truth of the critiques of revolutionary France and of Woodrow Wilson—that **even the honest pursuit of high-minded liberal aspirations can** **yield death and chaos**. **History has its own ways and means and we should moderate our hope for its coming with a reverential fear of its wrath**.¶ In between these two extremes, **deterrence** is a security policy that **offers a way forward for the U**nited **S**tates **that is** **not only more effective because more tailored**, **but is** **also more moral**. It is more moral because **a deterrent posture would entail a strategy that is more proportionate, more necessary, more responsive, and**, ultimately, **more just**. Indeed, **deterrence comports with the** **fundamental human intuition** **that it is** generally **only moral to fight when attacked**. In this it complies with the classical conception of just war, which mandates that wars only be conducted when one's cause is just, waged by a legitimate authority, motivated by a right intent, fought with a real prospect of success, conducted proportionately, and undertaken only as a last resort. Deterrence satisfies these criteria. **It is a defensive strategy that responds to invasions or attacks, and is therefore just**; **it sets out** relatively **clear guidelines for when it mandates that the government fight, and**, therefore, **is governed by legitimate authority**. It is driven by a desire to protect, deter, and avenge, and is therefore motivated by right intent; its realistic red lines and threats are backed up by the awesome power of the United States, and therefore likely to succeed; and it responds when attacked and asks from the rest of the international community only respect for its marked out positions rather than revolutionary transformation, and is therefore proportional.22 Finally, **by its nature it is undertaken as a last resort rather than preventively**.23 It was the fundamental moral attractiveness of this position that continually frustrated both Soviet efforts to decouple Europe from the American nuclear umbrella during the Cold War and occasional American efforts to roll back the Soviet empire.¶ But **theorizing about war and peace** **cannot remain at the level of abstraction**. **It must bear moral responsibility for** **actual consequence** and the power of contingency, as Max Weber pointed out.24 **And deterrence, defense by calculation,** **uniquely satisfies the moral requirement** **that leaders**, whatever their benevolent intentions, **are** basically **responsible for the consequences that contingency produces from their actions**. **This it does by grounding a nation's security on its own credible threats**—**not on** either **changing the world through force**, **as** **neo-conservatives advocate**, **nor by hoping that a more peaceful world will emerge, as the left proposes**. Both of **these extremes** **ground security on radical changes in the way the world operates**, **and**, therefore, necessarily **enmesh us in the rest of the world's affairs**, thereby **exponentially expanding our vulnerability to all the permutations that chance and contingency may produce**. **Deterrence**, rather, **narrows our profile, and thereby reduces our exposure to risk**.¶ **A deterrent posture follows** John Quincy Adams’ adage **that** **America should not go seeking monsters to destroy** and the ancient dictum that a moral act is a proportional one.25 Perhaps the greatest sin of the recent strategy is its disproportion, its confusion of the necessary with the desirable. It may be desirable to “end tyranny” and distribute the blessings of liberty worldwide, but its desirability must be carefully balanced against the costs of its enactment. If Iraq teaches us anything, it must be that a moral policy is not only one guided by the best of intentions, but one that is realistic.

### L: A2 “Miscalc”

#### Miscalc is a useful frame---it recognizes the complexity of the international arena, which solves the link

**Nordmann**, Professor of Philosophy and History of Science and Technoscience at Darmstadt Technical University, **‘18**

(Alfred, “Four Horsemen and a Rotten Apple. On the Technological Rationality of Nuclear Security,” in *Jahrbuch Technikphilosophie: Arbeit und Spiel*, pg. 279 – 294)

The apple is rotting. During the times of the Cold War, the precarious equilibrium of strategic threats had its own working order. **It could be trusted** and, in fact, **had to be trusted** in many ways. The weapons were carefully **monitored**, subject to permanent surveillance from many points of view. They were closely watched through the eyes of one's own strategists, technicians and engineers, military personnel, local opposition forces, but also through the eyes of friends and foes, international agencies and monitoring groups. Everyone was attending to the weapons for different, perhaps conflicting reasons, and yet the many observations were maintained in a relation of mutual support. The weapons themselves became fixated and paralyzed at their center of attention.

When the so-called **»four horsemen«** (Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William Perry, Sam Nunn) and political leaders like Barack Obama have called for a world without nuclear arms, it is because they are worried about the **break-down of** this **working order**.24 In their view, the current modes of monitoring, proliferation, negotiation, and sanctioning represent a deviation from the Cold War rationality of deterrence with its system of **mutual checks and balances**. Accordingly, they call for **adequate ways of controlling material flows**, of regulating access, of instituting transparency and accountability. **Their question is a technical question**: Given the half-life of plutonium and given the volatility of systems of government in many parts of the world, how does one institute a robust international system of arms-control? Thus, they worry only secondarily whether the weapons might get into the wrong hands, politically speaking and in the short term. They pose **primarily** a question from within a technologically advanced, economically and politically robust knowledge society — aside from the United States, who can be counted upon to reliably provide the necessary know-how in the long term? Who can take responsibility for the management of what was once and is no longer a denumerable, firmly circumscribed set of nuclear things?

This point can be further developed by briefly considering three other aspects of the current state of debate: First, as Christopher Daase has pointed out, the extension into the future of the nuclear privilege of weapon states in the NPT becomes questionable when this privilege no longer serves to maintain a taboo in times of strategic conflict but when it somewhat arrogantly declares whose hands are the good hands such that they can be entrusted to carry out a managerial process. Inclusion and exclusion can be justified more easily on the criterion of the possession of nuclear weapons, it becomes contestable if the criterion is the cultural competence of handling with due diligence and care a dangerous and globally endangering commodity.25 Second, this may prove to be the reason why some of the non-nuclear states like Norway, Austria, Mexico are seizing the moment to claim that, if anyone, they are best suited to frame the question or redefine the terms of the debate. They wish to bring the humanitarian consequences to the fore and thus the mishandling of the bomb, irrespective of a balance of power or terror.26 Finally, when the question is one of maintaining or recreating a safe working order **for a dangerous technology** and when the arms race is taking place between knowledge societies and their claims that the technology is with them in good hands, the general technical capabilities of these societies become **increasingly important**. The responsibility of diplomats and negotiators in the political and military sphere to create conditions for global security is shifting to the maintenance, broadly speaking, of a safety culture in civil society.

If this diagnosis is correct, the rules of the game have changed as has the rationale for inclusion and exclusion in the club of nuclear-weapon states, and the definition of the community of responsible actors. The global challenge is defined not as **preserving peace** or security in an age of ideological conflict and competing national interests. Instead, the challenge is one of **tending to a working order** of nuclear safety and safeguards. Issues of proliferation and disarmament, transparency and **control** now appear in the collective consciousness as analogous to the global threat of climate change. Both put national and stakeholder interests **into a managerial mode**. The Earth and the Bomb need to be **handled with care** — grounded in the perhaps illusory hope that in good hands, with a technical mindset, and attunement **to the complexity of affairs**, the challenge can be **met** and the danger **contained**.

Hazardous Waste

At this point it may appear as if I wanted to recommend or **valorize an engineering approach** that **abstains from moral and political judgement** but brings to the table the requisite understanding for maintaining, modulating, recreating a working order or technological system. **This is not the case.** I am arguing merely that one need to **take seriously** the **different modes of conceiving the problems** that are **in need of solution** — not only because the definition of a problem **entails a conception of its solution** and the **reasoning processes adequate to it**. **If only for heuristic purposes** we should attend to the implications of a shift from the logic of warfare and deterrence to a **logic of attunement and trust** — attunement to a working order and trust in the good hands of technical expertise. In conclusion, here are some of these implications, briefly stated.

First of all, the acquisition of working knowledge and the ability to **maintain** and **modulate** a working order **does nothing to justify technocratic approaches or to en-throne the expertise of managers and engineers.** As the case of the klu(d)ge served to remind us, deviations from strategic rationality coincide with deviations from top-down engineering or rational design. The situations in which working knowledge comes to the fore are **highly ambivalent**, whether it is the challenge of maintaining a rotten apple or of managing material flows in an ageing nuclear arsenal. In these situations, rational decision making is of the kind where a security **update** is scheduled to the operating system of a computer and users wonder a bit nervously whether it is **really such a good idea** to install the update. Not only the readers of Charles Per-row's Normal Accidents will wonder whether the security updates might **increase** the **complexity**, perhaps **instability**, perhaps **insecurity** of the operating system.27 And of course, with the end of the Cold War, the operating system of nuclear security has been changed, prompting us to ask anew what are the conditions for stability and security.

### L: A2 “NATO”

#### Cooperation with NATO is necessary now to prevent existential risks---threats are real, but cooperation can help mitigate risk

**Kagan 22**, Robert---Stephen & Barbara Friedman Senior Fellow with the Project on International Order and Strategy in the Foreign Policy program at Brookings Institute (“The Price of Hegemony: Can America Learn to Use Its Power?” Foreign Affairs, vol 101, no 3, 2022, https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/fora101&div=54&id=&page=)

Thankfully, that was not to be. But now that Putin has made his mistakes, **the question is whether the United States will continue to make its own mistakes or whether Americans will learn, once again, that it is better to contain aggressive autocracies early**, before they have built up a head of steam and the price of stopping them rises. The challenge posed by Russia is neither unusual nor irrational. The rise and fall of nations is the warp and woof of international relations. National trajectories are changed by wars and the resulting establishment of new power structures, by shifts in the global economy that enrich some and impoverish others, and by beliefs and ideologies that lead people to prefer one power over another. If there is any blame to be cast on the United States for what is happening in Ukraine, it is not that Washington deliberately extended its influence in eastern Europe. It is that Washington failed to see that its influence had already increased and to anticipate that actors dissatisfied with the liberal order would look to overturn it.

F**or the 70-plus years since World War II, the United States has actively worked to keep revisionists at bay**. But many Americans hoped that with the end of the Cold War, this task would be finished and that their country could become a "normal" nation with normal -- which was to say, limited -- global interests. But **the global heg- emon cannot tiptoe off the stage, as much as it might wish to. It especially cannot retreat when there are still major powers that, because of their history and sense of self, cannot give up old geopolitical ambitions** -- unless Americans are prepared to live in a world shaped and defined by those ambitions, as it was in the 1930s.

**The United States would be better served if it recognized both its position in the world and its true interest in preserving the liberal world order**. In the case of Russia, this would have meant doing everything possible to integrate it into the liberal order politically and economically while deterring it from attempting to re-create its regional dominance by military means. **The commitment to defend nato allies was never meant to preclude helping others under attack in Europe, as the United States and its allies did in the case of the Balkans** in the 1990s, and the United States and its allies could have resisted military efforts to control or seize land from Georgia and Ukraine. Imagine if the United States and the democratic world had responded in 2008 or 2014 as they have responded to Russia's latest use of force, when Putin's military was even weaker than it has proved to be now, even as they kept extending an outstretched hand in case Moscow wanted to grasp it. **The United States ought to be following the same policy toward China: make clear that it is prepared to live with a China that seeks to fulfill its ambitions economically, politically, and culturally but that it will respond effectively to any Chinese military action against its neighbors**.

**It is true that acting firmly in 2008 or 2014 would have meant risking conflict. But Washington is risking conflict now**; Russia's ambitions have created an inherently dangerous situation. It is better for the United States to risk confrontation with belligerent powers when they are in the early stages of ambition and expansion, not after they have already consolidated substantial gains. Russia may possess a fearful nuclear arsenal, but the risk of Moscow using it is not higher now than it would have been in 2008 or 2014, if the West had intervened then. And it has always been extraordinarily small: Putin was never going to obtain his objectives by destroying himself and his country, along with much of the rest of the world. If the United States and its allies -- with their combined economic, political, and military power -- had collectively resisted Russian expansionism from the beginning, Putin would have found himself constantly unable to invade neighboring countries.

Unfortunately, **it is very difficult for democracies to take action to prevent a future crisis**. The risks of acting now are always clear and often exaggerated, whereas distant threats are just that: distant and so hard to calculate. **It always seems better to hope for the best rather than try to forestall the worst. This common conundrum becomes even more debilitating when Americans and their leaders remain blissfully unconscious of the fact that they are part of a never-ending power struggle, whether they wish to be or not**.

But **Americans should not lament the role they play in the world. The reason the United States has often found itself entangled in Europe, after all, is because what it offers is genuinely attractive to much of the world -- and certainly better when compared with any realistic alternative**. If Americans learn anything from Russia's brutalization of Ukraine, it should be that there really are worse things than U.S. hegemony.®

# Impacts

### M: Util—card

#### Ethics means you must vote for the team that reduces the greatest existential risk – regardless of all else

**Baum and Barrett 17** – Seth Baum is an American researcher involved in the field of risk research and is the executive director of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute (GCRI); Anthony Barrett is a senior consultant, data scientist, and risk/decision analyst based in the Washington, D.C. area, focusing on risk assessment, risk management, and public policies in a wide variety of homeland security risk areas and other catastrophic-risk domains (“Global Catastrophes: The Most Extreme Risks”, via Risk in Extreme Environments: Preparing, Avoiding, Mitigating, and Managing, Oct 2, <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3046668> accessed 9/11/19)

2. What Is GCR And Why Is It Important? **Taken literally, a global catastrophe can be any event that is in some way catastrophic across the globe**. **This suggests a rather low threshold** for what counts as a global catastrophe. An event causing just one death on each continent (say, from a jet-setting assassin) could rate as a global catastrophe, because surely these deaths would be catastrophic for the deceased and their loved ones. **However, in common usage, a global catastrophe would be catastrophic for a significant portion of the globe**. Minimum thresholds have variously been set around ten thousand to ten million deaths or $10 billion to $10 trillion in damages (Bostrom and Ćirković 2008), or death of one quarter of the human population (Atkinson 1999; Hempsell 2004). **Others have emphasized catastrophes that cause long-term declines in the trajectory of human civilization** (Beckstead 2013), **that human civilization does not recover from** (Maher and Baum 2013), **that drastically reduce humanity’s potential for future achievements** (**Bostrom** 2002, **using the term “existential risk”), or that result in human extinction** (Matheny 2007; Posner 2004). **A common theme across all these treatments of GCR is that some catastrophes are vastly more important than others**. Carl Sagan was perhaps the first to recognize this, in his commentary on nuclear winter (Sagan 1983). **Without nuclear winter, a global nuclear war might kill several hundred million people. This is obviously a major catastrophe, but humanity would presumably carry on. However, with nuclear winter**, per Sagan, **humanity could go extinct. The loss would be not just an additional four billion or so deaths, but the loss of all future generations**. To paraphrase Sagan, **the loss would be billions and billions of lives, or even more**. **Sagan estimated 500 trillion lives, assuming humanity would continue for ten million more years, which he cited as typical for a successful species. Sagan’s 500 trillion number may even be an underestimate**. The analysis here takes an adventurous turn, hinging on the evolution of the human species and the long-term fate of the universe. On these long time scales, the descendants of contemporary humans may no longer be recognizably “human”. The issue then is whether the descendants are still worth caring about, whatever they are. If they are, then it begs the question of how many of them there will be. Barring major global catastrophe, Earth will remain habitable for about one billion more years 2 until the Sun gets too warm and large. The rest of the Solar System, Milky Way galaxy, universe, and (if it exists) the multiverse will remain habitable for a lot longer than that (Adams and Laughlin 1997), should our descendants gain the capacity to migrate there. **An open question in astronomy is whether it is possible for the descendants of humanity to continue living for an infinite length of time or instead merely an astronomically large but finite length of time** (see e.g. Ćirković 2002; Kaku 2005). Either way, **the stakes with global catastrophes could be much larger than the loss of 500 trillion lives. Debates about the infinite vs. the merely astronomical are of theoretical interest** (Ng 1991; Bossert et al. 2007), **but they have limited practical significance. This can be seen when evaluating GCRs from a standard risk-equals-probability-times-magnitude framework. Using Sagan’s 500 trillion lives estimate, it follows that reducing the probability of global catastrophe by a mere one-in-500-trillion chance is of the same significance as saving one human life. Phrased differently, society should try 500 trillion times harder to prevent a global catastrophe than it should to save a person’s life. Or, preventing one million deaths is equivalent to a one-in500-million reduction in the probability of global catastrophe. This suggests society should make extremely large investment in GCR reduction, at the expense of virtually all other objectives.** Judge and legal scholar Richard Posner made a similar point in monetary terms (Posner 2004). Posner used $50,000 as the value of a statistical human life (VSL) and 12 billion humans as the total loss of life (double the 2004 world population); he describes both figures as significant underestimates. Multiplying them gives $600 trillion as an underestimate of the value of preventing global catastrophe. For comparison, the United States government typically uses a VSL of around one to ten million dollars (Robinson 2007). Multiplying a $10 million VSL with 500 trillion lives gives $5x1021 as the value of preventing global catastrophe. But even using “just" $600 trillion, **society should be willing to spend** at least that much to prevent a global catastrophe, which converts to being willing to spend at least **$1 million for a one-in-500-million reduction in the probability of global catastrophe**. Thus **while reasonable disagreement exists on how large of a VSL to use and how much to count future generations, even low-end positions suggest vast resource allocations should be redirected to reducing GCR. This conclusion is only strengthened when considering the astronomical size of the stakes**, but the same point holds either way. The bottom line is that, **as long as something along the lines of the standard riskequals-probability-times-magnitude framework is being used, then even tiny GCR reductions merit significant effort. This point holds especially strongly for risks of catastrophes that would cause permanent harm to global human civilization. The discussion thus far has assumed that all human lives are valued equally. This assumption is not universally held**. **People often value some people more than others**, favoring themselves, their family and friends, their compatriots, their generation, or others whom they identify with. **Great debates rage on across moral philosophy, economics, and other fields about how much people should value others** who are distant in space, time, or social relation, as well as the unborn members of future generations. **This debate is crucial** for all valuations of risk, including GCR. Indeed, if each of us only cares about our immediate selves, then global catastrophes may not be especially important, and we probably have better things to do with our time than worry about them. **While everyone has the right to their own views and feelings**, we find that **the strongest arguments are for the widely held position that all human lives should be valued equally.** This position is succinctly stated in the United States Declaration of Independence, updated in the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and 3 women are created equal”. **Philosophers speak of an agent-neutral, objective “view from nowhere”** (Nagel 1986) **or a “veil of ignorance”** (Rawls 1971) **in which each person considers what is best for society irrespective of which member of society they happen to be**. **Such a perspective suggests valuing everyone equally, regardless of who they are or where or when they live. This in turn suggests a very high value for reducing GCR, or a high degree of priority for GCR reduction efforts.**

### M: A2 “Root Cause”—1AR

#### Root cause explanations fail---causes violence by locking in a static approach to politics

**Bleiker 14** – (6/17, Roland, Professor of International Relations at the University of Queensland, “International Theory Between Reification and Self-Reflective Critique,” International Studies Review, Volume 16, Issue 2, pages 325–327)

This book is part of an increasing trend of scholarly works that have embraced poststructural critique but want to ground it in more positive political foundations, while retaining a reluctance to return to the positivist tendencies that implicitly underpin much of constructivist research. The path that Daniel Levine has carved out is innovative, sophisticated, and convincing. A superb scholarly achievement.

For Levine, **the key challenge in** international relations (**IR**) scholarship **is** what he calls **“unchecked reification”**: **the widespread and dangerous process of forgetting “the distinction between theoretical concepts and the real-world things they mean to describe** or to which they refer” (p. 15). **The dangers are real**, Levine stresses, **because IR deals with some of the most difficult issues, from genocides to war**. **Upholding one subjective position without critical scrutiny can** thus **have far-reaching consequences**. Following Theodor Adorno—who is the key theoretical influence on this book—Levine takes a post-positive position and assumes that the world cannot be known outside of our human perceptions and the values that are inevitably intertwined with them. His ultimate goal is to overcome reification, or, to be more precise, to recognize it as an inevitable aspect of thought so that its dangerous consequences can be mitigated.

**Levine** proceeds in three stages: First he reviews several decades of IR theories to resurrect critical moments when scholars displayed an acute awareness of the dangers of reification. He refreshingly breaks down distinctions between conventional and progressive scholarship, for he **detects self-reflective and critical moments in** scholars that are usually associated with **straightforward positivist positions** (such as E.H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, or Graham Allison). But Levine also shows how these moments of self-reflexivity never lasted long and were driven out by the compulsion to offer systematic and scientific knowledge.

The second stage of Levine's inquiry **outlines why** IR scholars regularly closed down critique. Here, he points to a range of factors and phenomena, from peer review processes to the speed at which academics are meant to publish. And here too, he eschews conventional wisdom, showing that work conducted in the wake of the third debate, **while explicitly post-positivist** and critiquing the reifying tendencies of existing **IR** **scholarship, often lacked critical self-awareness**. As a result, Levine believes that many of the **respective authors failed to appreciate sufficiently that** “**reification is a consequence of all thinking**—including itself” (p. 68).

The third objective of Levine's book is also the most interesting one. Here, he outlines the path toward what he calls “**sustainable critique**”: a form of self-reflection that can counter the dangers of reification. Critique, for him, is **not just something that is directed outwards, against particular theories or theorists**. **It is also inward-oriented, ongoing, and sensitive to the “limitations of thought itself”** (p. 12).

The challenges that such a sustainable critique faces are formidable. Two stand out: First, if the natural tendency to forget the origins and values of our concepts are as strong as Levine and other Adorno-inspired theorists believe they are, then how can we actually recognize our own reifying tendencies? Are we not all inevitably and subconsciously caught in a web of meanings from which we cannot escape? Second, if one constantly questions one's own perspective, does one not fall into a relativism that loses the ability to establish the kind of stable foundations that are necessary for political action? Adorno has, of course, been critiqued as relentlessly negative, even by his second-generation Frankfurt School successors (from Jürgen Habermas to his IR interpreters, such as Andrew Linklater and Ken Booth).

The response that Levine has to these two sets of legitimate criticisms are, in my view, both convincing and useful at a practical level. **He starts off with depicting reification not as a flaw that is meant to be expunged, but as an a priori condition for scholarship**. The challenge then is not to let it go unchecked.

**Methodological pluralism lies at the heart of Levine's sustainable critique**. He borrows from what Adorno calls a “constellation”: an attempt to juxtapose, rather than integrate, different perspectives. It is in this spirit that Levine advocates **multiple methods to understand the same event or phenomena**. **He writes of the need to validate “multiple and mutually incompatible ways of seeing”** (p. 63, see also pp. 101–102). In this model, **a scholar oscillates back and forth between different methods and paradigms**, **trying to understand the event in question from multiple perspectives**. **No single method can ever adequately represent the event or should gain the upper hand**. **But each should**, in a way, **recognize and capture details or perspectives that the others cannot** (p. 102). **In practical terms, this means combining a range of methods even when**—**or, rather, precisely when**—**they are deemed incompatible**. **They can range from poststructual deconstruction to the tools pioneered and championed by** **positivist social sciences**.

**The benefit of such** a **methodological polyphony** **is not just the opportunity to bring out nuances and new perspectives**. **Once the false hope of a smooth synthesis has been abandoned, the very incompatibility of the respective perspectives can then be used to identify the reifying tendencies in each of them**. For Levine, this is how **reification may be “checked at the source”** **and** this is how **a “critically reflexive moment might thus be rendered sustainable”** (p. 103). It is in this sense that **Levine's approach is not really post-foundational but**, rather, **an attempt to “balance foundationalisms against one another”** (p. 14). There are strong parallels here with arguments advanced by assemblage thinking and complexity theory—links that could have been explored in more detail.

# Alt

### Alt: Alt Fails—2AC (Realism)

#### The alt can’t overcome realist preferences – if it does, that’s worse.

**Colatrella, 20**—associate adjunct professor of government and sociology at the University of Maryland University College (Steven, “Solidarity or Human Rights? National Sovereignty and Citizenship in the Twenty-First Century,” *Bringing the Nation Back In: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and the Struggle to Define a New Politics*, Chapter 2, pg 34-38, dml)

**When one is seen by others to be only a human being, without** any of the **social, political or cultural characteristics** that make one fully human, **the result may be compassion and charity but it may also be just as likely** be seen as **an invitation to further abuse**. “**Bare life**,” as Arendt and Agamben term it, **cannot be the basis for human dignity**.

For **human rights still require states to enforce them, just not the same state that is repressing or violating them**. But **the enforcement of rights by** external states or by **“the international community” means war**. Immanuel Kant warned that **peace could not come from forcing a single state that refused to accept even a positive value or policy of the world community to get in line, since that is not peace but war** (Kant). Machiavelli warned that **republics need a plurality of republics, able to criticize each other, encourage each other to best practices, engage in competition. When all republics fall under a single central power—even a collective one—we find an empire, not a republic. A condition in which the world community was unanimous and forced a recalcitrant state into accepting policies it and its citizens had not approved would be analogous to empire**, to **that world polity** that Arendt likewise warned **would not result in a stronger enforcement of rights, but in the greatest threat to them, and one without external recourse for redress** (Arendt 298).

Nor are these abstract problems. Mark Mazower has painstakingly shown that the entire conception of international law has always been based on the “standard of civilization” in which certain states were within such a standard, and so legitimized to enforce their conception of international law, while other peoples and states and communities were outside of it, and so vulnerable to having the will of others imposed upon them (Mazower 70). In short, **colonialism, neocolonialism, and** the current regime of **human rights are closely linked, and it is no accident that the countries that find themselves targets of humanitarian interventions under the “responsibility to protect” are ones that are not within the current updated version of the standard of civilization**—that is to say, not allies of the United States and often opposed to neoliberalism. Thus, even **in shifting from the** older **national** government’s **responsibility** to its own citizens **to** a conception that **the international** community has a **responsibility** to protect human rights, we find that **we have merely changed which fox is guarding the chickens**.

Human Rights and Global Citizenship

As a legalistic concept, human rights require a political authority to define what they are legally. One of the most widely cited works on human rights, Jack Donnelly’s Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice fails from the start on this point with its key analogy: human rights, like property rights, are a preexisting condition. This notion has already been dismantled by Arendt as shown above. By contrast, international relations theorists recognize that **human rights must be granted and recognized by global institutions, but the lack of a central international authority makes this very difficult**. **The realist school** of international relations (Morgenthau; Waltz) **sees anarchy reigning in a state of nature in world politics, making the protection of human rights well nigh impossible**. The so-called English School of International Relations sees an international society as precarious, in which **norms, though real, are enforced by national states that see adherence to such norms as** advantageous for maintaining the international society and **in the interest of the individual states in question** (Bull). These theories are united in that they see international organizations as instruments for carrying out what has already been agreed to by national states. Neither position posits a global polity as existing, and many theorists in each camp would see such a polity as undesirable.

Others are less pessimistic. **Constructivists view human rights as a discourse that has achieved** a certain degree of **autonomy from institutional settings**, though the geopolitical limits on the discourse remain (Risse; Ropp and Sikkinke 16). Some political theorists seek to found human rights solely on the narrow basis of historical liberal theory, with all the baggage that this involves—from class privilege and economic doctrine to the policies of existing international organizations such as the IMF and WTO, and with the historical affiliation with Anglo-American hegemonies intact (Charvet and Nay). Samuel Moyn’s demonstration of the Christian roots of human rights merely shifts the instrument of human rights formation from political constitutionalism to Christian ethos. In both cases, however, **the Western origin of the rights concept belies its alleged universality**. Donnelly’s influential work engages in intellectual gymnastics to find a plausible basis for universal human rights. But **even this work admits that despite all, people must live in determined polities or they would find themselves in a Hobbesian state of nature, and that in the end states have human rights responsibilities only to their own citizens and territorial residents** (Donnelly 30–32).

**Clearly, only global citizenship could address all of these difficulties**, and there has been considerable work done on developing that idea. Robert Paehlke seeks the basis for global citizenship in the movements to limit corporate depravity and U.S. militarism worldwide, hoping ironically that the opposition to the current global governance regime will provide that same regime with a stronger basis for legitimacy (Paehlk 15, 200–02). Andrew Moravcsik instead argues that democratic republican governments have often accepted the limitations on sovereignty imposed by international human rights regimes when the gains in reducing domestic political uncertainty—the risk of having a domestic opposition reverse preferred policies—outweigh that compromise (Moravcsik 217–52). **Efforts at conceptualizing a “global democracy” are perpetually challenged by the lack of any global**, or even international, or even European **demos or people** (Held 220). Aristotle’s criteria continue to matter in the twenty-first century. **It seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that even under the most global of human rights regimes, rights remain inextricably tied to domestic politics and national governments. If there is a role for civil society and popular social movements, their impact must be primarily at the national level, and be differentiated in that impact in different countries and political communities. To be effective beyond national boundaries, they must act in concrete ways in solidarity** with brother and sister movements and struggles or **with efforts to bring about analogous gains to those already won or being fought for in each other’s national political communities**. This means that **the struggles, acts of solidarity, and discourses of movements from the pre-globalization era**, especially from the immediately preceding era of anti-colonial and analogous movements, **are surprisingly relevant** to addressing our problems today.

### Alt: Alt Fails—Rejection Bad

#### Wholesale rejection is bad---it makes ethical politics impossible and reproduces violence

**Abraham, 17**—Johns Hopkins University (Kavi Joseph, “Making Machines: Unlikely Resonances between Realist and Postcolonial Thought,” International Political Sociology (2017) 11, 221–238, dml)

This passage marks out one of the biggest obstacles to connecting realist and postcolonial thought: race. One would be hard pressed to find in realist theorizations anything resembling a supple understanding of race and racism (Vitalis 2015)— though Carr (2001b, 107) demonstrates a comparatively great deal of reflexivity on postcolonial liberation (see fn. 2 above). Even in Williams’s (2005) “wilful” realist tradition, there is scant discussion of how an embedded ethic of critical self-limitation fared in the context of racial or other forms of radical difference. Absent an engagement with the analytics of postcolonial thinking, or the diverse ways in which white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity inflect past and present liberal imperial formations, willful realism does not address the categories that threaten to push prudential skeptics toward violent responses, that pose limitations to an ethos of limits. As evidenced in Morgenthau, failure to think critically about race opens up the way for Morgenthau’s theoretical practice to be driven toward resentful rather than careful ends. It is at this juncture that **those concerned with contemporary imperial formations are confronted with a number of possible responses: one is to deem realism, in all its complex and contradictory manifestations, as a failed, unethical, and fundamentally racist/imperial project**. A second response is to politically align against liberalism, while holding this partnership at arm’s length. **A third response**, derived from Ayoob’s (2002) subaltern realism, **is to work on an epistemic register, selectively taking insights from realist traditions that help better explain the neocolonial world**. Morgenthau’s racist interjections should be critiqued and confronted—perhaps by outlining the innumerable non-Western contributions to the making of so-called Western modernity (Hobson 2004)—but this **failing does not delegitimize other realist insights**. What is important for Ayoob’s (2002) accommodationist stance is to combine plausible realist insights with other categories that can grasp the extent of global politics, including the dynamics of the postcolonial experience, better. The final response is the one I advance. To adopt a mode of argumentation concerned with **building a counter-imperial machine is to neither dismiss constituencies that become caught up in imperial formations, nor merely to tactically align with them; rather, establishing resonant connections among postcolonial and realist lines of thought, highlighting shared dispositions to difference, is to push the latter toward repositioning itself on new ethical lines that limit contemporary forms of violence. To recover a minor position in realism is not to accept all realist positions, nor is it to synthesize or convert any theoretical line into a coherent framework. It is**, however, **to amplify the shared spirituality that informs both realist and postcolonial thinking, drawing constituencies toward prudential rather than imperial defenses of difference. It is to furnish current research agendas with an anti-imperial focus, to seek the creative possibilities that may arise when divergent constituencies meet, interfuse, and shift**. Thus, our response to Morgenthau, as to other realists, is to cultivate the connections that do exist, not for epistemic reasons but for a political project that strengthens counter-imperial movements. Thinking from the Present By way of conclusion, it is important to reiterate the politics that motivates a theoretical project of linking realist and postcolonial thinking. If the ends of this project were to simply gather critiques of liberalism and its relationship to imperial practices, then certainly a return to classical realist thought adds little epistemic value over and above postcolonial approaches. However, **the ends of this argument are to outline and energize a counter-imperial machine**, to cultivate a shared spirituality **that can gather diverse and divergent constituencies to confront dangerous practices**. In my estimation, **countering an imperial machine that operates in complex ways and at complex sites requires a political strategy as unwieldy and diffuse, linking constituencies that we may otherwise dismiss.** **That a tradition of realism regularly circulates through halls of power across the globe should be reason not to reject righteously but rather to leverage its authorized status. We can talk about imperialism, knowledge production, and race here, while they can talk about anarchy, power, and self-interest there—or we can theoretically work on the lines of thought that reverberate among us**. To reiterate, building a countermachine is not driven to “pragmatic” reconciliation or consensus and, thus, remains distinct from the “eclecticism” of other plural approaches popular in IR today. While the combinatory logic of paradigmatic synthesis has its place, the connections between realist and postcolonial thought articulated here are made in a far more agonistic manner. Rather than produce something like a “postcolonial-realism,” **this** argument **involves pushing contemporary realist scholarship toward new research agendas and new forms of critique** that both capture a spirit internal to its own traditions while confronting the realities of contemporary global politics. It engages with minor positions along the realist canon to orient today’s realism away from the logic of great power politics operating under anarchy toward an understanding of how the logic of liberal order permits forms of imperial intervention. Needless to say, **drawing together realist and postcolonial thought**, as this essay has done, **can be met with analytical skepticism and political hostility. A mode of argumentation that refuses comparisons of theoretical cores or non-truncated readings of select theorists strikes a note of analytical evasion**. To this there is no defense—other than that already discussed at length. On the other hand, if the expressly political purpose of this work is accepted, **the argument anticipates strong political reservations: why align the project of postcolonial theory with realism, an unethical tradition of militarism and realpolitik?** To this I would respond that while a kind of strategic essentialism has its place, **reducing “realists” to a coherent body of thought not only obscures the complexity of their thinking** (see never-ending interpretations of Machiavelli as an example) **but reproduces the narrative of transhistorical unity that some realists use to authorize unethical policy programs in the first place**. More critically, however, **in embodying an unproductive ahistoricism, it poses conventional realist categories of anarchy, selfinterest, and military power as the political problem to confront whereas the present historical context demands attunement to how some of these drives** (militarism, national interest) **connect with discrete problems of liberalism and imperial practices**. In fact, there are good reasons to think that the dominance of (neo)realism in IR is overstated (Walker and Morton 2005; Maliniak et al. 2011) and that the ascension of liberal IR theory is sociologically tied up with the present hegemony of a US liberal world order (Sterling-Folker 2015). In other words, while realism may have been a productive foil in Cold War bipolarity, we must theorize from the present. In doing so, we may find that **countering imperial formations may benefit from resonances established** not just **among** postcolonial, feminist, poststructural, and other “critical” theorists but **contemporary realists who identify links between liberalism and imperialism** (Walt 2013). Indeed, **if realism as a policy program defending the national interest is entangled with current militaristic and imperial interventions, we should push the premise of this statement, that difference should be defended, in anti-imperial and prudential directions. Doing so may allow new openings to emerge in the present sense of closure, new strategies to think and defend alternative politics**. In this way, we may more fully embody postcoloniality by not being satisfied with either narrow critique or brash conversion but rather attentive translation.