**Aff Answers**

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**FW — Jarvis**

**Epistemology is secondary to the plan.**

**Jarvis ’0** [Darryl; 2000; Former Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Sydney; *International Relations and the Challenge of Postmodernism*, *University of South Carolina Press*, “Continental Drift,” p. 128-129]

More is the pity that such irrational and obviously abstruse debate should so occupy us at a time of great global turmoil. That it does and continues to do so reflect our lack of judicious criteria for evaluating theory and, more importantly, the lack of attachment theorists have to the real world. Certainly, it is right and proper that we ponder the depths of our theoretical imaginations, engage in **epistemological and ontological debate**, and analyze the sociology of our knowledge. But to support that this is the **only task** of international theory, let alone the most important one, smacks of **intellectual elitism** and displays a certain **contempt** for those who search for guidance in their **daily struggle** as actors in international politics. What does Ashley’s project, his **deconstructive efforts**, or valiant fight against positivism say to the truly marginalized, **oppressed**, and destitute**?** How does it help solve the plight of the poor, the displaced refugees, the **casualties of war**, or the émigrés of death squads**?** Does it **in any way speak** to those whose actions and thoughts comprise the **policy and practice** of international relations?

On all these questions one must answer **no**. This is not to say, of course, that all theory should be judged by its technical rationality and problem-solving capacity as Ashley forcefully argues. But to support that **problem-solving** technical theory is not necessary—or in some way bad—is a **contemptuous position** that **abrogates** any **hope of solving** some of the **nightmarish realities** that **millions confront daily**. As Holsti argues, we need ask of these theorists and their theories the ultimate question, “So what?” To what purpose do they deconstruct, problematize, destabilize, undermine, ridicule, and belittle modernist and rationalist approaches? Does this get us any further, make the world any better, or enhance the human condition? In what sense can this “debate toward [a] **bottomless pit** of **epistemology and metaphysics”** be judged pertinent, relevant, **helpful**, or cogent to **anyone** other than those **foolish enough** to be scholastically excited by **abstract** and recondite debate.

**FW — Fiat Good**

**Fiat is good — foreign policy simulations teach students how allies and adversaries respond to U.S. policy — fosters ideological reflexivity, accurate policy prediction, and argumentative agency.**

**Esberg and Sagan ’12** [Jane and Scott; 2012; Special assistant to the Director at New York University’s Center on International Cooperation; Professor of Political Science and Director of Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation; *The Nonproliferation Review*, “NEGOTIATING NONPROLIFERATION: Scholarship, Pedagogy, and Nuclear Weapons Policy,” p. 95-96]

These government or quasi-government think tank **simulations** often provide very similar **lessons** for high-level players as are learned by **students** in educational simulations. Government participants learn about the **importance** of **understanding foreign perspectives**, the need to practice internal coordination, and the **necessity** to **compromise and coordinate** with other governments in negotiations and crises. During the Cold War, political scientist Robert Mandel noted how **crisis exercises** and war games forced government officials to overcome ‘‘bureaucratic myopia,’’ moving beyond their normal organizational roles and thinking more creatively about how others might react in a crisis or conflict. The **skills of imagination** and the subsequent ability to predict **foreign interests and reactions** remain critical for **real-world foreign policy makers**. For example, simulations of the Iranian nuclear crisis\*held in 2009 and 2010 at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center and at Harvard University’s Belfer Center, and involving former US senior officials and regional experts\*highlighted the dangers of misunderstanding foreign governments’ preferences and misinterpreting their subsequent behavior. In both simulations, the primary criticism of the US negotiating team lay in a failure to **predict accurately** how **other states**, both **allies and adversaries**, would behave **in response** to **US policy initiatives**.

By **university age**, students often have a **pre-defined view** of **international affairs**, and the literature on simulations in education has long emphasized how such exercises **force students** to challenge **their assumptions** about how other governments **behave** and how their own government works. Since simulations became more common as a teaching tool in the late 1950s, educational literature has expounded on their benefits, from encouraging engagement by breaking from the typical lecture format, to improving communication skills, to promoting teamwork. More broadly, **simulations** can deepen **understanding** by asking **students** to link **fact and theory**, providing a context for facts while bringing theory into the realm of practice. These exercises are particularly valuable in teaching international affairs for many of the same reasons they are useful for policy makers: they force **participants** to ‘‘grapple with the issues arising from **a world in flux.** Simulations have been used successfully to teach students about such disparate topics as European politics, the Kashmir crisis, and US response to the mass killings in Darfur. Role-playing exercises certainly encourage **students** to learn **political and technical facts**\* but they learn them in a **more active style**. Rather than sitting in a classroom and merely receiving knowledge, students actively research ‘‘their’’ government’s positions and actively argue, brief, and negotiate with others. Acts can change quickly; **simulations** teach students how to **contextualize and act** on information.

**Fiat teaches empathy.**

**Craps ’12** [Steph; 2012; Professor of English at Ghent University, Director of Centre for Literature and Trauma; *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds*, *Palgrave*, “Conclusion,” p. 126-127; GR]

Cogent though these various critiques are in their own terms, it seems to me that they unduly homogenize and simplify different forms of interest in and inquiry into trauma. While it is true, of course, that trauma research does not in and of itself lead to political transformation, I would argue that a **trauma** theory revised along the lines I have suggested is not destined to serve as the handmaiden of the status quo or a mere academic **alibi** for the indulgence of **voyeuristic inclinations**. On the contrary, it can help identify and understand situations of **exploitation and abuse**, and act as an **incentive** for the kind of sustained and systemic critique of **societal conditions** called for by Berlant and Brown. In fact, the expanded **model of trauma** I have proposed, based on the work of Laura Brown, Frantz **Fanon**, and others, bears a close resemblance to the model of suffering that Berlant puts forward as an **alternative** to the (traditional) trauma model, which she finds inadequate: "a model of suffering, whose etymological articulation of **pain** and patience draws its **subject** less as an **effect** of an act of **violence** and more as an effect of a **general atmosphere** of it, peppered by **acts**, to be sure, but not contained by the presumption that trauma carries, that it is an effect of a single scene of violence or toxic taxonomy" (338). Berlant's observation that "the pain and suffering of subordinated subjects in everyday life is an ordinary and ongoing thing that is underdescribed by the (traumatic) identity form and its circulation in the state and the law" (344) is perfectly in line with the argument I have presented in this book.

That **trauma research** can act as a **catalyst** for astute **political analysis** and **meaningful activism** would seem to be borne out by the [END PAGE 126] development in Fanon's writing, from Black Skin, White Masks, which describes the psychological impact of racial and colonial oppression, to the overtly political The Wretched of the Earth, which confronts the source of the mental strife he saw in the clinic.3 Since Douglas Crimp's plea for "[m]ilitancy, of course, then, but mourning too: mourning and militancy" (18) in relation to the AIDS movement back in 1989, several scholars have argued that an interest in issues of trauma, loss, and mourning is in fact compatible with a commitment to radical activism. A desire to make **visible** the creative and **political**-rather than **pathological** and negative-aspects of an **attachment** to loss is the thread that binds together the essays gathered in David Eng and David Kazanjian's volume Loss: The Politics of Mourning (2003), which seeks to "extend[] recent scholarship in trauma studies by insisting that ruptures of experience, witnessing, history, and truth are, indeed, a starting point for political activism and transformation" (10). Eng and Kazanjian see their collection as moving "from trauma to prophecy, and from epistemological structures of unknowability to the politics of mourning" (10). As one of the contributors, Ann Cvetkovich, puts it, trauma can be "the provocation to create **alternative lifeworld’s**" ("Legacies of Trauma" 453).

Recognition of suffering serves as a **necessary first step** towards the amelioration of that suffering. In Judith Butler's words, "The recognition of **shared precariousness** introduces strong normative commitments of equality and invites a more robust universalizing of rights that seeks to address basic **human needs** for food, shelter, and other conditions for persisting and flourishing" (28-29). Without wishing to overstate its likely impact, I believe that rethinking trauma studies from a postcolonial perspective and providing nuanced readings of a wide variety of narratives of trauma and witnessing from around the world can help us understand that shared precariousness. By fostering attunement to previously unheard suffering and putting into global circulation memories of a broad range of traumatic histories, an inclusive and culturally sensitive trauma theory can assist in raising awareness of injustice both past and present and opening up the possibility of a more just global future-and, in so doing, remain faithful to the ethical foundations of the field.5

**FW — Scenario Planning**

**Scenario planning is good – a model of dialectical negation enables the transcendence of entrenched political ideologies and trains debaters to imagine radical alternative worlds guided by pragmatic strategy – their author concedes we’re right.**

**Ossewaarde ’17** -- Associate professor in governance, society and technology, University of Twente (Marinus Ossewaarde, 7-21-2017, “Unmasking scenario planning: The colonization of the future in the ‘Local Governments of the Future’ program”, Futures, Volume 93, pg. 80-88, <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.futures.2017.07.003>, accessed 7-4-2022) -- nikki

Scenario planning can be understood as a dialogical enterprise or ‘dialectical negotiation’ (Bowman 2016: 90). It therefore involves the ‘art of friendly dispute’ or ‘clash of minds’, which in turn enables the critique, negation, and transcendence of established ideologies, imaginaries and frames that determine the present and future. Scenario planning is a quest for alternative, still to be decided, open futures, in which different understandings of the world are reconciled through compromises. Chosen courses of actions informed by various (conflicting) possible scenarios reflect such compromises. As Habegger (2010: 51) emphasizes, in scenario planning ‘there is no such thing as “the future”.’ Clashes between ideologies, imaginaries and frames, accordingly, are not problems a scenario planning must get rid of; instead, they must be embraced as a sine qua non for advancing the knowledge of futures, if only because such contradictions or different intellectual orientations increase the awareness of possible future worlds (cf. Mannheim 1954: 241). There is no one necessary or inevitable path to one future. A scenario planning is a dialectical process involving the creative quest for futures (Barber 1998). Contemporary scholars therefore draw a parallel between scenario planning and the writing of futuristic stories (Korte and Chermack 2007). Science fiction, for instance, is widely recognized as a valuable asset for envisioning undetermined or undecided futures and stimulating utopian (or, dystopian) enquiries (Birtchnell and Urry 2013). Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World and George Orwell’s 1984 are examples of literary works that provide the imaginative component of scenario planning (cf. Schulz, 2015: 133). The purpose of scenario planning is, of course, not to produce science fiction-like stories as such; ‘scenarios are far more than stories’ (Chermack and Coons 2015: 189). Instead, scenario planning generates scenarios that are not simply linear extrapolations of the present. It involves reckoning with – imagining – unpredictable or possible events. The resulting scenarios, in turn, entail and demand a wide range of policies hitherto unheard of (Volkery and Ribeiro 2009; Habegger 2010). The imaginative part of scenario planning is therefore intimately connected to world-making, to decisions and strategic actions, which are directed to changing the course of history (Korte and Chermack 2007; MacKay and McKiernan 2010; Amer, Daim and Jetter 2013). Along this line, scenario planning always involves and requires (1) new imagination of future worlds, (2) debate about alternative futures, and (3) the creation of manoeuvring room for strategic actions that correspond to different scenarios (Chermack 2004; Korte and Chermack 2007; Volkery and Ribeiro 2009). The imagination of future worlds is enabled by literary methods that evoke distrust of fixed images and iconic representations (Shapiro 2016). Hence, parables, the articulation of paradoxes, allegories, symbolisms, and metaphors make it possible to understand and reckon with ambiguous, elusive, or latent (not yet fully manifest) phenomena in scenario planning (Levine 1985: 29; 218). Literary methods, and writers (poets in particular) can inspire truly new insights and strengthen the belief in different possible worlds, past, present and future. In other words, in these works, the reader comes to the realization that what is, or what has passed, could have been different; or what possibilities have been missed (MacKay and McKiernan 2010; Dufva and Ahlqvist 2015; Shapiro 2016). From such literary angle, futures unfold when events – which may be the results of strategic decisions – rupture ongoing trends and disrupt established patterns. In contrast with trends, events happen suddenly and can evoke shocks (MacKay and McKiernan 2010; Schulz 2015). A scenario planning has to include the possibility of such surprising historical moments through organizing so-called ‘what if’ scenarios, and must, accordingly, be organized in ‘an atmosphere detached from daily routines’ (Dufva and Ahlqvist 2015: 265). In this way, the enthusiasm for and openness to unexpected events, for ungrounding the present and the emergence of newness and radical transformations, is not stifled. The imagination of futures beyond current trends require a particular kind of radicalism from participants in the scenario planning process, namely, the transcendence of their current assumptions regarding the world. In other words, their capacity to invent new futures depends on their willingness and capacity to critically re-examine what they conceptualized as trends that would continue into the future (Chermack 2004; Korte and Chermack 2007; Van Wijck and Niemeijer 2016; Bowman 2016). They must, accordingly, abandon any pretence of knowing the ’laws’ of the world, thereby leaving open the possibility that the world might have been very different if other power constellations had been in place. Concretely, such attitude requires giving up biases, dogmas, ideological distortions, and compulsive identifications with a particular (well-known) order, stereotypes, and clichés. Indeed, it is only through the critique, negation and transcendence of established conceptual frameworks, practices and current policies that it is possible to generate new ways of seeing the world, and hence to envision alternative worlds (Amer, Daim and Jetter 2013). Ideological discourses freeze (reify) established patterns (typically described as ‘progress,’ ‘development,’ or ‘transformation’) and obscure ambiguities. Scenario planning results in increased scope for strategic action to realize undetermined possible futures. Though it tends to limit itself to descriptions of alternative futures (Amer, Daim and Jetter 2013; Van Wijck and Niemeijer 2016; O’Brien 2016), without prescriptive claims, it is a powerful instrument that can serve or undermine democracy and its future (Barber 1998). Its liberating potential depends on the range of different accounts of the world and of possible future worlds that is taken into account during the process. The exclusion of alternative images of the future on the basis of current assumptions and beliefs – for instance, the salvation of the world lies in technology – from scenario planning makes the latter a sham. Since the inclusion of conflicting worldviews is the hallmark of democracy, a pseudo-scenario planning that presumes and legitimizes one desirable future clearly undermines the democratic ideal of debate or of the publics (cf. Ravetz, 2011).

**FW — IR Scenario Planning Good**

**IR scenario planning and probabilistic forecasting is pedagogically valuable — it’s accurate, breaks down biases and solves any Ks of non-rigorous approaches.**

**Scoblic & Tetlock ’20** — Peter J. Scoblic; Co-Founder of Event Horizon Strategies, a Senior Fellow in the International Security Program at New America, and a Fellow at Harvard’s Kennedy School. Philip E. Tetlock; Leonore Annenberg University Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. October 13, 2020; "A Better Crystal Ball: The Right Way to Think About the Future"; *Foreign Affairs*; [edited for gendered and ableist language] https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-10-13/better-crystal-ball; //CYang

Every policy is a **prediction**. Tax cuts will boost the economy. Sanctions will slow Iran’s nuclear program. Travel bans will limit the **spread of COVID-19**. These claims all posit a **causal relationship** between **means** and **ends**. Regardless of party, ideology, or motive, no policymaker wants ~~his or her~~ [their] recommended course of action to produce unanticipated consequences. This makes every policymaker a **forecaster**. But forecasting is difficult, particularly when it comes to **geopolitics** — a domain in which the rules of the game are poorly understood, information is invariably incomplete, and expertise often confers surprisingly little advantage in predicting future events.

These challenges present practical problems for decision-makers in the U.S. government. On the one hand, the limits of imagination create blind spots that policymakers tend to fill in with past experience. They often assume that tomorrow’s dangers will look like yesterday’s, retaining the same mental map even as the territory around them changes dramatically. On the other hand, if policymakers addressed all imaginable threats, the United States would need so large and expensive a national security establishment that the country could do little else. By many measures, it is nearing this point already. The United States has military bases in more than 70 countries and territories, boasts more than four million federal employees with security clearances, and fields 1.3 million active-duty troops, with another million in reserve. According to one estimate, the United States spends $1.25 trillion annually on national security. When it comes to anticipating the future, then, the United States is getting the worst of both worlds. It spends untold sums of money preparing yet still finds itself the victim of surprise — fundamentally ill equipped for defining events, such as the emergence of COVID-19.

There is a better way, one that would allow the United States to make decisions based not on **simplistic extrapolations** of the past but on **smart estimates** of the future. It involves reconciling two approaches often seen to be at philosophical loggerheads: **scenario planning** and **probabilistic forecasting**. Each approach has a fundamentally different assumption about the future. Scenario planners maintain that there are so many possible futures that one can imagine them only in terms of plausibility, not probability. By contrast, forecasters believe it is possible to calculate the odds of possible outcomes, thereby transforming amorphous uncertainty into quantifiable risk. Because each method has its strengths, the optimal approach is to **combine them**. This **holistic method** would provide policymakers with both a range of **conceivable futures** and regular updates as to which one is likely to emerge. For once, they could make shrewd bets about tomorrow, today.

PLANNING FOR UNCERTAINTY

Although widely used in business today, the first element of this duo — scenario planning — grew out of post–World War II national security concerns, specifically the **overwhelming uncertainty** of the nuclear revolution. Previously, martial experience was thought to offer some guidance through the fog of war. Nuclear weapons, however, presented a novel problem. With the newfound ability to destroy each other as functioning societies in a matter of minutes or hours, the United States and the Soviet Union faced an **unprecedented situation**. And unprecedented situations are, by definition, uncertain. They lack any analogy to the past that would allow decision-makers to calculate the odds of possible outcomes.

Still, early U.S. efforts at nuclear-war planning sought to turn that problem into a calculable one. During World War II, the Allies had great success with the new field of operations research, the application of statistical methods to improve the outcome of tactical engagements. After the war, the RAND Corporation — a “think factory” that the U.S. Air Force established as a repository for leading researchers — hoped to parlay this success into a new, more rational approach to war, based less on the intuition of generals and more on the quantification afforded by models and data.

Unfortunately, methods that worked at the tactical level proved nearly farcical at the strategic level. As the historian David Jardini has chronicled, RAND’s first attempt to model a nuclear strategy ignored so many key variables that it nonsensically called for deploying a fleet of aging turboprop bombers that carried no bombs because the United States did not have enough fissile material to arm them; the goal was simply to overwhelm Soviet air defenses, with no regard for the lives of the pilots. In the wake of such failures, it became clear that analysts could not **entirely banish** uncertainty. In 1960, even Charles Hitch, a man predisposed to calculation by dint of being RAND’s top economist and president of what was then the Operations Research Society of America, cautioned, “No other characteristic of decision-making is as **pervasive** as uncertainty.”

That, of course, raised the question of how to formulate **sensible strategy**. Unexpectedly, it was a RAND mathematician and physicist, Herman Kahn, who offered an answer. If the lived past could not shape strategy, perhaps the **imagined future** could. Frustrated with RAND’s attempts to scientize war, Kahn devoted himself to crafting scenarios in the pursuit of “ersatz experience” that would prepare the **U**nited **S**tates for the future through what were essentially thought experiments. Policymakers could use these scenarios as “artificial ‘case histories’ and ‘historical anecdotes,’” Kahn wrote, thus making up for a lack of **actual examples** or **meaningful data**. They would provide analogies where there were none.

Early methods of generating scenarios were often freewheeling and discursive. But after scenario planning migrated to the business world, it took on more structured forms. The most recognizable is a two-by-two matrix in which planners identify two critical uncertainties and, taking the extreme values of each, construct four possible future worlds. Regardless of the specific shape they take, **rigorous scenario-planning** exercises all involve identifying key **uncertainties** and then imagining how different combinations could yield situations that are vastly different from what **mere extrapolation** of the present would suggest. By then “backcasting” — taking one of these imagined futures as a given and asking what conditions produced it — scenario planners derive both a **story** and a **system**. They come up with a plausible narrative of how a future happened and an internal logic that describes how it operates. Scenarios are not supposed to be predictive. They are meant to be provocative, challenging **planners’ assumptions**, shaking up their **mental models** of how the world works, and giving them the cognitive flexibility to better sense, shape, and adapt to the **emerging future**.

The pandemic has occasioned a renaissance in the use of scenarios, as organizations from think tanks to technology companies grapple with the question of what a “new normal” might look like and how soon it might arrive. But the national security community has long used scenarios to address some of its most wicked problems — particularly high-stakes issues that are in flux, such as the U.S.-Chinese relationship. This past summer, RAND released a report on Chinese grand strategy. It concluded with four scenarios that offered brief vignettes of China’s possible place in the world 30 years from now. “Triumphant China” dominates the world stage in most domains, with a modern military and an innovative economy. “Ascendant China” is the preeminent power not only in Asia but in other regions, as well. “Stagnant China” has suffered from low growth and faces social unrest. And “Imploding China” experiences a crisis of existential proportions, in which domestic instability undercuts the country’s international influence.

Although comprehensive, the wide range of these scenarios highlights the chief challenge of the method: If China’s potential futures encompass rise, fall, and everything in between, how can they aid in the formulation of strategy and policy? Although this cornucopia of scenarios could lead policymakers to develop strategies that would improve the United States’ position no matter which future comes to pass, in practice, having too many different versions of the future can make it nearly impossible to act. **Good scenario planning** puts boundaries on the future, but those limits are often not enough for **decision-makers** to work with. They need to know which future is **most likely**.

TURNING **UNCERTAINTY** INTO **RISK**

Probabilistic forecasting — the second element of the duo — tries to address that **shortcoming**. Forecasters see scenario planning as maddeningly vague or, worse, dangerously misleading. They not only point to the lack of consistent evidence to support the alleged benefits of scenario planning; they also argue that the compelling nature of a good story can trigger a host of biases. Such biases fuel irrationality, in part by tricking decision-makers into making basic statistical errors. For example, even though a detailed narrative may seem more plausible than a sparse one, every contingent event decreases the likelihood that a given scenario will actually transpire. Nevertheless, people frequently confuse plausibility for probability, assigning greater likelihood to specific stories that have the ring of truth. They might, illogically, consider a war with China triggered by a clash in the Taiwan Strait more likely than a war with China triggered by any possible cause.

In contrast to scenario planning’s emphasis on imagination, forecasting tends to rely on calculation. Deductive approaches use models or laws that describe the behavior of a system to predict its future state, much like Newtonian mechanics allows astronomers to anticipate the position of the planets. Inductive approaches do not require such understanding, merely enough data and the assumption that the future will in some way reflect the past. This is how Netflix anticipates what you might like to watch or Amazon what you might want to buy, based purely on your previous actions. Increasingly, thanks to advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning, analysts use hybrid approaches. Meteorology is a good example, in which researchers combine sophisticated models and big data collection, which feed into each other and enable ever-better weather forecasts.

International politics poses a challenge for these methods because the laws governing the system are elusive or highly debatable, relevant data points are often unavailable or unprecedented, and thousands of variables interact in countless ways. History functions as a series of unfolding events, with highly contingent branching paths sometimes separated by mere happenstance. Tectonic shifts can hinge on seemingly mundane occurrences. That makes it hard to deduce future events from theoretical principles or to induce them from past experience.

As a result, historians and foreign policy experts are often bad forecasters. In 2005, one of us, Philip Tetlock, published a study demonstrating that seasoned political experts had trouble outperforming “dart-tossing chimpanzees” — random guesses — when it came to predicting global events. The experts fared even worse against amateur news junkies. Overconfidence was the norm, not the exception. When experts expressed 100 percent certainty that events would occur, those events materialized only 80 percent of the time. Yet there were pockets of excellence amid this unimpressive performance. Those who were surest that they understood the forces driving the political system (“hedgehogs,” in the philosopher Isaiah Berlin’s terminology) fared significantly worse than their humbler colleagues, who did not shy from complexity, approaching problems with greater curiosity and open-mindedness (“foxes”).

This distinction caught the eye of the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity, which set up a geopolitical “forecasting tournament,” in which Tetlock participated. He recruited a team of volunteers to provide probabilistic answers to sharply defined questions, such as “Will the euro fall below $1.20 in the next year?” or “Will the president of Tunisia flee to exile in the next six months?” By measuring the difference between estimates and the actual occurrence of events, Tetlock and his colleagues could calculate a score showing how “well-calibrated” the expectations of any given forecaster were with reality. By analyzing these data, Tetlock discovered that the key to more accurate **geopolitical forecasting** was to take people who were naturally **numerate** and **open-minded**, train them to think **probabilistically** and avoid common biases, and then group them so they could leverage the “wisdom of the crowd.” The **best forecasters** would approach seemingly intractable questions by decomposing them into parts, researching the past frequency of similar (if not precisely analogous) events, adjusting the odds based the uniqueness of the situation, and continually updating their estimates as new information emerged. By the end of the tournament, Tetlock’s top performers had achieved scores that were 30 percent better than those of career CIA analysts with access to classified information. Somehow, they had transmuted **uncertainty** into **measurable risk**.

The advantages of being able to put realistic odds on possible futures are obvious. It gives you a peek into the future. But even the best forecasters have their limits. If asked to predict events three to five years out, their performance becomes increasingly indistinguishable from random guessing. Still, many **critical policy questions** are **short term**: perhaps the most famous recent example concerned whether Osama bin Laden was in the Abbottabad compound in May 2011. Highly consequential short-term questions now include when a COVID-19 vaccine will be widely available. As of this writing, the smart money (68 percent probability) is on or before March 31, 2021.

But to the extent that leaders need to make consequential, difficult-to-reverse decisions that will play out over the long run — the strategic choices that will give the United States an advantage over time — it becomes more difficult to link forecasts to policymaking. Well-calibrated forecasters, for instance, can estimate the likelihood that a skirmish with the Chinese navy in the South China Sea will result in at least two American deaths by December 31. But what policymakers really want to know is the extent to which China will threaten U.S. interests in the coming years and decades.

Answers to that type of inquiry are beyond the reach of forecasters because it is impossible to define precisely what constitutes an interest or a threat. To provide forecasts, questions must pass the “clairvoyance test,” which is to say that were it possible to pose the question to a genuine clairvoyant, that omniscient seer must be able to answer it without having to ask for clarification. “Will I fall in love?” is not a forecasting question. “Will I marry Jane Smith by this time next year?” is.

From a policy perspective, then, the greatest challenge to forecasts is that although they can clarify slices of the future, they do not necessarily provide enough information to inform decision-making. Indeed, making a decision based on one specific forecast would be a mistake: the estimated probability of an event is a poor proxy for the significance of that event. “Will Vladimir Putin relinquish power within the next two years?” is a far different question from “What would Vladimir Putin’s abdication of power mean for U.S.-Russian relations?” The problem with forecasting is thus the exact opposite of the problem with scenarios: if the latter often provide too panoramic a view of the future to be useful, the former provides too narrow a glimpse.

AN ANSWER FOR THE FUTURE

How should these different approaches to anticipating the future be linked? The answer lies in developing clusters of questions that give early, forecastable indications of which envisioned future is likely to emerge, thus allowing policymakers to place smarter bets sooner. Instead of evaluating the likelihood of a long-term scenario as a whole, question clusters allow analysts to break down potential futures into a series of clear and forecastable signposts that are observable in the short run. Questions should be chosen not only for their individual diagnostic value but also for their diversity as a set, so that each cluster provides the greatest amount of information about which imagined future is emerging — or which elements of which envisioned futures are emerging. As a result, the seductiveness of a particular narrative will not tempt decision-makers into mistaking plausibility for probability. Instead, preliminary answers to specific questions can provide a simple metric for judging in advance how the future is most likely to unfold — a metric that analysts can then refine once the event in question takes place or not.

Consider the scenarios RAND produced as part of its analysis of China’s grand strategy. The four scenarios envisioned for 2050 — “Triumphant China,” “Ascendant China,” “Stagnant China,” and “Imploding China” — can be roughly placed on a classic two-by-two matrix, with the strength of China’s political leadership on one axis and the strength of China’s economy on the other. A cluster of questions that would give a heads-up that history is on a “Triumphant China” trajectory might include “On December 31, 2020, will China exercise de facto control over Itu Aba (or Taiping Island) in the South China Sea (which is currently under the de facto control of Taiwan)?” “Will China’s GDP growth in 2023 exceed ten percent?” and “Among African audiences, when will the China Global Television Network have a higher weekly viewership than Voice of America?”

These questions are useful both individually and collectively. Knowing that top forecasters see an increased chance of China controlling the island (from, say, a ten percent probability to a 20 percent probability), for instance, would provide immediate tactical value to the U.S. Navy. It should not necessarily tip the balance in the debate over whether China will be “triumphant,” but if all the forecasts resulting from the question cluster are trending in the same direction, the United States may want to recalibrate its strategy. As forecasts change and individual questions are answered by the course of events, the view of the far-off future becomes a little bit clearer. Analysts can then update their scenarios and generate new clusters of questions. They can thus develop a continually evolving sense of plausible futures, as well as a probabilistic estimate of which policies will yield the most bang for the buck today.

This method resembles the U.S. defense and intelligence community’s use of indications and warnings. In the early 1960s, for example, the National Intelligence Council developed a list of actions — large troop maneuvers, for instance — that might precede an attack by the Sino-Soviet bloc. The idea was that tactical changes might provide an early warning of future strategic shifts. Indications and warnings have come to play an important role in many national security scenarios. Unfortunately, there are potential problems with scouring today’s environment for hints of tomorrow. For one thing, as psychological research shows, having envisioned a particular scenario, humans are not only inclined to consider it more likely; they are also more prone to see evidence of its emergence—a form of confirmation bias that U.S. intelligence has battled for decades. For another, analysts are not particularly good at discerning in real time which events matter—which signposts are actually indicative of a particular future. Developments initially considered to be earthshattering may turn out to be significantly less important, whereas a story buried well beneath the day’s headlines can end up changing the course of history. In a statistical analysis of nearly two million State Department cables sent in the 1970s, for instance, one recent study demonstrated that U.S. diplomats were often bad at estimating the historical importance of contemporaneous events.

Linking scenarios to clusters of forecasting questions mitigates these problems. First, because the questions must be precise enough to pass the clairvoyance test, there is no wiggle room about what constitutes, say, large troop maneuvers. Second, because questions that disprove hypotheses often yield the greatest information, selecting questions for their diagnostic value decreases forecasters’ susceptibility to **confirmation bias**. Third, much as diversified stock portfolios spread risk through multiple, uncorrelated investments, the diversity of question clusters prevents forecasters from overweighting a potentially **unimportant signpost** and **mistakenly concluding** that a particular scenario is coming to pass. Finally, and most important, because question clusters yield forecasts, one can attach **meaningful probabilities** to the likelihood that **particular events** will occur in the future. This provides a sort of advance **e**arly **w**arning **s**ystem. An event does not need to actually transpire for the United States to have actionable information. That, more than anything else, gives question clusters an advantage over traditional indications and warnings.

PLANNING IN PRACTICE

To be useful, any vision of the future must be connected to decisions in the present. Scholars and practitioners often claim that scenario planning and probabilistic forecasting are incompatible given their different assumptions and goals. In fact, they mesh well. A scenario planner’s conviction that the future is uncertain need not clash with a forecaster’s quest to translate uncertainty into risk. Rather, the challenge lies in understanding the limits of each method. Question clusters make it possible to leverage the strength of **each approach**, transforming the **abstract long term** into the **concrete short term** so that leaders can understand the future **quickly** and act to **stave off danger**, seize opportunity, and strengthen national security.

The greatest barrier to a **clearer vision** of the future is not **philosophical** but **organizational**: the potential of combining scenario planning with probabilistic forecasting means **nothing** if it is not **implemented**. On occasion, the intelligence community has used forecasting tournaments to inform its estimates, but that is only a first step. Policymakers and consumers of intelligence are the ones who must understand the importance of forecasts and **incorporate them** into their decisions. Too often, operational demands — the daily business of organizations, from weighty decisions to the mundane — fix attention on the current moment.

Overcoming the tyranny of the present requires **high-level action** and broad, sustained effort. Leaders across the U.S. government must cultivate the cognitive habits of top forecasters throughout their organizations, while also institutionalizing the imaginative processes of scenario planners. The country’s prosperity, its security, and, ultimately, its power all depend on policymakers’ ability to envision **long-term futures**, anticipate **short-term developments**, and use both **projections** to inform everything from the budget to grand strategy. Giving the future short shrift only shortchanges the United States.

**Nuanced debates about the merits of hegemony are uniquely valuable — creates effective advocates to counter public apathy.**

**Brands 18** — (Hal Brands, PhD, Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; “AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY IN THE AGE OF TRUMP”; Brookings Institution Press; D.A. July 5th 2020, [Published 2018]; <https://www.brookings.edu/book/american-grand-strategy-in-the-age-of-trump/>)

Fifth and finally, sustaining America’s post–Cold War strategy entails **persuading** the American **public to recommit** to that strategy and the investments it requires. The state of American opinion on that subject is currently ambiguous. Polling data indicates that **public support** for most key aspects of American internationalism **has recovered** somewhat from where it was in 2012–13, and is again at or near postwar averages.[32](javascript:void(0)) But the **2016 election** cycle and its eventual outcome **revealed** strong **support** for candidates who advocated **rolling back** key elements of post–Cold War (and post–World War II) **grand strategy**, from **free trade** to U.S. **alliances**. This atmosphere reflects **discontent** with the **failures** and **frustrations** of U.S. **grand strategy** in the post–Cold War era, no doubt, yet it also reflects the fact that **American strategy** seems **at risk of becoming a victim of its** own **success**.[33](javascript:void(0)) By helping to foster a comparatively stable and congenial environment, American policies have made it more difficult for Americans to **remember why** significant **investments** in the global order **are needed** in the first place.

Today, this ambivalence is becoming increasingly problematic, for the simple reason that properly resourcing American **strategy** **requires** **making** politically **difficult trade-offs** with respect to **entitlements** **and** other **ballooning** domestic **costs**. It is also becoming problematic, of course, because even if the American public seems to support particular aspects of American grand strategy, the **public has shown** itself **willing to elect a president** who appears to **care little** for the successful postwar and post–Cold War tradition, even if he has, so far, maintained more aspects of that tradition as president than his campaign rhetoric might have led one to expect. In the future—and indeed, looking beyond Trump’s presidency—**sustaining** American **grand strategy** will thus **require** more **intensive political efforts**.

American leaders will need to more effectively make the case for **controversial** but broadly **beneficial policies** such as free trade, while also addressing the inevitable socioeconomic dislocations such policies cause.[34](javascript:void(0)) They will need to more fully **articulate** the **underlying logic and value** of **alliances** and other **commitments** whose costs are often more visible—not to say greater—than their benefits. They will need to remind Americans that their country’s **leadership** has not been a matter of charity; it has helped **produce** an **international order** that is **exceptional** in its **stability, liberalism, and benefits** for the United States. Not least, they will need to make the case that the costs that the country has borne in support of that order are designed to avoid the necessity of bearing vastly higher costs if the international scene returned to a more tumultuous state. After all, the **success of** American **statecraft** is often reflected in the **bad things that don’t happen** as well as in the **good things that do**. Making this point is essential to reconsolidating domestic support now and in the future—and to **preserving a grand strategy** that has delivered pretty good results for a quarter century.

**Researching and debating IR is good.**

**Ettinger, 20**—Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Carleton University (Aaron, “Scattered and Unsystematic: The Taught Discipline in the Intellectual Life of International Relations,” International Studies Perspectives (2020) 0, 1–24, dml)

The first benefit is generating a **well-trained pipeline** of future IR scholars and practitioners. Today’s students are the **scholars** and **practitioners of tomorrow**, and sparking **curiosity** in students, especially **undergraduates**, has the potential to **rejuvenate the field** from within. As Hagmann and Biersteker (2014, 292–293) argue, IR scholars should “take a **more direct interest** in how world politics is explained to students in everyday schooling practices.” This is eminently sensible. International relations’ preoccupation with “the cult of research intensivity” (Nossal 2006, 737), and to a lesser extent political practice, **misleads** the professoriate into believing that the very people who sustain universities as institutions and who are the future of the discipline—student subscribers—can be **ignored**. It has also led the IR professoriate to **undervalue** the contribution that the taught discipline makes to disciplinary renewal through the **training** of international relations’ next generation.

For future practitioners, whether in **government** or **elsewhere**, an IR education provides the **conceptual architecture** needed to **make decisions** about policy and its place in the world. In his memoirs, Henry Kissinger emphasizes this point: “The convictions that leaders have formed before reaching high office are the intellectual capital they will consume as long as they continue in office. There is little time for leaders to reflect” (as quoted in Desch 2019, 153). While Kissinger is talking about the highest level of elected office, it is equally true that policymakers throughout government come in equipped with the **intellectual capital** and **technical skills** learned in the classroom (Biswas and Paczynska 2015). For future scholars, early lessons have **downstream effects** on the very content of IR knowledge. After all, the **classroom** is where IR theory gets reproduced “**for the first time**” to future generations of IR scholars. As Newsom (1995, 64–65) put it, “[t]eachers **plant the seeds** that shape the thinking of each new generation; this is probably the academic world’s **most lasting contribution**.” It is also a place where the durability and centrality of the field’s major theories are reinforced as a matter of course and **not necessarily for the better** (Vitalis 2015, 6). Early undergraduates **carry** the assumptions they are taught **throughout** their undergraduate and graduate careers, and **beyond**. A discipline that **cannot connect** with students or is inward-looking and esoteric risks **putting off** its next generation. Thus, the classroom needs to be treated with **greater regard** as a site of **knowledge production** and **dissemination** in the intellectual life of the field. In this sense, curiosity can be provoked among students that may continue **beyond** an undergraduate career. Take, for example, the observation of one student on her intellectual awakening in the classroom:

Despite a Eurocentric and male-dominated ethos, what ultimately convinced me to stay in IR was my exposure and inability to detach from what was first described to me as the politics of the “postcolonial.” A lecturer holding up a roughened paperback copy of Edward Said’s 1979 acclaimed work Orientalism originally introduced me to postcolonialism…Hearing Said’s words being reiterated back to me in my predominately white and conservative-leaning lecture theater was a defining moment in my education. Orientalism provided an experience that I could finally connect with: one where political power was not about who had the most weaponry or democracy, but instead about who held political control over the reality of the racialized person (Abu-Bakare 2017).

The moment captured in this tableau is the intellectual awakening that is possible when pedagogy is carefully considered. From the student perspective, well-taught courses **prepare** them better for the next stage in their education, starting with **superior foundational training** at the early undergraduate levels and progressing to **improved research capabilities** and **substantive knowledge** at the higher undergraduate levels, and then to advanced skills training in graduate school. Well-trained cohorts coming up the ranks will be **highly proficient** in a **wider range** of IR topics, theories, ideas, and methods and will be **well prepared** to make the jump to fluency. Similarly, future practitioners will be equipped with **superior substantive** and **technical training**. This is especially true with “experiential learning.” Done in purposeful ways, learning through experiences outside the classroom generates employable skills for students.

Social and Institutional Context of Teaching and Disciplinary Reproduction

Directly related to the question of the future of international relations is the social context of teaching and the discipline’s reproduction in the classroom. IR scholars must recognize that the IR classroom is the site of **ideational preferences**, clashes of **favored** or **disfavored paradigms**, of **personal authority**, generational difference, **social privileges**, and **prejudices**. At **every point** in professional international relations, there are implications for how knowledge is **produced**, **taught**, and **passed on** (Ettinger 2016; Colgan 2017; Fattore 2018; Knight 2019). Indeed, the intellectual output of IR scholars does not exist independent of the **lived context** in which it is produced. Gaining insight into the social context of international relations’ taught discipline can help begin to correct the pathologies that are affecting the way the next generation of IR scholars are being taught right now and how future scholars and practitioners will be taught next year and beyond.

It begins by addressing the social identity of the instructor and how it contributes to the reproduction of IR knowledge. After all, the instructor does not speak from a position of nowhere and an account of IR pedagogy should address the personal features of the instructor, her place within the discipline’s division of labor, and its effect on the delivery of course content (Biswas and Deylami 2017). For international relations especially, it is the site of entrenched male and Euro-Atlantic dominance with cascading implications within the classroom and beyond. The 2014 TRIP survey shows that the global IR professorate is two-thirds male (Maliniak et al. 2014). In the United States and British IR “core” and in the Anglo “noncore” (Cox and Nossal 2009), the professoriate is overwhelmingly white and male. Australia is 72.11 percent male and 76.87 percent white. Canada is 70.83 percent male and 83.4 percent white. The United Kingdom is 64.83 percent male and 85.23 percent white, while the United States is 68.33 percent male and 85.21 percent white non-Hispanic. New Zealand, a slight outlier, is 81.82 percent male but only 34.78 percent identifying as NZ European (Maliniak et al. 2014). Given what has been shown about the American dominance of the discipline, the insularity of national IR communities, and the gender gap in citations, it is reasonable to conclude that the bulk of the most influential IR scholarship is produced and disseminated by white men in the West (Maliniak et al. 2018; Maliniak et al 2013).

Understanding this relationship can improve IR pedagogy by recognizing how diverse student populations interact with an overwhelmingly white Euro-Atlantic intellectual tradition and by remedying some of the attending limitations such as geohistorical narrowness, state-centrism, epistemological positivism, and phallocentric authorship (Fonseca 2019). In this regard, the taught discipline of international relations should be intellectually responsive to a diversifying discipline and to a diversifying student population. Such circumstances call for a broader approach to teaching courses in a field whose heavy Euro-American centrality can alienate students when their backgrounds are not reflected in the course material. This is not simply a matter of curriculum design that tries to mirror or “look like” the students (Appiah 2019, SR7). Rather, it is one that balances disciplinary foundations with broadened ontological scope of what “matters” in IR in order to generate betterinformed teaching. It is widely recognized that international relations is a very traditional field of scholarship, but this should not preclude perspectives beyond the canon or case studies from outside the empirical mainstream. More ambitious and, especially, diverse content helps adapt teaching to changing student audiences. This is especially true at the undergraduate level. What is important to avoid is the “pipeline problem” that has discouraged women and minorities from progressing through the scholarly ranks in STEM fields (Brown et al. 2016; Branch 2016). By the same token, bringing more and more diverse young students into the discipline of international relations and encouraging their growth can bear intellectual fruit down the line. At very least, we avoid artificially restricting the development of the next generation of scholars.

By **no means** is this a call to **jettison** the classics. To the contrary, the field’s canon is **irreplaceable** as a foundation, as the **intellectual inheritance** of the present, as the **prevailing ideas** of foreign policymakers, and as **points of disagreement** for critical traditions. However, the scope of IR pedagogy can be **expanded** to make it relevant for a twenty-first century classroom. Primarily, this means expanding the theoretical and empirical scope of international relations **beyond** its traditional **Eurocentric** and **male-dominated** parameters (Acharya 2016). This is discussed below. Granted, there will be no singular population to which an IR curriculum will be pitched. Variation in student population profiles based on race, gender, class, geography, and other identity markers complicate the decisions that an instructor has to make. The point is that there are intellectual gains to be had when the taught discipline takes seriously the social context of international relations’ disciplinary reproduction. With a more diverse pedagogy in place, it is possible that, with more eyes on the subject matter and more minds from different backgrounds at work, the IR classroom can generate greater interest in **fundamental theoretical questions** for the next generation of scholars to solve.

Institutional context of teaching matters too. The vast majority of IR practice takes place in university institutions. Therefore, the material institutional setting must enter in as a condition of international relations’ intellectual life. Consider first, the matter of basic institutional survival. In an era where public universities around the world face funding problems, there are immediate economic imperatives for taking the taught discipline of international relations seriously. In the short term, survival in unforgiving economic times requires student enrollment and retention (Conley 2019). Systematic accounts of US undergraduate enrollment since the Great Recession of 2008 show majors in the “traditional disciplines” declining by 21 percent (philosophy) to 30 percent (history). Political science and international relations fare less badly, declining “only” by 11 percent and 15 percent over ten years (Schmidt 2018). Put differently, the classroom is on the front line in the battle for resources. Student recruitment and retention are essential to the economic viability of academic departments including political science and international relations. Turning students off the subject matter through an unreflexive pedagogy, boring classes, or mediocre lecturers has real economic implications for the future. Without students prepared to part with tuition dollars, or governments prepared to unlock activity-based funding, no department can thrive, even with a roster of productive researchers. Concretely, this means no new hiring and reduced budgets— a recipe for contraction. In this context, the systematic neglect of the classroom by IR stocktakers is entirely inexplicable given the parlous financial state of most public universities. Trends in expanded enrollment compound or create new problems. Universities that pack classrooms with hundreds, if not thousands, of more students—many of whom are international and pay exorbitant tuition fees—put revenue generation above pedagogy (Schulmann 2019).

The disciplinary division of university labor must be factored into an understanding of the context of IR teaching and its implications for the intellectual life of international relations. In this sense, debate about the taught discipline must grapple with question of resources, division of university labor, teaching assignments, pressures of the tenure track, the precarity of contract faculty, and other aspects of university governance as conditions that influence the classroom. One of the most striking trends in university governance is the increasing role of contingent instructors. In the United States, some 73 percent of instructional positions were nontenure track in 2016 (AAUP 2018). This is consistent with longer-term trends. The percentage of postsecondary instructional positions filled by contingent faculty increased from 57.6 percent in 1995 to 71.6 percent in 2011. In that time, the number of full-time tenure-track positions increased by 10 percent while the number of full- or part-time contingent positions doubled (GAO 2017, 8–9). This is not to say that contingent faculty are worse teachers, but the contingent nature of the work creates impediments to teaching. Fewer institutional resources, the constant need to reapply for jobs, and the need for part-time work outside the university are all matters that detract from time dedicated to students, improving pedagogy, or learning new content. Downstream, the design of an IR class or the delivery of an IR curriculum may not be nearly as effective as it could be.

Intellectual Reflection and Renewal from the Inside Out

Taking teaching seriously as part of the intellectual life of international relations can lead to intellectual renewal and self-reflection for individual professors and for the discipline as a whole. At the individual level, teaching has the ability to catalyze an **intellectual renewal** in the mind of the individual professor. The intellectual challenges of the classroom can provoke **new avenues of research** for the instructor. The classroom is a **much more permissive intellectual environment** than academic publishing. It affords the professor a degree of freedom to **explore topics**, **ideas**, and **arguments**, outside of their research expertise. Making use of the opportunity to teach beyond one’s comfort zone permits **thinking out loud**, **working through ideas**, and **entanglement in analytical puzzles**. Doing so is demanding, and it is much easier to fall back on existing teaching content. But an ambitious teaching agenda can lead to **new research questions**, **new** and **unexpected intellectual horizons**, and **better background context** for existing expertise. Indeed, there is truth to the aphorism that there is no better way to learn than to teach.

This kind of renewal turns on the “**eureka**” moment when research ideas **flows directly** from classroom activities. A more systematic approach to renewal that is less reliant on serendipity begins by asking discipline-wide questions. The first is this: what is the purpose of teaching international relations? It is a variation on a core concern to the discipline and one that remains unresolved (Dyvik, Wilkinson, and Selby 2017)? Is it for disciplinary self-reproduction, to train future practitioners, or more broadly, citizens and knowledge workers in the twenty-first century economy (Darling and Foster 2012; Szarejko and Carnes 2018; Zartner et al. 2018)? Arriving at an official “purpose” for international relations is probably **pointless**, and it is best left to the decentralized community of scholars to decide. IR scholars have debated this question widely within the published discipline but far less so in the taught discipline. This is a shame because the answers matter for the nature of the design of individual courses and entire degree programs.

Just like the published discipline, the taught discipline is radically decentralized in universities around the world, subnational variations, department-level programs, and individual scholar’s preferences. Thus, it is incumbent on individual professors to give an answer in their own teaching programs. At the individual level, answering the question about the purpose of teaching international relations should outfit students with an answer to what they are about to encounter and why this topic, course, or degree program is worth pursuing. Students, especially early undergraduate students, need to know why they are about to be presented with the complicated theory and obscure events that are core (or peripheral) to the IR discipline. Answers are generously supplied in the introduction chapters to IR textbooks but the suite of options betrays a lack of focus that is symptomatic of the wider field (Albert 2010). However, this permissive intellectual environment is beneficial for **wide-ranging intellectual pursuits**, **teaching styles**, and **pedagogical agendas**. It **may**, though, come at the cost. The institutional underpinnings of the discipline—faculty administrators, editorial boards, funding agencies, hiring committees, and so on— may end up doing as much to shape the boundaries of the discipline as the substantive output (Albert and Buzan 2017, 908). The alternative, though, is subjecting intellectual and academic freedom to an **institutionalized orthodoxy**. In teaching, decentralization may be intellectually permissive but may come at the expense of disciplinary coherence.

This concern, though, may be **overstated**. TRIP **data** on curriculum design gives an indication of the **competing** and sometimes **overlapping pedagogical priorities** among the IR professoriate. In a question on introduction to IR classes, respondents were asked whether their introductory courses are designed more to introduce IR scholarship within the discipline or to prepare students to be informed about foreign policy and international issues. The result favors a mix of both with 80.83 percent incorporating scholarship and issues in some balance. The remaining 19.17 percent come down in favor of one to the exclusion of the other. At the master’s level, the ratio is a bit narrower (73 to 27 percent) but still overwhelmingly embraces a mixture of academic scholarship and international issues (Maliniak et al. 2014). Respondents are a bit more divided on what undergraduate courses should be mandatory in an IR program. They overwhelmingly agree (73.25 percent) that IR theory should be a required subject. However, they differ on other options. The next most popular candidates for a required course are international/global political economy (45.37 percent), international security (38.87 percent), and research methods (35.22 percent), followed by international organizations (27.59 percent), comparative foreign policy (22.86 percent), home country foreign policy (19.95 percent), international law (19.85 percent), diplomatic history (19.11 percent), and international economics (15.17 percent) (Maliniak et al. 2014). The point is that resolving what IR teaching is supposed to accomplish is **hardly settled**, but there is some convergence on certain issues.

So, what then, is the purpose of teaching international relations? Ultimately, it is up to the individual instructor to answer and to enact a program accordingly. But it is up to the community of scholars to **debate**. It may well be that the enormous variation in the purpose of teaching international relations and the radical decentralization is an inescapable feature of the taught discipline. Though IR teaching may be **wildly divergent** around the world, there is **always some purpose** to it, and, however defined, this is an **intrinsic feature** of an international relations education. Here, Cox’s (1981, 128) famous admonition that “theory is **always for someone** and **for some purpose**” serves as the anchor concept for such pedagogical framing. It frames IR theories as **political things** and **not just abstractions** to be memorized or an **analytical template** to be applied uncritically. Similarly, it helps to **frame thematic** and **empirical cases** in the classroom so that course material is not merely a reflection the professor’s unexamined preference. In the classroom, it is up to the professor to articulate. Beyond the classroom in administrative meetings, academic conferences, and in print, it is up to the field to debate.

The next question asks what is the proper scope of IR teaching? This question has also been asked before of the field but not directly about the IR classroom (Albert and Buzan 2017, 898). The answer to this question connects different themes of this article: intellectual rejuvenation and disciplinary renewal, diversity, and the future of international relations as an intellectual project. In substance and in design, the scope of IR teaching should **embrace pluralism** in paradigm, empirical remit, and criticism. A great deal has been made of pluralism in international relations (Levine and McCourt 2018; Eun 2016), but pluralism in the taught discipline is far different from pluralism in the published discipline, where differences accrue over the merits of accumulation and diversity. Here, the scope of possibility in the classroom is **far more intellectually permissive**. Teaching international relations can be **theoretically** and **empirically promiscuous**. It can respect the canon, its inner logic, and its external life, as well as contemporary alternatives (Ferguson 2015). This is an “integrative pluralism” (Dunne, Hansen, and Wight 2013, 416) that embraces diversity as a means of “providing **more comprehensive** and **multidimensional accounts** of complex phenomena” and a pedagogical engagement with the world that includes, but **hardly limited** to the Euro-Atlantic theater, that has dominated generations of IR thinking (Dunne, Hansen, and Wight 2013, 416).

Pedagogical pluralism in international relations flows from intuitions about balancing theory and empirics, the canon and its alternatives, being current while eschewing presentism, being “useful” without being instrumentalist, and drawing on instructor expertise without being constrained by the hyperspecialized knowledge attendant to the published discipline. Of course, this is easy to say. But operationalizing these intuitions into a pluralistic teaching program is much more difficult. Complicating the matter is the relative absence of explicit theoretical guidance for making IR pluralism work in the classroom. The insights of proponents of a “Global IR” can help, including some critiqued above for their neglect of the classroom. In particular, Acharya and Buzan’s (2019, 300–308) program for developing a Global IR provides concrete steps toward curriculum design as much as is does for research.

Regarding the IR theoretical parts of their program, Acharya and Buzan (2019, 301) say that Global IR respects existing theories while “giving due recognition to the places, roles, and contributions of non-Western peoples and societies,” which entails “pluralization within theories, rather than just between them.” There are issues here. First, pluralization between theories requires **expanding the remit** of IR theory beyond the grand IR paradigms to include **non-Western contributions** to international thought (Acharya and Buzan 2010; Acharya 2011). But this is not easy. Tickner and Wæver (2009) make it clear that Anglo-American IR looms impossibly large around the world. Without jettisoning this intellectual inheritance, Thinking International Relations Differently (Tickner and Blaney 2012) provides a route to pluralism. That volume **interrogates alternative meanings** to some of international relations’ central concepts—security, state, sovereignty and authority, globalization, secularism, religion, and the international. A professor committed to this kind of pluralism can **expand the conceptual vocabulary** of international relations in a way that **encourages** undergraduate **conversancy** in multiple IR vernaculars **within** and **beyond** the Anglo-American core.

There is also the matter of what do with the **existing**, **Western-centric canon**. Acharya and Buzan (2019, 301) also say that a global international relations would **subsume** rather than **supplant** existing IR theories and methods. The purpose here is **not to displace** Western-dominated IR knowledge but to **situate** it within the global context. This is an entirely attainable objective for an IR theory instructor. IR teachers should have full command of some IR theories while being conversant in nearly all anyway. Integrating a fuller slate of intellectual content into teaching IR theory permits a **cognitive pluralism** that is rarely available in the published discipline. The point here is that teaching narrowly and to the expertise of professors may suit their interests, but it puts blinders on the students. Upper-year and graduate studies can explore specific pathways, but only after international relations’ map has been presented. This likely means instructors must venture out of their preferred intellectual comfort zones and teach to their weaknesses as well as their strengths. Doing so, however, requires breaking through disciplinary walls and should not be underestimated. It requires breadth of knowledge, disciplinary literacy beyond the scholar’s training, and language skills (usually beyond English) that can take many years to develop, while the imperatives of the published discipline stress specialization.

Regarding the empirical subject matter, a pluralistic IR agenda would ground its empirics in world history rather than just Western history (Acharya and Buzan 2019, 301) This is demanding on an instructor whose subject-matter expertise will be narrow (by dint of academic training) and whose time will be short given other professional and personal commitments. Without considerable effort, this is more of an ideal than a reality. But a good start would be to follow Acharya and Buzan’s (2019, 303) admonition to integrate the study of regions, regionalism, and area studies into the curriculum. In particular, this means offering case studies, examples, and illustrations drawn from parts of the world outside the Euro-Atlantic zone. To this we can add Buzan and Lawson’s (2015) case for expanding the temporal remit of international relations to the nineteenth century. This would break free of the apocryphal founding myths (Carvalho, Leira, and Hobson 2011) and temporal myopia of the orthodox discipline (Buzan and Lawson 2014) in order to draw upon a richer and more global context for the emergence of the modern world. A worldly curriculum will likely begin rather thin, but over time become much deeper and more inclusive. Perhaps more attainable in the short-term is a pluralistic pedagogy that recognizes **multiple forms of agency** beyond the state and material power. Such an approach would entail a pedagogy addressing a diverse constellation of actors in world politics that offers a faithful representation of an overwhelmingly complex environment **without reducing it** exclusively to a handful of Western powers.

**IR Scenario analysis unlocks an intellectual openness to overcome cognitive biases**

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Added-**value of scenario analysis for IR scholarship**

As Tomé and Açıkalın (2019) point out, in order to **fill the gap** between **IR theory** and **real-world problems**, “an increasing number of scholars have come to embrace a spirit of **intellectual openness**, recognizing both the need for **greater flexibility** in the **theoretical formulations** and the **possibility of complementarity** by **other theories** and approaches” (p. 12). This section discusses the added value of scenario analysis as a **complementary approach** to **traditional IR methods**. The most obvious advantage of **scenario analysis as a methodology**, grounded in the reservoir of foresight studies, lies by definition in its ability to **tackle future events**. As mentioned before, there are no specified instruments within traditional IR methods which would allow scholars to go beyond past and present. The only exception is forecasting, one of the formal methods in IR, which is, however, distinctly different from foresight.

The underlying logic of forecasting is to provide predictions about the future by drawing on mathematical models and big data-sets based on known patterns. Thus, it is not particularly suitable to accommodate discontinuities. Foresight, as described above, aims at going beyond existing patterns by developing alternative futures based on an innovative combination of multiple driving forces. Its goal is to capture a set of possible futures and learn from them by examining the causal relations between driving forces and their different evolutions. By applying scenario approaches, scholars can thus account for evolving dynamics and discuss such timely issues as the consequences of Brexit for both British and EU-security, economics and politics (Brakman, Garretsen, & Kohl, 2018; Martill & Sus, 2018; Musolff, 2017; Verschueren, 2017; Ziv et al., 2018). Yet, scenario analysis offers more than the possibility to talk about the future. We see a fourfold merit of adding scenario analysis to the range of methods applied by IR scholars.

Confronting enduring assumptions

As we presented in the previous section, the main feature of explorative scenarios, which are the subject of this paper, is to **stimulate creative thinking** by **challenging** the **deeply held assumptions of their authors**. In other words, this method is helpful for **overcoming** enduring **cognitive biases**—mental errors such as **linearity**, **presentism**, and **group think** caused by the **subconscious** and **simplified information processing of humans** (Heuer, 1999, pp. 111– 112). Humans have the tendencies to focus on the present at the expense of the future and to think about the future in linear terms by extrapolating past trends into the future. As Gaddis (1992) points out, “we tend to bias our historical and our theoretical analyses too much toward continuity (…) we rarely find a way to introduce **discontinuities into theory**, or to attempt to determine what causes them to happen” (p. 52). Even if Gaddis does not explicitly mention scenarios, he refers to the concepts underlying scenario approaches (Han, 2011, p. 51). Scenario analysis attends to “**deeper**, otherwise left **implicit**, **assumptions** about **continuous** and **linear patterns of development**” (Wilkinson et al., 2013, p. 707). The **process of scenario development** invites the participants to **reveal** and **question convictions** which have **so far remained unchallenged**, and to **question the linearity of world developments**.

The ability of **reexamining one’s own assumptions** and going **beyond linear patterns** of development is **essential** for **IR scholarship**. To illustrate it with two examples: IR scholars and historians did not think that the Soviet Union could collapse and were startled by its fall, the peaceful resolution of the Cold War and the transformation of the bipolar system (Davis, 2005; Gaddis, 1992). In a similar vein, United States scholars were for decades so convinced of China’s economic, political, and cultural limitations that they neglected the possibility of its sudden ascent and were taken by surprise when it happened (Hundley, Kenzer, & Peterson, 2015). Interestingly, since the rise of China became evident, the United States debate on its future has been marked by a similar linearity of thought, leading to single-outcome predictions of China’s long-term future (Kerbel, 2004). In both cases, the discipline proved incapable of anticipating events of such importance, because scholars took for granted the status quo instead of confronting their bias towards linearity and detect manifestations of upcoming change. As a result, two major geopolitical surprises—the end of the Cold War and the rise of China have at first been neglected, forcing academia to catch up.

Against this backdrop, foresight helps IR scholars to **exit** the **tunnel vision** on world affairs and discover potentially valuable nonlinear lines of development. These can be both **innovative** in terms of **scholarship**, and **policy-relevant** by offering a **reflection** on **unexpected discontinuities**. Thus, it can facilitate the **intellectual capability** to **think the unthinkable** (Porter, 2016, p. 259).

Bringing forward new research questions

Scenario analysis starts with **confronting one’s enduring assumptions** and **developing multiple causal possibilities**, through which scholars can potentially discover topics that have not been examined before. One of the greatest challenges for any scholar is to identify innovative venues for research that might bring the discipline forward and advance publicity for one’s work. In Lakatosian terms, such an ability is often considered an evidence of a progressive research program.10 Since the prime feature of scenario analysis is to **detect rapid and significant shifts** in **trajectories**, or the **forces behind them**, this method succors when defining new pressing topics for academia. In particular, as mentioned in the previous section, scenario analysis enables the detection of both weak signals and wild cards. By drawing attention to these hitherto overlooked but potentially pressing issues, scenario analysis can identify research agendas for **further investigation** (Barma et al., 2016). Therefore, scenario analysis seems to be the right tool to **advance innovative research** since it helps scholars **drive their research into new areas**, away from moribund topics that have been followed for many decades. By “identifying questions of likely future significance” (Barma et al., 2016, p. 6), scenario analysis can contribute to combatting the proliferation of researchers in fields occupying the political status quo, such as Soviet or Japan studies in the United States in the 1980s. At the same time, innovative research topics **confront the uncertainties** that are **crucial for policymakers** to be monitored closely.

Dealing with the complexity and interdisciplinarity of real-world issues

Another added value of the scenario analysis for IR scholarship lies in its ability to provide **comprehensive causal reasoning** and thus to **tackle complex issues**. As mentioned in the introduction, the **world’s complexity** combined with **abrupt shifts** poses a challenge for IR scholarship. The possibility to **accommodate multiple driving forces**, to **take into account different values** they might take and finally to **combine them with each other** and **see how they affect the dependent variable**, makes the scenario approach quite unique. Traditional IR methods work with a limited number of independent variables, formulate and test hypotheses usually based on the relation between a single causal variable and the dependent variable. Investigating complex causal trajectories is therefore not possible. Against this background, we agree with Barma et al. (2016) and his colleagues who argue that **scenarios are highly apt** for **dealing with complexity** and **uncertainty** and providing academia with a tool for “**actionable clarity** in **understanding contemporary global issues**” (p. 1).

Moreover, the scenario approach helps to tackle the challenges of interdisciplinarity that is tied to complexity. By drawing on the active participation of people from different disciplines, backgrounds, and with different expertise in the scenario development process, it brings interdisciplinarity to the table by default. The key advantage of the approach is that this interdisciplinary conversation takes place prior to and during the research phase, rather than after it. This distinguishes the scenario approach from other methods that bring interdisciplinary perspectives together but do not facilitate a discussion between them, rather letting them passively co-exist. By exploring the dynamics between seemingly unrelated vectors of change (key drivers), scenario analysis can be useful for shedding light on developments that would have been overlooked by narrower research designs. In **security studies**, for example, scenario analysis can **connect the dots** between hard, soft, traditional and non-traditional understandings of security and capture the **interplay of economic-societalenvironmental** and **technological changes**. Imposing interdisciplinarity also helps to **counter** the “**hyper-fragmentation of knowledge**” that “makes it difficult for even scholars in different disciplines to understand each other, much less policy-makers and general public” (Desch, 2015, p. 381).

Complex real-world issues that were tackled using scenario analysis include the Israel-Palestine conflict (Stein et al., 1998), Turkey’s geopolitical environment (Çelik & Blum, 2007), the prospects of the United States– China conflict (Friedberg, 2005) and the consequences of Brexit for EU foreign and security policy (Martill & Sus, 2018). An examination of these topics without the application of interdisciplinary approaches would not be possible precisely due to their multifaceted character.

Stepping out of the ivory tower

Finally, scenario analysis also enables **IR scholars** to **establish** a **channel of communication with policy-makers** other than conducting interviews for their own research or providing ad-hoc consultations. A participatory scenario process forges “**deep and shared understanding** between its participants” (Ramírez & Wilkinson, 2016, p. 21). In scenario workshops, academics and policy-makers work together, confront their world visions and assumptions and arrive at an agreement upon which they develop narratives for alternative futures. Hence, scenario analysis can be perceived as a tool towards **more exchange between academia and policy-making** that can contribute to a **better understanding between the two** worlds. For policymakers, it provides the opportunity to consider **long-term trends** (an occasion not often found in the day-to-day nature of politics). For academics, it provides insight into which trends are most concerning for policy-makers, allowing them to check and ultimately enhance the **relevance of their research agendas**.

We acknowledge the difficulty to engage policy-makers in foresight exercises caused by their time-constrains and possible lack of interest. Yet, in our experience, this problem mostly refers to high-level policy-makers. Mid-level and former officials and policy-makers have more time and willingness to participate in foresight exercises and contribute equally valuable perspectives. The participatory character of foresight exercises facilitates the exchange of views from different stakeholders on an equal level. In our case, as the evaluation has shown, it has proven to be stimulating for each of the engaged groups.

Moreover, the **policy dialogue** benefits from **scenarios’ accessibility** to a **broader audience**. Scenario publications tend to be shorter and easier to read than the average academic publication and as Nye (2008) rightly notes “a premium on time is a major difference between the two cultures” of academia and policy-making. Since scenario publications are **more suitable** to the **time- and attention-constraints** of many policy-makers, they improve the accessibility of research findings for the policy world (Cairney & Kwiatkowski, 2017). An illustrative example is offered by a foresight exercise conducted by the Aspen Institute Berlin in 2017. A group of academics, think tank experts and policy-makers developed scenarios on the future of the liberal world order that served as raw material for a newspaper from the future titled “The Aspen Insight” and dated October 21, 2025. Not only did the presentation of the newspaper catch the attention of many Berlin-based policy-makers but the “The Aspen Insight” was also attached as a supplement to the Berlin daily Tagesspiegel, and reached more than 300,000 readers.11

We acknowledge that the four aspects of the added value of scenario analysis for IR scholarship are interrelated and that their boundaries are not clear-cut. Yet, we believe, they highlight distinct benefits of this approach for academics that want to **tackle the challenges of today’s world via their research**.

**Perm**

**The perm uses NATO as a force for good. Rejecting NATO enslaves the world under Russia and China’s gangster mafia totalitarianism.**

**Riggio 20** [Adam Riggio; professor of Communications and Globalization at ILAC & Georgian College; 5-7-2020; "Adam Riggio: Why we must fight for a socialist NATO — The Canada Files"; Canada Files; https://www.thecanadafiles.com/articles/so; KL]

Admitting NATO’S crimes and anti-democratic effects is, however, **only the first step** to understand the actual bind in which we progressives are stuck. Too many among progressives and radical socialists are trapped in this stunted way of thinking because of how we understand neoliberal capitalism as a uniquely American project.

Movements for social progress around the world **grow precarious** in the shadow of the **geopolitical games** of our **great state powers** jockeying for **military** and **economic** influence and domination. The socialist left has long been well aware of the brutality and rapaciousness of capitalism.

Decades of research and journalism have demonstrated the central role of American military and economic policy in pressing capitalist development around the world. The intellectual tradition of studying how capitalism began with Karl Marx himself and continues through generations across a variety of disciplines. Many well-educated progressives have studied these traditions, whether in the formal settings of universities to our own learning. But much of this tradition focuses on the American role in promoting global capitalism.

We progressives today must face a terrifying truth: the American state is **not alone** in enforcing the brutal innovations in capitalism that have developed over the last generation.

Monstrosities of Mafia Fascism and Absolutism

Russia was once an ally of socialist liberation movements around the world, though their own revolution under Josef Stalin had collapsed into state-controlled capitalism and government by secret police.

Now, Vladimir Putin has restored **totalitarian principles** of government to Russia, as their domestic policy is the **economic** and **political devastation** of the **Russian people**. In other words, Putin facilitated the **wholesale theft** of **hundreds of billions** of dollars in wealth from the Russian state and its industries to a **clique** of former **bureaucratic** and **secret police apparatchiks**, of which is he leader. Those oligarchs are also leaders and financiers in Russia’s **international mafia**. Putin has explicitly built his new Russian totalitarianism with significant influence from the fascist political philosophy of Ivan Ilyin.

Russia is emerging again as a major power in our century’s geopolitics, but the collapse and corruption of much of the American government under Trump, as well as their homicidal approach to COVID, has made China the most powerful military and economic state in the world.

For decades, the Chinese state has governed its people with **brutal police enforcement** of **regime loyalty**, even deploying **concentration camps** and **ethnic cleansing** to its conquered territories of **East Turkestan** and **Tibet**. More recently, Xi Jinping’s regime has been **especially devoted** to institutionalizing his **absolute rule** over China, and the country’s highest political leaders are themselves embedded in **corrupt relationships** with their most powerful **billionaire businessmen**.

One need **only count** the **many murdered journalists** in Russia who have investigated the details of Putin’s **gangster regime** to know that this geopolitical enemy of America is **no friend** of the progressive. The same goes for dissidents and whistleblowers who have **defied Xi’s official truth**: they **rot in prison** like Liu Xiaobo or **disappear from humanity** like Li Wenliang.

Three Militaries Against Democracy, Not Just One

Despite the destruction that the NATO military alliance has caused in Europe and Asia, we progressives face an **uncomfortable truth**: we need a **military powerful enough** to stand against the many threats that **Russia** and **China** pose to democracy around the world. As well, we **must never** let our opposition to the threat that America poses to global democracy make us **patsies** for Russian or Chinese control.

The **most potent** threat to our own democracies is the **destabilization** of our **democratic societies**. A foundation of modern Russia’s foreign policy is to **aflame social conflicts** inside of **democratic polities**, and use weapons of **cyber-warfare**, such as viruses and disinformation.

China has taken a more traditional route to global dominance. Chinese investments in **massive resource extraction** projects across **Africa** follow the model of the old British East India Company. Take almost **all profit** from mines and oil wells, while trapping their African partner states in **unsustainable debt** from project financing.

How do we progressive and other ordinary people escape this triple squeeze between three militarized, aggressive superpower states run by mafiosi and billionaire power brokers? Anti-capitalist, socialist, and democratic organization and agitation across the world is really our only answer.

**We need NATO**, but only because socialist and democratic movements are closer to taking some measure of control away from the corrupt in Europe and the Americas, pessimistic though even these prospects often feel. A socialist Europe and North America would stand against Russia and China as the weapons of war move to the internet and public political movements themselves.

If the NATO states of Europe and North America could unite in an aggressive cyberwar to encourage **popular resistance** to the **brutal mafia totalitarianism** of Russia and China, then we will have a chance for global democracy, socialism, a green economy, and a sustainable civilization on Earth.

Until those revolutions happen, we remain in our triple bind. But **collapsing** our military entirely, while geopolitical enemies **expand** and **consolidate** theirs, is a recipe for our **enslavement**. We remain slaves under neoliberal capitalism, our opportunities **ground to dust**.

**Perm [Postcolonial IR]**

**Perm solves best – prioritizing postcolonial theories of IR above realist predictive models reproduces the binaristic logics they criticize.**

**Fitzgerald ’19** -- UK Anti-Corruption Programme’s Network Co-ordinator. She works to co-ordinate the advocacy and campaign efforts of key civil society organisations, including the UK Anti-Corruption Coalition. Prior to joining TI-UK, she worked in advocacy and fundraising for a global NGO and completed an MA in International Relations from King’s College London. (Susannah Fitzgerald, 6-26-2019, "Do Postcolonial Approaches Explain World Politics Better than Other IR Theories?," E-International Relations, https://www.e-ir.info/2019/06/26/do-postcolonial-approaches-explain-world-politics-better-than-other-ir-theories/, accessed 7-5-2022) -- nikki

Conclusion: the paucity of ‘better’ It seems appropriate to conclude by commenting on why it would be futile to attempt to provide a justification for why postcolonial approaches offer a “better” explanation of world politics in comparison to other IR theories. The analysis has shown that traditional IR theories, and even critical theories such as poststructuralism and Marxism, operate within the limitations of an epistemology that is inherently Eurocentric and attached to a vision of world politics that is excessively temporal, with ontological categories that reflect this point of view. Even when the European vision of modernity is criticised from within, this criticism is prone to falling back on these same categories in order to do so. Instead, a decolonial epistemology can create space for a universal that incorporates rather than excludes difference, while ontological concepts derived from this epistemology and the non-Western experience can elaborate a vision of world politics that is more holistic and nuanced. Yet to say that such an explanation is “better” seems to negate the very purpose of postcolonial approaches to IR; to draw attention to the hierarchies embedded in the international sphere through the past and ongoing practices and discourses of colonialism and imperialism. Describing these approaches as “better” merely engages in the same tendency towards hierarchy, binaries, and reductionism critiqued in other approaches. It is for this reason that this essay has argued strongly for the importance of postcolonial approaches to explaining world politics but refuses to reduce these attributes to a better or worse distinction. Suffice it to say that postcolonial approaches encourage an understanding of world politics that truly merits the name.

**Bridging the gap between postcolonial theorizations of IR and normative ones produces a comprehensive analytic of power -- that solves best.**

**Darby and Paolini ’94** -- Phillip Darby was educated at the Universities of Melbourne (MA, LLB) and Oxford – at St.Catherine’s and Nuffield Colleges (D.Phil). He taught at the University of Melbourne from 1969 to 2017, and is a principal fellow in the School of Social and Political Sciences. He has published on imperial history, postcolonialism, international relations and security studies, mostly drawing on material from South Asia and Black Africa. bourne; A. J. Paolini is assistant lecturer in Politics, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Au. (Phillip Darby and A.J. Paolini, 1994, “Bridging International Relations and Postcolonialism”, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political , Summer 1994, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 371-397, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40644813?seq=1>, accessed 7-5-2022) -- nikki

Bull notwithstanding, there have been attempts in international re- lations to address the cultural realm.32 Ali Mazrui confronts interna- tional relations head-on by claiming that "culture is at the heart of the nature of power in International Relations. "33 Mazrui sees ideol- ogy, political economy, and technology as deeply rooted in the cul- tural realm, and views the North-South divide as an increasingly cultural one. Cultural identity is held to be an issue of increased sig- nificance in the contemporary world - so much so that, according to Mazrui, we may be witnessing the "gradual unravelling of identities based on the state, a declining of identities based on political ideol- ogy - and the revival of identities based on culture."34 Peter Worsley's earlier account of world development makes similar claims.35 The in- ternationalization of culture - youth cults, religious revivalism, con- sumerism, feminism - are seen as "powerful evidence that a sense of common identity and a shared culture can give rise to social move- ments that quickly transcend the boundaries of any particular soci- ety."36 Both Mazrui and Worsley thus see culture as a key determinant of political and economic processes. Even the generally econocentric Immanuel Wallerstein has shifted ground to view culture as "the key ideological battleground" of the opposing interests within the mod- ern world capitalist system.37 These attempts to engage culture seemingly amount to a re- spectable interest on the part of international relations, and it is in- structive to consider the intellectual background of the three writers discussed. Wallerstein is a sociologist, and the essay cited above was published in a collection of sociological articles on nationalism, glob- alization, and modernity. Mazrui has always cut a distinctive path in international relations, and his concerns have had more to do with the problems of Third World justice and identity than with main- stream issues. Worsley, similarly, has been steeped in the problems of development and dependency in the Third World. We thus see that many of the perspectives that have enlivened the discipline have come from outside it and draw on different source material. Something similar may be said of R. B. J Walker. Certainly he ha ried a consideration of culture with the issues of order, power states, but his bearings have been taken from broad modernity.38 Without belaboring the point, such an analysis is very much the exception. Walker himself recognizes as much: 'This kind of literature . . . has emerged largely on the margins of International Relations as an institutionalized discipline. It remains obscure, even alien to those whose training has been primarily within the positivis- tic, realist, or policy-oriented mainstreams.'139 The contrast with postcolonialism could not be starker. Where in- ternational relations has ignored culture, or at most grudgingly con- ceded it a minor role, postcolonialism has elevated culture to an extraordinary degree. Although the understanding of culture has changed as the discourse has evolved, culture has been at the heart of postcolonialism from the outset. In the first phase of postcolonial- ism, culture was grounded in the literary context and understood very much in terms of the clash of values engendered by the colonial encounter. Following postcolonialism's move away from specific texts to a more generalized account of domination and resistance between North and South, culture has attained larger explanatory significa- tions. It has come to encapsulate the very site of struggle and differ- ence between the so-called margin and the center; the pivot upon which an emergent postcolonial identity develops. On one view, how- ever, culture has been overdone. In its attempt to be at the cutting edge of academic discourse, postcolonialism can be accused of hav- ing overstretched the analytical utility of culture. Yet such a perspec- tive underplays the significance of the cultural reorientation; it is precisely through culture that postcolonialism mounts a fundamental challenge to the epistemological bases of established regimes of thinking such as international relations. In this respect its effect has been overwhelmingly positive. To this point, the burden of our analysis has been to suggest that international relations and postcolonialism pass like ships in the night. We have highlighted possible intersections and potential sites of engagement, the idea being that both discourses might be en- riched through a process of cross-fertilization. Such enrichment would follow partly from the very fact of difference. We now want to direct attention to three key areas of difference in which engagement might have real significance, not only for each discourse but more generally for our broader concern with approaches to the North- South divide. The first relates to power and representation, the sec- ond to modernity, and the third to emotional commitment and radicalism. In the process of contestation and comparison, the hope is that we can get a better handle on understanding issues such as power and modernity as they bear upon the relationship between the North and South. Both discourses have distinct strengths and weak- nesses and bring different perspectives to bear on the issues at hand. In seeking a dialogue and making assessments about what we might learn from their diferences, we can begin to bridge the discourses to their mutual benefit.

**Perm [Pan]**

**The perm solves — representations aren’t static and including deconstructive self-reflection allows us to re-think our relationship with China.**

\*Also an alt card if you frame self-reflection as the alt.

**Pan 12**, Associate Professor of International Relations at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and a member of the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation at Deakin University. He held visiting positions at the University of Melbourne, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Peking University, Fudan University and the University of Macau, and was an Endeavour Research Fellow at the Australian Studies Centre, Peking University between October 2016 and February 2017. He is on the editorial board of Series in International Relations Classics (World Affairs Press, Beijing)., (Chengxin, “China watching: towards reflection and dialogue” in Knowledge, Desire and Power in Global Politics: Western Representations of China’s Rise) //CHC-DS

CHINA KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-REFLECTION

Until now, my focus seems to have been mainly on how not to understand China’s rise. While deconstruction is all well and good, one cannot help but wonder: How to study China? If those paradigms are problematic or less than adequate, what are the alternative ways of knowing this important country? These questions sound reasonable enough. Be it scholars or practitioners, when faced with an apparently unprecedented transition from a transatlantic century to a transpacific century led by the ‘rise’ of China (and India), one is naturally anxious to know what China is up to and how to best respond to it. Yet, however understandable this desire may be, this book has hesitated to directly volunteer answers to those questions, or at least its implicit answers would be unlikely to satisfy those demands on their own terms. There are several reasons for this. To begin with, I am sceptical of some of their underlying ontological and epistemological premises about what China is and what China knowledge should mean. For example, those questions seem to assume that this book is merely a study of China studies (or a particular section of China studies), rather than a study of China per se. Hence their insistence on knowing how we might go about studying China proper. Yet, from the beginning, this knowledge/reality dichotomy has been problematised. Since there is no China-in-itself outside knowledge, representation or discourse, what we refer to as ‘China’ must already be coloured by such representations. Without **reference to representations** we cannot for a moment speak of China or do China studies. Given that China does not exist independently of discourse and that any study becomes part of its object of study, I should say that this analysis of Western discourses of China is already a study of China in the proper sense of the word. Also, underlying those question is the belief that deconstruction is essentially destructive and thus has little constructive to contribute to China studies. However, as Derrida notes, deconstruction is ‘a way of taking a position’ rather than merely ‘a flourish of irresponsible and irresponsiblemaking destruction’. 8 By way of deconstruction, this book has hoped to generate both critical and constructive reflections on the way we think about the nature of China knowledge as well as the way such knowledge can be better produced. To the extent that methodology is always implied in ontology and epistemology, my ontological and epistemological critique is not an exercise of esoteric verbal incantation, but carries important methodological messages for China watching, even though such messages could well be dismissed as hollow, mystifying or even alien by conventional standards. One message from this study is that it is no longer adequate for us to be merely ‘China’ specialists who are otherwise blissfully ‘ignorant of the world beyond China’.9 **Self-watching**, I suggest, requires at once **discarding** this positivist **self-(un)consciousness** and cultivating a **critically reflective, philosophising mind**. ‘The philosophizing mind’, wrote Collingwood, ‘never simply thinks about an object, it always, while thinking about any object, thinks also about its own thought about that object’. China watching needs autoethnography or ‘self-watching’ to consciously make itself part of its own object of critical analysis whereby the necessary but often missing comparative context can help us put China in perspective. All research, to be sure, must already contain some level of reflectivity, be it about methods of inquiry, hypothesis testing, empirical evidence, data collection, or clarity of expression. And the Western representations of China’s rise, predicated on some particular ways of Western selfimagination, are necessarily self-reflective in that sense. And yet, such narrow technical reflectivity or narcissistic posturing is not what I mean by ‘self-watching’. In fact, the **unconscious Western self-imagination** as the modern knowing subject (who sets itself apart from the world and refuses to critically look at itself) is the very **antithesis of self-watching**. 10 This position is similar to that of ‘ironists’. According to Richard Rorty, ironists are ‘never quite able to take themselves seriously because always aware that the terms in which they describe themselves are subject to change, always aware of the contingency and fragility of their final vocabularies, and thus of their selves’.11 In the concluding chapter of his Scratches on Our Minds, Harold Isaacs seemed to have endorsed such ‘ironist’ approaches to China studies: ‘we have to examine, each of us, how we register and house our observations, how we come to our judgments, how we enlarge our observations, how we describe them, and what purposes they serve for us’.12 Back in 1972, John Fairbank put such reflection in practice by suggesting that America’s Cold-War attitude towards China was based less on reason than on fear, a fear inspired not by China but by America’s experience with Nazi and Stalinist totalitarian regimes. 13 These examples clearly show the possibility of reflective China watching, but alas, as noted from the beginning, such reflectivity is hardly visible in today’s ‘China’s rise’ literature. Indeed, without the trace of a single author, the two dominant China paradigms hinge onto a ubiquitous collective psyche and emotion that is often **difficult to see**, let alone to criticise from within. Yet it is imperative that such self-criticism should occur, which entails **problematising** China watchers’ own thought, vocabularies and taken-forgranted self-identity as disinterested rational observers. It requires us to **pause and look into ourselves** to examine, for example, why we constantly fear China, rather than taking that fear as given: ‘We are wary of China because we are wary of China’. Self-watching demands an ironist awareness of the contingency, instability, and provinciality of mainstream China knowledge, its intertextual and emotional link to the fears and fantasies in the Western self-imagination, the political economy of its production, and the attendant normative, ethical and practical consequences both for dealing with China and for serving the power and special interests at home. Put it differently, it requires a **deconstructive move of intellectual decolonisation** of the latent **(neo)colonial desire** and mindset that, despite the formal end of colonialism decades ago, continues to actively operate in Orientalism knowledge and China watching, facilitated by its various scientific, theoretical, and pedagogical guises. In this context, self-reflection cannot be confined to individual China watchers or even the China watching community. Never a purely personal pursuit or even a disciplinary matter, China knowledge is always inextricably linked with the general dynamism of Western knowledge, desire and power in global politics. Its self-reflection should thus extend to the shared collective self of the West, its assumed identity and associated foreign policy (China policy in particular). If China can be seen as a being-in-the-world, these issues are part and parcel of the world in which China finds itself and relates to others. But until now they have largely escaped the attention of China watchers. Maybe it is because these are primarily the business of scholars of Western/American culture, history and foreign relations, rather than that of China scholars. After all, there is a need for division of labour in social sciences. True, for various reasons it is unrealistic to expect China scholars to be at the same time experts on those ‘non-China’ issues. Nevertheless, since China watchers both rely on and contribute to their collective Western self-imagination in their understanding of China, it is crucial that they look at their collective Western self in the mirror. Take the negative image of China’s brutal Soviet-style sports system for example. Every now and then, such an image will be reliably brought up to reinforce China’s Otherness more generally. But if the ways American young talents are trained are put under the same spotlight, the difference between the US and China is no longer as vast as it appears. 14 In doing so, the previous China image is no longer as defensible as it seems. In brief, the broader point here is that the same China may take on quite different meanings when we are willing to subject ourselves to similar scrutiny. We may **better appreciate** why China looks the way it does when we are more self-conscious of the various lenses, paradigms, and fore-meanings through which we do China watching. Conversely, we cannot fully comprehend why the Chinese behave in a certain way until we pay attention to what we have done (to them), past and present. Such self-knowledge on the part of the West is essential to a better grasp of China. Without the former, China knowledge is incomplete and suspect. Yet, to many, self-reflection is at best a luxurious distraction. At worst it amounts to navel-gazing and could turn into ‘a prolix and self-indulgent discourse that is divorced from the real world’. 15 Such concern is hardly justified, however. The imagined Western self is integral to the real world, and critical self-reflection also helps reconnect China watching to the ‘real’ world of power relations to which it always belongs. By making one better aware of this connection, it helps open up space for emancipatory knowledge. As Mannheim notes: The criterion of such self-illumination is that not only the object but we ourselves fall squarely within our field of vision. We become visible to ourselves, not just vaguely as a knowing subject as such but in a certain role hitherto hidden from us, in a situation hitherto impenetrable to us, and with motivations of which we have not hitherto been aware. In such a moment the **inner connection** between our role, our motivations, and our type and manner of experiencing the world suddenly draws upon us. Hence the paradox underlying these experiences, namely the opportunity for relative emancipation from social determination, increases proportionately with insight into this determination. 16 Still, there may be a lingering fear that excessive reflectivity could undo much of the hard-won China knowledge. But again to quote Mannheim, ‘the extension of our knowledge of the world is closely related to increasing personal self-knowledge and self-control of the knowing personality’.17 Even when that does expose our lack of knowledge about China, **all is not lost**. Such revelation is not a sign of ignorance, but an essential building block in the edifice of China knowledge. Confucius told us that ‘To say that you know when you do know and say that you do not know when you do not know— that is [the way to acquire] knowledge’. 18 Thus, the knowing subject can emancipate itself from its delusion about its own being; 19 the real meaning of ignorance is that one claims to know when one does not or cannot know.

**Perm [Space]**

**Integrating the alt’s discourse into space colonization is possible.**

**Renstrom 21**, Boston University Senior Lecturer, Rhetoric; Joelle Renstrom maintains an award-winning blog, Could This Happen, about the relationship between science and science fiction., (Joelle, “We Shouldn’t Invoke Colonialist Language To Justify Missions To the Cosmos”, The Wire: Science, <https://science.thewire.in/aerospace/why-should-we-invoke-colonialist-language-to-justify-missions-to-the-cosmos/>) //CHC-DS

In Kennedy’s words, space exploration is our species’ most “dangerous and greatest adventure.” It makes sense to address factors that influence human behaviour in space – and that will ultimately determine our odds of success there – sooner rather than later. That includes asking everyone, not just NASA or Elon Musk, what we want an interplanetary future of humanity to look like. Would we want futuristic Mars settlements to operate like modern-day Earth towns, or could we do better?

Crafting a **code of ethics** for space exploration may seem daunting, but **our words offer a** potential **starting point**. Space is one of few places humans have gone that thus far remains **peaceful**. Why, then, use the language of war, imperialism, or colonialism to describe human actions there? **Eliminating** the language of genocide and subordination from the space discourse is one easy step anyone can take to encourage the great leaps for humankind that we dream of for the future, on Earth and beyond.

**Top — AT: Afropess K**

**Two L/T –**

**[a] Russian Propaganda**

**Russian propaganda explicitly targets black people. They are extremely good at doing it.**

**Ackerman 18** [Spencer Ackerman is a contributing editor at the Daily Beast. From 2017 to 2021, he was senior national security correspondent for The Daily Beast. He is the author of forthcoming [REIGN OF TERROR](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/622555/reign-of-terror-by-spencer-ackerman/): How The 9/11 Era Destabilized America and Produced Trump, 11-4-2018, How Russia Is Exploiting American White Supremacy, Daily Beast, https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-russia-exploits-american-white-supremacy-over-and-over-again] Eric

The cynical brilliance of Vladimir **Putin’s** **propaganda** campaign is that it **exploited** **America’s foundational commitment** to white supremacy. The term itself is so raw and so hideous that it inspires an allergy to its usage within mainstream political discourse. But no other term—racism, white privilege, etc.—better captures the dynamic at issue. White supremacy is exactly what it says on the label: a social structure by which whites, a pseudoscientific grouping with [a definition that changes over time as is convenient](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B003HQ3XHQ/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1), dominate America’s complex and often informal hierarchies of power.

American history is many things, but among them is a catalog recording the mutating shape of a white power structure and how that structure responds to various challenges to its existence. Amongst white supremacy’s greatest contemporary triumphs is its portrayal of racism as individual prejudice rather than maintenance of the social order. Our schools teach children that racism is about hatred, and hatred is disreputable—not that racism is about power, with hatred merely one downstream effect amongst many. And so, nearly every day, the public discourse shows another white person objecting that the definitions have changed on them in a dizzying way. Those objections predictably run a gamut from [left](http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/09/donald-trump-white-supremacy-and-the-discourse-of-panic.html) to [right](https://money.cnn.com/2018/08/09/media/fox-news-laura-ingraham-tucker-carlson-white-nationalism/index.html), since white supremacy’s roots sink deeper in America than any mere political persuasion. Putin's trolls **wisely selected a fuel source** that white Americans of all political stripes, **consciously** **or not, ensure is inexhaustible**.

With every tweet, Facebook post, YouTube video and Tumblr page, Russia showed that it understands America with a depth **that prompts much of white America to avert its eyes.** Russian propaganda expertly grasped that even the most meager challenges to white supremacy prompt **a politically powerful** **and useful white resistance**, and that this **dynamic is a persistent feature** of American life. All Russia—or any foreign power, or no foreign power at all—needs to do is **breathe** on the **embers** **until they ignite**. White supremacy **murders millions of people**, **steals their wealth** to distribute it up the social ladder, **and denies untold millions their true human potential**. America does this to itself, and left undisturbed, will continue doing it. Russia’s only unique contribution in 2016, and beyond, was to underscore the threat white supremacy poses to U.S. national security.

The reactionary Russian political theorist [Alexander Dugin](https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-far-right-book-every-russian-general-reads) has written explicitly on the benefits of operationalizing American white supremacy for Russian benefit. While Dugin’s true influence on Putin remains a subject of debate, his 1997 tome The Foundations of Geopolitics presaged the Russian active-measures campaign of the past three years.

“It is especially important to introduce geopolitical disorder into internal American activity, **encouraging** all kinds of **separatism** **and ethnic, social and racial conflicts**, actively supporting all dissident movements—extremist, racist, and sectarian groups, thus **destabilizing internal political processes** in the U.S.,” Dugin [wrote](https://bigthink.com/paul-ratner/the-dangerous-philosopher-behind-putins-strategy-to-grow-russian-power-at-americas-expense). His clarity might have benefitted the 2017 CIA-FBI-NSA intelligence assessment.

To credibly put that into practice 20 years later, Russians merely needed to be ready online. They observed the idioms adopted by left and right online political subcultures and repurposed them, using “cultural, linguistic and identity markers in their Twitter profiles to align themselves with the shared values and norms of either the left- or right-leaning clusters,” write University of Washington researchers Ahmer Arif, Leo G. Stewart and Kate Starbird in a [paper](http://ahmerarif.com/papers/BLM-IRA.pdf) to be presented at an academic conference in November.

IRA stereotypes were crude, speaking to how Russians understood the social currency of their marks. One fake profile, hilariously titled @USA\_Gunslinger, read: “They won’t deny us our defense! Whether you’re agree [sic] with me or not, you’re welcome here! If you don’t want to be welcomed, go f\*ck yourself.” Another, anticipating Atlantic writer Adam Serwer’s thesis that contemporary white supremacy portrays itself as[disgusted by racism](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/11/the-nationalists-delusion/546356/), included “Anti Racism” in its profile alongside “Southern. Conservative. Pro God.” IRA Tumblrs attempting to portray themselves as black were titled such things as [Hustle In A Trap and Ghetta Blasta](https://www.thedailybeast.com/trump-believes-there-is-a-conspiracy-to-submarine-the-kavanaugh-nomination?ref=scroll). But the accounts, whether left or right, showed more sophistication—at least on a level analogous to what a machine could spit out, given enough data—in their appropriation of how authentic accounts within the targeted groups spoke to one another.

“What really struck me in studying the activities of these accounts up close, was the level of knowledge they demonstrated of American culture,” Arif told The Daily Beast. “They talked about the movies, they talked about specific holidays and things like that, so it speaks to an organized, kind of a digital marketing operation, almost, knowing your audience really thoroughly … [For] a country that is already divided in some ways by things like race and politics, this is a case of someone coming along and giving us just a little nudge.”

Arif and his colleagues didn’t set out to study the IRA. As academics examining human-computer interaction, they wanted to examine the online discourse around Black Lives Matter. But last year, after Twitter and Facebook began shuttering accounts associated with the IRA, they noticed Russian accounts popping up with sufficient frequency in Black Lives Matter discussions that they studied that phenomenon on its own. Their preliminary work has already attracted coverage in [Mother Jones](https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2018/01/russian-trolls-hyped-anger-over-black-lives-matter-more-than-previously-known/), [The Atlantic](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/01/trump-russia-twitter/551093/) and [Mashable](https://mashable.com/2018/01/22/drawing-lines-of-contention-study-twitter-university-of-washington/#zUuNBZbpbmq8), but their final product has more information about, among other things, “what content they were propagating,” Arif said.

What they found matched a series of 2017 exclusives from The Daily Beast that showed white supremacy was never far from the surface of surreptitious Russian propaganda. The fake group **SecuredBorders** urged a real-life rally in Idaho in August 2016 under the cry, “[We must stop taking in Muslim refugees!](https://www.thedailybeast.com/exclusive-russia-used-facebook-events-to-organize-anti-immigrant-rallies-on-us-soil)” The **IRA** Twitter account Being Patriotic **called on** **followers** **to** actually **kill Black Lives Matter activists**: “[Arrest and shoot every sh\*thead taking part in burning our flag! #BLM vs #USA](https://www.thedailybeast.com/russians-appear-to-use-facebook-to-push-pro-trump-flash-mobs-in-florida).”

It’s true that the Russians also impersonated what they saw as left-wing and nonwhite American audiences. Arif and his colleagues have documented the IRA pretending to be both #BlackLivesMatter and its white-backlash antagonist #AllLivesMatter. But a look at the substance of the messaging the Russians geared to an ostensibly non-white audience looks distinctly congruent with the prejudices reflected by its white right-wing one. When the IRA pretended to be non-white, it portrayed its fabricated in-group as threatening, provocative or anti-American.

A Facebook page [impersonating the United Muslims of America](https://www.thedailybeast.com/exclusive-russians-impersonated-real-american-muslims-to-stir-chaos-on-facebook-and-instagram) pushed memes falsely claiming the U.S., and particularly the Russian adversaries Hillary Clinton and John McCain, created ISIS—before claiming that Clinton was the guardian of Muslim interests. Arif’s paper notes that the IRA impostor group BlackMatters pushed a series of inflammatory gifs purporting to show police officers sexually assaulting a black teenage girl—which participants in the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag subsequently debunked. “[T]he video incident functioned both to further stoke anti-police sentiments on the left and, once it was debunked, increase anti-BlackLivesMatter sentiments on the right,” Arif, Stewart and Starbird write.

The Russians posturing as Black Lives Matter “favored an uncompromising and adversarial stance towards law enforcement,” they found. “This activity feeds directly into attempts to frame #BlackLivesMatter as an anti-police hate group. From prior research we know that such framings were actively resisted and addressed by #BlackLivesMatter activists… [T]hese accounts did not just speak to the communities that they were pretending to be a part of, but also aimed to communicate an antagonistic representation of those communities to others.”

That strategy is on display in Europe as well as America. According to a knowledgeable European Union official who was not cleared to talk to a journalist, social media accounts strongly suspected of being Russian cutouts are waving digital red flags to ideologically contrary audiences. In the run-up to the September 9 election in Sweden, the EU official noticed pro-refugee messaging emanating from suspected Russia-controlled accounts, aimed this time at audiences expected to feel anxious about immigration. “You strengthen the grievances, and then exploit” them, the official told The Daily Beast.

While each surreptitious Russian influence campaign is distinctly tailored to its particular audience, continuities amongst them point to the particular sort of chaos in the West that the Kremlin considers beneficial. **It inflames** a sense of grievance amongst a **white overclass** which fears the collapse of its social, political and economic supremacy. It inflates even the most modest challenge to that supremacy as an attack on its fundamental way of life, essentializing entire national histories to nothing more than white prerogatives. This is how immigration becomes perceived as an invasion, Black Lives Matter becomes a “[domestic terror outfit](https://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2018/01/25/vermont-high-school-fly-black-lives-matter-flag/),” and the [poor white masses feel besieged into silence](https://www.breitbart.com/london/2018/03/07/people-tiny-irish-town-taking-hundreds-migrants-no-say-scared-called-racist/) before crying out for a champion to make them feel great again.

**Russian government’s primary incentive is to alienate black groups and create increased animosity.**

**Barnes and Goldman 20** [Julian E. Barnes is a national security reporter for The New York Times covering the intelligence agencies and Adam Goldman reports on the F.B.I. for The New York Times and was part of a team that won a Pulitzer Prize in 2018 for national reporting on Russia’s meddling in the presidential election, 3-10-2020, Russia Trying to Stoke U.S. Racial Tensions Before Election, Officials Say (Published 2020), NYT, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/10/us/politics/russian-interference-race.html] Eric

WASHINGTON — The **Russian** **government** has **stepped up efforts** to inflame racial tensions in the United States as part of its bid to [influence November’s presidential election,](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/us/politics/cia-russian-election-interference.html) including **trying to incite violence** by white supremacist groups and to stoke anger among African-Americans, according to seven American officials briefed on recent intelligence.

[Russia](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/world/europe/russia-school-shooting.html)’s lead intelligence agency, the S.V.R., has apparently gone beyond 2016 methods of [interference](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/us/politics/election-interference-russia-2020-assessment.html), when operatives tried to stoke racial animosity by **creating fake Black Lives Matter groups** and spreading disinformation to [**depress black voter turnout**](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/17/us/politics/russia-2016-influence-campaign.html)**.** Now, Russia is also trying to influence white supremacist groups, the officials said; they gave few details, but one official said federal investigators are examining how at least one neo-Nazi organization with ties to Russia is funded.

Other Russian efforts, which American intelligence agencies have tracked, involve simply prodding white nationalists to more aggressively spread hate messages and amplifying their invective. **Russian** **operatives** are also **trying to push black extremist groups toward violence**, according to multiple officials, though they did not detail how.

Russia’s more public influence operations, like state-backed news organizations, have continued to **push divisive racial narratives**, including stories emphasizing allegations of police abuse in the United States and highlighting racism against African-Americans within the military.

And as social media companies more vigilantly monitor for foreign activity than they did in 2016, Russia has also adjusted its methods to evade detection. Rather than disseminate messages as widely as possible, as in 2016, Russian operatives are using private Facebook groups, posts on the online message board 4chan and closed chat rooms that are more difficult to monitor, according to intelligence officials.

Russia’s primary goal, according to several officials briefed on the intelligence who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive information, **is to foster a sense of chaos** in the United States, though its motivations are under debate and difficult to decipher in the absence of high-level intelligence sources inside Moscow.

The direct effect of its interference on presidential politics is less clear, though some American officials said that Russia believed that acts of violence could bolster President Trump’s re-election bid if he could argue that a response to such an episode demanded continuity and that he represented a law-and-order approach.

The F.B.I. and other intelligence agencies declined to comment on specific Russian activities.

“We see Russia is willing to conduct more brazen and disruptive influence operations because of how it perceives its conflict with the West,” David Porter, a top agent on the F.B.I.’s Foreign Influence Task Force, said last month at an election security conference in Washington.

He added, “To put it simply, in this space, Russia wants to watch us tear ourselves apart.”

Because Russia is trying to amplify the messaging of existing groups, its interference is difficult for American officials to combat given First Amendment protections for speech. The government does have the legal authority to stop hate speech that explicitly advocates violence, and social media companies continue to take down accounts linked to Russian intelligence or disinformation groups.

Attempts to exacerbate racial divisions are **only one strand** of Russia’s influence operations in 2020; Moscow’s intelligence agencies promote a variety of narratives and divisive issues. But perhaps no more difficult issue exists in the United States **than racial justice and privilege**, and officials expressed worry that **amplifying divisions** among races could do the most damage to the country’s social fabric.

The Russian intelligence services took note of the divisive nature of the 2017 white supremacist march in Charlottesville, Va., which led to the death of a counterprotester, and concluded that promoting hate groups was the most effective method of sowing discord in the United States, according to American intelligence reports described by the officials.

Some American officials believe that Russia is trying to undermine American democracy and the nation’s standing in the world by driving debate to the extremes.

“One of Russia’s goals is weakening institutions and the **weaponization of race** is a way they can do that,” said Laura Rosenberger, the director of the Alliance for Securing Democracy. “A divided America is a weaker America. When we are unable to solve our challenges together, Russia is more able to flex its power around the world.”

**Red Pill movement proves — it creates material violence**

**Spaulding 18** [Suzanne Spaulding is a senior adviser for homeland security with the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. Devi Nair is a program manager and research associate with the CSIS International Security Program. Arthur Nelson is an intern with the CSIS International Security Program, 12-21-2018, Why Putin Targets Minorities, CSIS, https://www.csis.org/analysis/why-putin-targets-minorities] Eric

Historically, oppressed minorities may be more likely to gravitate towards **a certain group identity**. It is unsurprising that Russia identifies these individuals as targets of disinformation. What is also concerning, however, is that Russia has been using social media platforms to track the progress of emerging cultural movements and has worked to infiltrate and fortify an identity-consciousness among members of these groups.

The Kremlin exploits social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Alphabet, and Instagram by turning them into dual-use tools. First, they use these platforms to capture the “pulse” of political discourse and gauge the content spectrum of conversations surrounding certain topics or groups. The Russians then use social media as a joiner tool, bringing together like-minded individuals under the banner of a shared interest or idea.

This is precisely how Russian operatives imbedded within the “Red Pill” movement—an internet culture **rooted in male supremacy and white nationalism**. Southern Poverty Law Center [recently classified](https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/male-supremacy)the Red Pill movement as an extremist ideology. A number of online communities affiliated with the Red Pill movement have a history of [encouraging **hatred** and **violence** **towards** **women**](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/world/americas/incels-toronto-attack.html). A 2016 study on online extremism found [overlap **between online Nazi networks** **and** **Red Pill networks**](https://cchs.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2371/f/downloads/Nazis%20v.%20ISIS%20Final_0.pdf#page=21). While Russia did not start the movement, it helped amplify the extreme messaging of this group, which helped it develop a sizeable audience. According to the New Knowledge report, the IRA-run Instagram account, “the.red.pill,” had approximately 3.5 million total interactions. Additionally, our analysis shows that thousands of IRA tweets attempted to attract people to the Red Pill movement by co-opting hashtags like #RedPill, #FollowTheWhiteRabbit, and #BlackPill.

It should not go unrecognized that a few young men exposed to Red Pill ideology **have committed atrocious domestic acts of terror**. For instance, in [Santa Barbara](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/05/27/inside-the-manosphere-that-inspired-santa-barbara-shooter-elliot-rodger/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d9a251bd6ed0), **a young man** associated with the movement **murdered six individuals**. Just two months ago, **another follower** of the Red Pill movement **shot and killed 11 people in a Pittsburgh synagogue.** The shooter was also an [active participant on Gab](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/us/gab-robert-bowers-pittsburgh-synagogue-shootings.html), a nascent social networking platform and, according to New Knowledge, a [known hotbed](https://disinformationreport.blob.core.windows.net/disinformation-report/NewKnowledge-Disinformation-Report-Whitepaper.pdf#page=5)of Russian disinformation.

The Russian accounts promoting the Red Pill movement did not directly instruct the men to commit violent crimes, but the account moderators are guilty of investing time and resources into fostering communities of people bound together by shared hate. By actively promoting movements like Red Pill, the Russians are making clear their intent to fan the flames of fear and hate in society.

**[b] EU populism — it massively expands anti-black violence through strengthening radical institution**

**Rattansi 20** [Ali Rattansi is Visiting Professor of Sociology, City, University of London, 3-23-2020, The Runnymede Trust, https://www.runnymedetrust.org/blog/racism-and-the-rise-of-populist-movements] Eric

Unprecedented growth in the number and influence of right-wing nationalist populist movements and political parties have characterised the first two decades of the 21st century.

Brexit and the election of Trump represent **only the tip** of this global iceberg. Brazil has seen the election of Bolsonaro, a vocal opponent of same-sex marriage and race equality initiatives; in **France islamophobic** National Front **leader** Marine Le Pen was the **runner** **up** in the 2017 presidential election; **Austria’s Freedom** **Party**, which has vowed to ban free distribution of the Koran, **has won over 25 per cent** of the national vote and has been part of a coalition government.

Meanwhile, in Germany, the **Alternative for Germany**, a party with distinct neo-Nazi overtones, now **has 94 seats in the Bundestag** (parliament) and is the largest opposition party. Likewise, in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway, right-wing national populists have **gained a significant share of votes** and parliamentary representation. In Italy the xenophobic Legal Nord has been in government, while in Hungary and Poland authoritarian populist parties have been in government and have begun to dismantle independent judiciaries, repress dissent and even explicitly call for illiberal democracy. And so on.

But how and in what ways is racism involved in the phenomenal growth of this nationalist right-wing populism? First, it helps to define populism. At a minimum, populist ideology posits an opposition between a ‘pure’ people and a ‘corrupt’ political elite which is out of touch and is responsible for the damage caused to the nation or people. Populist electoral strategy is then based on a promise to rein in the power of this elite, rid it of corruption, and restore the fortunes of the people. There is usually a crucial element in which populists argue that there are internal or external ‘others’ who are involved in the downward fortunes of the genuine ‘people’ of the nation. It is in this way that racism can be inserted as an important part of the message. These others may be the EU, minorities, recent or even third generation immigrants, refugees or economic migrants, such as the Mexicans so strongly evoked by Trump as posing a strong economic and cultural threat to white Americans. Even the EU has created an external, xenophobic and racialised threat by a short-lived attempt to rebrand the head of the EU’s migration policy as ‘the commissioner for protecting the European way of life’.

Sociologists and political scientists have argued that there are four main causes that explain the rise of nationalist right-wing populism, some aligned with the definition above. The four components are: a distrust of corrupt or out of touch power elites; a fear of the destruction of national cultures and identities; relative deprivation; and a dealignment between mainstream parties and electorates. This last issue is a phenomenon particularly reflected in the poor showing of social democratic, labour parties which have seen their working- class voter base eroded by the nationalist populists.

Each of these four main causes are intertwined with racism or racialisation in one form or another. The distrust of political elites is partly related to the unwillingness or inability of national elites to curb immigration, especially Muslim immigration. Muslims are racialised as practising a distinctly non-white way of life that is supposedly completely at variance with the ‘Western’ or ‘European’ culture. Relative deprivation in the form of a fall in living standards is easily blamed on the arrival of immigrants and refugees, and this is indeed what right-wing populists tend to do. The restructuring of the usual pact between working-class electorates and social democratic parties has occurred in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis in which social democratic parties, rather than the financial sector and its elites, are blamed for profligacy and being supposedly ‘soft’ on welfare ‘scroungers’, especially non-white immigrants (although white Eastern Europeans have also been caught up in a form of racialised, xenophobic framing).

What brings all these elements together is what has been called the **ideology of ‘nativism’**. “Britain first”, as the murderer of the British MP Jo Cox shouted as he killed her**,  echoes Trump’s ‘America first’**, and ‘Germany for Germans’ or ‘Sweden for the Swedes’, always with the strong sense that the ‘true’ or ‘genuine’ natives who are being defended are white. Trump’s rallying cry ‘**Make America Great Again’** has been **perceived** **as** a thinly veiled call for making America ‘**white again’**, notwithstanding the fact that the earliest Americans we know were non-white indigenous peoples (formerly labelled ‘Red Indians’). In the case of Britain (and this might be extended to the whole of Western Europe), **the fantasy of an original**, **pure** **white population is belied** by the fact that the earliest Briton discovered so far (the so-called ‘Cheddar Man’ whose remains were found in the Cheddar gorge) would today be identified as black.

Right-wing national populism, **then, is a thoroughly** **racialised phenomenon**. Not all those who support nativism would see themselves as racist, but the consequences of adopting a nativist stance **draws one into territory that is certainly stained with racism.**

**Top — AT: Colonialism K**

**Colonialism is not constant, but variable.**

**Lightfoot ’20** — Sheryl; associate professor in Indigenous Studies at University of British Columbia. 2020; “The Pessimism Traps of Indigenous Resurgence”; Chapter 10 in *Pessimism in International Relations*, pp 162-170; <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-21780-8_10>; //CYang

**Pessimism Trap** 2: The State is **Unified**, **Deliberate** and **Unchanging** in Its Desire to Dispossess Indigenous Peoples and Gain Unfettered Access to Indigenous Lands and Resources

In other words, colonialism by settler states is a constant, not a variable, in both outcome and intent. Further, the state is not only intentionally colonial, but it is also unified in its desire to co-opt Indigenous peoples as a method and means of control.

In 2005's Wasase, Alfred presents the state as unitary, intentional and unchanging in its desire to colonise and oppress Indigenous peoples noting, 'I think that the only thing that has changed since our ancestors first declared war on the invaders is that some of us have lost heart'.22 Referring to current state policies as a 'self-termination movement', Alfred states, 'It is senseless to advocate for an accord with imperialism while there is a steady and intense ongoing attack by the Settler society on everything meaningful to us: our cultures, our communities, and our deep attachments to land'.23

Alfred's Peace, Power, Righteousness (2009) also argues that the state is deliberate and unchanging, stating quite plainly that 'it is still the objective of the Canadian and US governments to remove Indians, or, failing that, to prevent them from benefitting, from their ancestral territories'.24 Contemporary states do this, he argues, not through outright violent control but 'by insidiously promoting a form of neo-colonial self-government in our communities and forcing our integration into the legal mainstream'.25 According to Alfred, the state 'relegates indigenous peoples' rights to the past, and constrains the development of their societies by allowing only those activities that support its own necessary illusion: that indigenous peoples today do not present a serious challenge to its legitimacy'.26

Linking back to the aim of co-option, Alfred argues that while the state's desire to control Indigenous peoples and lands has never changed, the techniques for doing so have become subtler over time. 'Recognizing the power of the indigenous challenge and unable to deny it a voice', due to successful Indigenous resistance over the years, 'the state has (now) attempted to pull indigenous people closer to it'.27 According to Alfred, the state has outwitted Indigenous leaders and 'encouraged them to reframe and moderate their nationhood demands to accept the fait accompli of colonization, (and) to collaborate in the development of a "solution" that does not challenge the fundamental imperial lie'.28

In a similar vein, Coulthard's central argument is centred on his understanding of the dual structure of colonialism. Drawing directly from Fanon, Coulthard finds that colonialism relies on both objective and subjective elements. The objective components involve domination through the political, economic and legal structures of the colonial state. The subjective elements of colonialism involve the creation of 'colonized subjects', including a process of internalisation by which colonised subjects come to not only accept the limited forms of 'misrecog-nition' granted through the state but can even come to identify with it.29 Through this dual structure, colonial power now works through the inclusion of Indigenous peoples, actively shaping their perspectives in line with state discourses, rather than merely excluding them, as in years past. Therefore, any attempt to seek 'the reconciliation of Indigenous nationhood with state sovereignty is still colonial insofar as it remains structurally committed to the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of our lands and self-determining authority'.30

Concerning the state in relation to Indigenous peoples on the international level, Corntassel argues that states and global organisations, for years, have been consistently framing Indigenous peoples' self-determination claims in ways that 'jeopardize the futures of indigenous communities'.31 He claims that states first compartmentalise Indigenous self-determination by separating lands and resources from political and legal recognition of a limited autonomy. Second, he notes, states sometimes deny the existence of Indigenous peoples living within their borders. Thirdly, a political and legal entitlement framing by states deem-phasises other responsibilities. Finally, he claims that states, through the rights discourse, limit the frameworks through which Indigenous peoples can seek self-determination. Like Alfred and Coulthard, Corntassel has concluded that states are deliberate and never changing in their behaviour. With this move, Corntassel limits and **actually demeans** Indigenous agency, overlooking the reality that **Indigenous organisations themselves** chose the human rights framework and rights discourse as a target sphere of action precisely because, as was evident in earlier struggles like slavery, civil rights or women's rights, these were tools available to them that had a proven track record of opening up **new possibilities** and shifting previous **state positions** and behaviour. Indigenous advocates also cleverly realised, by the 1970s, that the anti-discrimination and decolonisation frames could be used together against states. States did, in no way, nefariously impose a rights framework on Indigenous peoples. Rather, Indigenous organisations and savvy Indigenous political actors **deliberately chose** to frame their self-determination struggles within the human rights framework in order to bring states into a double bind where they could not credibly claim to adhere to human rights and claim that they uphold equality while simultaneously denying Indigenous peoples' human rights and leaving them with a diminished and unequal right of self-determination. But, because he is caught in the **pessimism trap** of seeing the state only as unified, deliberate and unchanging, Corntassel overlooks and diminishes the **clear story** of Indigenous agency and the potential for **positive change** in advancing self-determination in a multitude of ways.

**Pessimism Trap** 3: Engagement with the Settler State is Futile, if Not Counter-Productive

Since the state always intends to maintain, if not expand, colonial control, and is seeking to co-opt as many Indigenous peoples as possible in order to maintain or expand its dispossession and control, it is therefore futile, at best, and actually dangerous to Indigenous existence to engage with the state. Furthermore, all patterns of engagement will lead to co-optation as the state is cunning and unrelenting in its desire to co-opt Indigenous leaders, academics and professionals in order to gain or maintain control of Indigenous peoples.

Alfred argues, in both his 2005 and 2009 books, that any Indigenous engagement with the state, including agreements and negotiations, is not only futile but fundamentally dangerous, as such pathways do not directly challenge the existing colonial structure and 'to argue on behalf of indigenous nationhood within the dominant Western paradigm is self-defeating'.32 Alfred states that a 'notion of nationhood or self-government rooted in state institutions and framed within the context of state sovereignty can never satisfy the imperatives of Native American political traditions'33 because the possibility for a true expression of Indigenous self-determination is 'precluded by the state's insistence on dominion and its exclusionary notion of sovereignty'.34 Worst of all, according to Alfred, when Indigenous communities frame their struggles in terms of asserting Aboriginal rights and title, but do so within a state framework, rather than resisting the state itself, it 'represents the culmination of white society's efforts to assimilate indigenous peoples'.35

Because it is impossible to advance Indigenous self-determination through any sort of engagement with the state, Coulthard also advocates for an Indigenous resurgence paradigm that follows both his mentor Taiaiake Alfred but also Anishinaabe feminist theorist Leanne Simpson.36 As Coulthard writes, 'both Alfred and Simpson start from a position that calls on Indigenous peoples and communities to "turn away" from the assimilative reformism of the liberal recognition approach and to instead build our national liberation efforts on the revitalization of "traditional" political values and practices'.37 Drawing upon the prescriptive approach of these theorists, Coulthard proposes, in his concluding chapter, five theses from his analysis that are intended to build and solidify Indigenous resurgence into the future:

1. On the necessity of direct action, meaning that physical forms of Indigenous resistance, like protest and blockades, are very important not only as a reaction to the state but also as a means of protecting the lands that are central to Indigenous peoples' existence;

2. Capitalism, No More!, meaning the rejection of capitalist forms of economic development in Indigenous communities in favour of land-based Indigenous political-economic alternative approaches;

3. Dispossession and Indigenous Sovereignty in the City, meaning the need for Indigenous resurgence movements 'to address the interrelated systems of dispossession that shape Indigenous peoples' experiences in both urban and land-based settings'38;

4. Gender Justice and Decolonisation, meaning that decolonisation must also include a shift away from patriarchy and an embrace of gender relations that are non-violent and reflective of the centrality of women in traditional forms of Indigenous governance and society; and

5. Beyond the Nation-State. While Coulthard denies that he advocates complete rejection of engagement with the state's political and legal system, he does assert that 'our efforts to engage these discursive and institutional spaces to secure recognition of our rights have not only failed, but have instead served to subtly reproduce the forms of racist, sexist, economic, and political configurations of power that we initially sought.to challenge'.39 He therefore advocates expressly for 'critical self-reflection, skepticism, and caution' in a 'resurgent politics of recognition that seeks to practice decolonial, gender-emancipatory, and economically non-exploitative alternative structures of law and sovereign authority grounded on a critical refashioning of the best of Indigenous legal and political traditions'.40

Corntassel also demonstrates the third pessimism trap, that all engagement with the state is ultimately futile. For the most part, however, Corntassel's observation is that the UN system operates like a reverse Keck and Sikkink 'boomerang model' and 'channels the energies of transnational Indigenous networks into the institutional fiefdoms of member countries', by which an 'illusion of inclusion' is created.41 He argues that, in order to be included or their views listened to, Indigenous delegates at the UN must mimic the strategies, language, norms and modes of behaviour of member states and international institutions. Corntassel finds that 'what results is a cadre of professionalized Indigenous delegates who demonstrate more allegiance to the UN system than to their own communities'.42 In his final analysis, he charges that the co-optation of international Indigenous political actors is highly 'effective in challenging the unity of the global Indigenous rights movement and hindering genuine dialogue regarding Indigenous self-determination and justice'.43

Finding that states deliberately co-opt and provide 'illusions of inclusion' to Indigenous political actors in UN settings, Corntassel comes to the same conclusion as Alfred concerning the futility of engagement, arguing that because transnational Indigenous networks are 'channeled' and 'blunted' by colonial state actors, 'it is a critical time for Indigenous peoples to rethink their approaches to bringing Indigenous rights concerns to global forums'.44

Imagining a Post-Colonial Future: Pessimistic 'Resurgence' Versus the Optimism and Tenacity of Indigenous Movements on the Ground

All of these writers advocate Indigenous resurgence, through a combination of rejecting the current reconciliation politics of settler colonial states, coupled with a return to land-based Indigenous expressions of governance as the only viable, 'authentic' and legitimate path to a better future for Indigenous peoples, which they refer to as decolonisation. While inherently critical in their orientation, these three approaches do make some positive and productive contributions to Indigenous movements. They help shed light on the various and subtle ways that Indigenous leaders and communities can become co-opted into a colonial system. They help us to hold leadership accountable. They also help us keep a strong focus on our traditional, cultural and spiritual values as well as our traditional forms of governance which then also helps us imagine future possibilities.

As I have pointed out here, however, all three theorists are also caught in the same three pessimism traps: authenticity versus co-option; a vision of the state as unified, deliberate and never changing in its desire to colonise and control; and a view of engagement with the state as futile, if not dangerous, to Indigenous sovereignty and existence. When combined, these three pessimism traps aim to inhibit Indigenous peoples' engagement with the state in **any process** that could potentially re-imagine and re-formulate their **current relationship** into one that could be transformative and post-colonial, as envisioned by the **UN** **D**eclaration on the **R**ights of **I**ndigenous **P**eoples. The pessimism traps together work to foreclose any possibility that there could be **credible openings** of opportunity to negotiate a fairer and just relationship of co-existence with even the most progressive state government.

This pessimistic approach is not innocuous. By **overemphasising structure** and granting the state an enormous degree of agency as a unitary actor, this pessimistic approach does a **remarkable disservice** to Indigenous resistance movements by proscribing, from academia, an **extremely narrow** view of what Indigenous self-determination can and should mean in practice. By overlooking and/or discounting Indigenous agency and not even considering the possibility that Indigenous peoples could themselves be calculating, **strategic political actors** in their own right, and vis-a-vis states, the pessimistic lens of the resurgence school unnecessarily, unproductively and unjustly limits the field of possibility for Indigenous peoples' decision-making, thus actually countering and inhibiting expressions of Indigenous self-determination. By condemning—writ large—all Indigenous peoples and organisations that wish to seek peaceful co-existence with the state, negotiate mutually beneficial agreements with the state, and/or who have advocated on the international level for a set of standards that can provide a positive guiding framework for Indigenous-state relations, the pessimistic lens of resurgence forecloses much potential for new and improved relations, in any form, and is very likely to lead to **deeper conflicts** between states and Indigenous peoples, and potentially, even violent action, which Fanon indicated was the necessary outcome. The pessimism traps of the resurgence school are therefore, likely self-defeating for all but the most remote and isolated Indigenous communities. Further, this approach is quite out of step with the actions and vision of **many Indigenous resistance** movements on the ground who have been working for decades to advance Indigenous self-determination, both domestically and globally, in ways that transform the colonial state into something more just and may eventually present **creative alternatives** to the Westphalian state form in ways that could respect and accommodate Indigenous nations. Rather, it aims to **shame** and **blame** those who wish to explore creative and innovative post-colonial resolutions to the colonial condition.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration or UN Declaration) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007 after 25 years of development. The Declaration is ground-breaking, given the key leadership roles Indigenous peoples played in negotiating and achieving this agreement.45 Additionally, for the first time in UN history, the rights holders, Indigenous peoples, worked with states to develop an instrument that would serve to promote, protect and affirm Indigenous rights, both globally and in individual domestic contexts.46

Many Indigenous organisations and movements, from dozens of countries around the world, were involved in drafting and negotiating the UN Declaration and are now advocating for its full implementation, both internationally and in domestic and regional contexts. In Canada, some of the key organisational players — the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), the Assembly of First Nations, and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, or their predecessor organisations — were involved in the drafting and lengthy negotiations of the UN Declaration during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. In the United States, organisations like the American Indian Law Alliance and the Native American Rights Fund have been involved as well as the Navajo Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, who represent themselves as Indigenous peoples' governing institutions. From Scandinavia, the Saami Council and the Sami Parliaments all play a key role in advancing Indigenous rights. In Latin America, organisations like the Confederation de Nationalidades Indfgenas del Ecuador (CONAIE) and the Consejo Indio de Sud America (CISA) advocate for implementation of the UN Declaration. The three, major transnational Indigenous organisations — the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the International Indian Treaty Council and the Inuit Circumpolar Council — were all key members of the drafting and negotiating team for the UN Declaration, and the latter two, which are still in existence, continue their strong advocacy for its full implementation.

Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requires fundamental and **significant change**, on both the international and domestic levels. Because implementation of Indigenous rights essentially calls for a complete and fundamental restructuring of Indigenous-state relationships, it expects states to enact and implement a significant body of legal, constitutional, legislative and policy changes that can accommodate such things as Indigenous land rights, free, prior and informed consent, redress and a variety of self-government, autonomy and other such arrangements. States are not going to implement this multifaceted and complex set of changes on their own, however. They will require significant political and moral pressure to hold them accountable to the rhetorical commitments they have made to support this level of change. They will also require ongoing conversation and negotiation with Indigenous peoples along the way, lest the process becomes **problematically one-sided**. Such processes ultimately require sustained **political will**, commitment and engagement over the long term, to reach the end result of **radical systemic change** and Indigenous state relationships grounded in mutual respect, co-existence and reciprocity. This type of fundamental change requires creative thinking, careful diplomacy, tenacity, and above all, optimistic vision, on the part of Indigenous peoples. The pessimistic approaches of the resurgence school are ultimately of little use in these efforts, other than as a cautionary tale against state power, of which the organisational players are already keenly aware. Further, by dismissing and discouraging all efforts at engagement with states, and especially with the blanket accusations that all who engage in such efforts are 'co-opted' and not '**authentically**' Indigenous, the resurgence school actually creates **unnecessary negative** feelings and divisions amongst Indigenous movements who should be pooling limited resources and working together towards better futures.

**Top — AT: Cybernetics K**

**Putin’s disinformation is disguising food crisis in Africa**

**Sguazzin 7-4** [Antony Sguazzin is a senior managing editor at Bloomberg, 07-04-2022, Putin’s media blitz on Africa food crisis sparks alarm in Europe, Japan Times, https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/07/04/world/putin-africa-food-crisis-europe/] Eric

European governments have been alarmed by a Russian disinformation campaign that **seeks to deflect criticism** that President Vladimir Putin’s war with Ukraine risks leaving **millions of people in Africa** facing famine.

**Russian diplomats** have gone on a **media offensive** **in recent months** **to push the narrative** **that sanctions**, **rather than Russian** **blockades, are causing shortages of grains and fertilizer in Africa**. The public-relations onslaught shows how the monthslong war in Ukraine is becoming a global propaganda battle as food, fuel and crop-nutrient prices surge.

EU and U.K. officials who’ve recently met their African counterparts at meetings in New York and Rwanda expressed concern that the Russian message is gaining traction, said senior European diplomats who asked not to be identified. In response, European governments are increasing their engagement with leaders on the continent and boosting their own information campaigns to counter the Russian narrative, the diplomats said.

A senior European intelligence officer said the Kremlin had manufactured the debate as a means to get sanctions lifted and was intent on using the threat of global hunger as a bargaining tool in any future peace talks. Moscow has focused much of its influence operations on Africa and the Middle East, the official said.

**Russian scientific colonialism outweighs**

**Kagan et al. 19** [Frederick; 2019; PhD in Russian and Soviet military history @ Yale, Director of the Critical Threats Project at the American Enterprise Institute, Associate Professor of Military History at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, “Confronting the Russian Challenge: A New Approach for The U.S.,” http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/ISW%20CTP%20Report%20-%20Confronting%20the%20Russian%20Challenge%20-%20June%202019.pdf]

The Ideals of the American Republic

The stakes in the Russo-American conflict are **high**. Russian leader Vladimir Putin seeks to **undermine confidence** in **democratically elected institutions** and the **institution of democracy itself** in the United States and the West.1 He is trying to interfere with the ability of American and European peoples to **choose their leaders freely** and is undermining the **rules-based international order** on which **American prosperity** and **security** rest. His actions in Ukraine and Syria have driven the **world** toward **greater violence** and **disorder**. The **normalization of Putin’s illegal actions over time** will likely **prompt other states to emulate his behavior** and cause further **deterioration of the international system.**

Moscow’s war on the **very idea of truth** has been perhaps the most **damaging** Russian undertaking in recent years. The most basic element of the Russian information strategy, which we will consider in more detail presently, is the creation of a sense of **uncertainty** around **any important issue**. Russia’s strategy does not require persuading Western audiences that its actions in Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula or the Kerch Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, for example, were legal or justified.3 It is enough to create an environment in which many people say simply, “who knows?” The “who knows?” principle feeds powerfully into the phenomena of viral “fake news,” as well as other falsehoods and accusations of falsehoods which, **if left unchecked**, will ultimately make civil discourse **impossible**. The Kremlin’s propaganda does not necessarily need its target audiences to believe in lies; its primary goal is to make sure they do not believe in the truth.

**Top — AT: Fem IR K**

**Russian misinformation causes sexism**

**Jankowicz 17** [Nina Jankowicz is an American researcher and writer. She is the author of How to Lose the Information War, on Russian use of disinformation as geopolitical strategy, and How to Be a Woman Online, a handbook for fighting against online harassment of women, 12-11-2017, How disinformation became a new threat to women, Coda Story, https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/how-disinformation-became-a-new-threat-to-women/] Eric

She is far from alone. Female politicians and other high profile women **worldwide are facing a deluge** of what you could call **sexualized disinformation**. It mixes old ingrained sexist attitudes with the anonymity and reach of social media in an effort to destroy women’s reputations and push them out of public life.

Several female politicians in the small Caucasian nation of Georgia were the victims of a sexualized disinformation campaign last year, in the run-up to parliamentary elections. A series of videos purportedly showing them having sex were released online, with intimidating messages. The goal was to **spread “fear”** **among women** **involved in politics**, says Tamara Chergoleishvili, a prominent journalist and activist, whose husband is a well-known opposition politician. Georgia is a very conservative country where patriarchal attitudes remain strong, so that made the attack more potent. To underline the point, the message was accompanied by doctored images purporting to show her totally naked.

Chergoleishvili was targeted too, in a video supposedly showing her engaged in sex with two other people. But Chergoleishvili says it was a fake. “They didn’t know I’ve had a huge tattoo on my back since, like, 2000,” she laughs.

Though it backfired in her case, another female politician implicated in an extramarital affair as a result of the videos has all but retreated from Georgian political life.

By contrast, the men who featured have not suffered, “because male adultery is a common thing,” says Chergoleishvili. “Maybe the family suffered, but society would be less judgemental, whereas women are supposed to be the Virgin Mary. They’re not supposed to have sex.”

There was one exception. A man who appeared in the video aimed at Chergoleishvili was labelled as “gay,” which put him at extreme risk because of deep-seated homophobic attitudes in Georgia. “It took a long time for him to get over that,” she recalls.

Like Chergoleishvili, Zalishchuk has withstood the attacks against her, and continues to maintain a high profile. But she can’t escape her naked doppelganger. “Whenever I speak publicly somewhere abroad, someone will comment on it [on social media],” the Ukrainian MP says, often adding a link to the photo. “I have no resources to fight that.” “It was all intended to discredit me as a personality, to devalue me, and what I’m saying.” Ukrainian MP Svitlana Zalishchuk

Zalishchuk **suspects a pro-Kremlin hand** in the abuse she has experienced, **as it started at the height of the conflict with Russia.** And the **fake claims** and **doctored images** **first** **appeared** **on pro-Kremlin platforms.** But whatever the case, it has become a worldwide problem for any women who takes a position online.

The use of realistic pictures — which is easy to achieve with modern software — adds to the potency **of these misogynistic disinformation campaigns**, says Sandra Pepera, director of Gender, Women, and Democracy programs at the National Democratic Institute, in Washington, D.C. “Obscene harassment is bad enough, but the visualization of it is what tips the balance.”

Such abuse is becoming almost part of the job for female politicians. But logging off to try to escape is not really an option, as being on social media is such a crucial part of being a modern-day politician.

In Georgia, the government eventually condemned the release of the sex tapes, and they were removed from YouTube. But that could not mitigate the damage entirely, as the names of those shown in the videos spread widely. And intimidation like this can have a smothering effect on female engagement in politics, says the NDI’s Pepera, “limiting both the number of women able to participate online and the range of issues discussed.”

And in countries where violence against women is common, online slurs can **quickly translate into direct** **physical threats**. “If it happens to you and you’re Hillary Clinton that’s one thing,” says Pepera. “If that happens to you and you’re in Indonesia, Malaysia, or Pakistan, you could pay for it with your life.”

There is more awareness now of the the threat of sexualised abuse online, but both governments and the social media giants **have yet to come** **up with an** **effective response**. Sexualized disinformation mixes old ingrained sexist attitudes with the anonymity and reach of social media in an effort to **destroy women’s** **reputations and push them out of public** **life.**

**Top — AT: Grove K**

**Grove agrees with NATO deterrence!**

**Kamanā 22**, ABC News, (Lia, “As tensions rise in Ukraine, impacts will be felt in Hawai'i”, ABC News, February 22, <https://www.kitv.com/news/local/as-tensions-rise-in-ukraine-impacts-will-be-felt-in-hawaii/article_75d9e806-945d-11ec-80ad-474101021af2.html>) //CHC-DS

President Joe Biden announcing major economic sanctions against Russia on Tuesday, following Russian president Vladimir Putin's move of troops into the eastern region of Ukraine. While Putin called it a peacekeeping mission, the U.S. calls it a flagrant violation of international law. In Hawaii, Ukraine may seem like a world away, but the impacts of the situation in eastern Europe will be felt on its shores. "When you are in a place like Hawaii and you are thinking thank goodness we aren't right next door to the war, you need to start questioning what does it mean, what kind of precedent does it mean that international boundaries don't matter," said Jairus Grove, associate professor of international studies at the University of Hawaii Grove says how the situation in Ukraine plays out, could have lasting consequences. "This is calling into question what NATO is for, this is calling into question what the U.S. can do without firing shots," Grove said.

Using an example from Thomas C. Schelling's, 'Arms and Influence,' Grove says there are two different things that military power does. "**First it deters**, it prevents another state from attacking you," said Grove. "**Then, there is** having so much power because of military might you can have **compellence** which means without firing a shot you can compel a state to do what you would like it to do." Grove says for most of our lifetimes, we have lived with the belief that the United States has compellence. Now, he thinks Putin has kind of called the bluff on that belief, and how the U.S. continues to react will be watched closely by other adversaries. "Once one state calls your bluff, you kind of wait for the next one to do it and the United States will be put to a choice, when do we decide that it’s not a bluff, when are we actually willing to fight and that is the conversation we need to have," said Grove. Among the sanctions issued Tuesday, Feb. 22: cutting off Russia's government from western finances, which means the country can no longer trade in its new debt on U.S. or European markets. But Grove was quick to point out, sanctions only work if they are painful and if they are a painful they are probably working in a way we aren't going to like. One example is at the gas pump where Hawai'i will continue to see prices rise. "We are market takers and so we tend to purchase the oil on the market where we can get it cheapest and over the last few years, 34% or about 1/3 of all oil comes from Russia so from that stand point it has a major impact on us," said Chris Yunker, Managing Director, Resiliency, Clean Transportation, and Analytics, with the Hawai'i State Energy Office. According to Grove, the problem lies in if the sanctions don't work though. "That means **we don't have a way to constrain Russia without using military force**," said Grove. Grove says he thinks Putin over the last several years has built a large enough counter financial network outside of the sanctions that he can keep investment and capital coming in. "He has a lot to lose politically by kowtowing to the sanctions," said Grove. "I would be surprised. The domestic costs would be high for him and I don’t know if he will even feel the pinch." Only time will tell whether or not sanctions work to deter Russia, but Grove says this will be a period of tremendous uncertainty and rapid change.

He does believe the probability of a direct war between the U.S. and Russia is less than zero, saying he doesn't see Biden committing U.S. troops to this particular conflict. "But what this can do, is this conflict can spread and that poses the question of **if Russia takes Ukraine too easily, will Putin set his eyes elsewhere**," said Grove.

**He thinks Russia’s revisionist!**

**Van Dyke 22**, journalist for Spectrum News Hawaiʻi, (Michelle Broder, “A Ukrainian living on Oahu reacts with shock to Russia’s invasion”, Spectrum News, March 9, https://spectrumlocalnews.com/hi/hawaii/human-interest/2022/03/08/a-ukrainian-living-on-oahu-reacts-with-shock-to-russia-s-invasion) //CHC-DS

“We … have a lot of anti-war activists in the state who watch these kinds of humanitarian catastrophes very closely,” said Grove. “We have a lot of people who are uniformed members of the U.S. military, who I'm sure are already thinking, ‘Is this a conflict that the United States is going to become involved in? Are we going to be sent to Europe to reinforce NATO allies?’” He also encouraged anyone who might feel Ukraine is far away to take the time to engage, as everyone's participation is important for a flourishing democracy. “That’s what makes us different than Russia … our foreign policy is shaped by our discourse and our elections and who represents us,” Grove said.

Russia’s Fake News

Olga Sousa moved to San Francisco when she was 19 years old, after growing up in the city Zaporizhzhia in southeastern Ukraine, where Russian forces have been fighting and seized a large nuclear power plant on March 4. Sousa has now lived in Hawaii for the last eight years. After learning that Russia had invaded Ukraine, Sousa told Spectrum News Hawaii that she called her mom, who currently lives in San Francisco, and they talked about their worry for Sousa’s 33-year-old brother. He lives in Hawaii, but had returned to Zaporizhzhia the week before the war started, trying to help his wife get out of Ukraine. “She was just crying,” said Sousa about her mother. “I have such a heavy guilt that I'm here safe. I'm thankful that I'm here, but at the same time I feel guilty that I'm here.” Sousa is half Ukrainian and half Russian, as her Russian mother moved to Ukraine in the 1980s, where she met her Ukrainian father. Her mom’s sister and her cousins still live in Russia, but she said her mom and aunt stopped speaking five years ago, because her aunt claimed Russia is helping Ukraine and the country should surrender. Sousa said Russian President Vladimir Putin’s rhetoric has brainwashed people. “It's very heartbreaking,” said Sousa about her family’s division. Grove said that **Russia is good at defining the narrative** of what’s taking place **through** strategic communications and **fake news**, including perpetuating the **false claim that** “**this is a defensive invasion** (and) that (attacking) Ukraine is about protecting Russia.” “Russia is very good at building stories, which draw people in and they can be conspiratorial (or) they can merely go with people's already existing political preferences, but they're very good at inflaming differences,” said Grove. Still, Grove said Putin can’t control all the information that comes into the country, especially with the internet. This is part of the reason some Russians are protesting the war in Ukraine.

War crimes

When Sousa first found out that Russia was attacking Ukraine, she said she was in disbelief; despite Russia’s escalation of troops, she never thought they would attack. She checked news reports, but information was just starting to come in, so she called a friend in Ukraine, who told her the apartment building next to her had just been bombed. “It was so surreal. I felt like I was watching a movie,” said Sousa. Sousa's grandparents and some of her other friends still live in Ukraine. “I have a lot of family and friends pretty much all over Ukraine and have my grandparents in Kharkiv, which has been heavily attacked for the last two days,” said Sousa in an interview with Spectrum News Hawaii on Feb. 28. Kharkiv is the second-largest city in Ukraine, with a population of 1.5 million, and Russia has been attacking the city with airstrikes and rockets. Residential buildings have been damaged and a missile hit the city’s central square on March 1. The city has put up a resistance to Russia’s fighting, with Russian planes shot down and advancing troops slowed. “Ukraine is so little compared to Russia on the map. Yet, we're sticking up to Russia,” Sousa said. “The strongest feeling I have right now is definitely pride. I'm proud for my people.” “I'm sad to see people dying, to be honest, on either of the sides,” Sousa added. Grove, the university professor, told Spectrum News Hawaii that it is clear Russia is committing war crimes in Ukraine right now. “I think whenever you move heavy artillery, and you're bombing in civilian areas, that is by definition, a war crime,” said Grove. “We may be seeing **unprecedented dangerous events** unfolding before us.” The 1949 Geneva Convention Article 8, 2.b defines war crimes, in part, as “intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives…” and “intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such an attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects …” The International Criminal Court launched an investigation on March 2 into whether Putin is committing war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide as the civilian death toll rises and widespread destruction is inflicted on Ukraine.

**And China!**

**Fawcett 22**, Journalist for Honolulu Civil Beat News, (Denby, “Denby Fawcett: Why Hawaii Should Care About The Russia-Ukraine War”, Civil Beat, March 1, <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/03/denby-fawcett-why-hawaii-should-care-about-the-russia-ukraine-war/>) //CHC-DS

University of Hawaii associate professor Jairus Grove says many in the islands view the war in Ukraine as a far away crisis, and that makes him sad. He thinks more people should be shocked. “It is a watershed moment for global order. It is no coincidence that China sent nine warplanes into Taiwan’s secure airspace the same day that Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine. He says Russia’s naked aggression could **embolden China** to go after disputed land it claims it owns and wants to take back. And it could make China more **eager** in the future to **test agreed-upon international boundaries**. Grove is chairman of the political science department at UH Manoa and the director of the Hawaii Research Center for Future Studies. He thinks that even the increased support from Germany and other Western allies for swift sanctions still may not be enough to change what Russia has in mind. He says even stronger sanctions may push Russia closer to China, which already signaled it might bail out Russia with economic support behind the scenes as it has done in the past. **“It is a different kind of world when China and Russia no longer see each other as competitors,”** says Grove.

**Their theory is wrong, and the case outweighs.**

**Mott, 20**—PhD in Political Science from St. Andrews, Master’s degree from London Metropolitan in IR, former Scholar in Residence at the Helmerich Center for American Research at the Gilcrease Museum (Christopher, “Savage Ecology: War and Geopolitics at the End of the World, A Book Review,” <https://geotrickster.com/2020/01/01/savage-ecology-war-and-geopolitics-at-the-end-of-the-world-a-book-review/>, dml) [typo correction denoted by brackets]

Where I **disagree** with the author, however, is his **very concept** of the ‘**Eurocene**.’ If the present international state system **wasn’t working** for states across the globe it would be **dying out**, but it seems to **strengthening**. There is **no way** we are getting through what I will remain calling the anthropocene without **some level** of a command economy for resources and research direction for technologies. Many of these resources will be scare and will be **competed over**. The competitive nature of the state system means something Darwinistic is occurring, which is good as we **do not yet have the answer** for surviving our current era and so **multiple approaches** must be tried and the **best will serve as models** for others and the **worst will die out**.

I also **do not see anything particularly European** about modernity anymore. While a new era **did begin** with the biological and demographic takeover of the western hemisphere and its forceable wedding to Europe-previously a minor and not particularly important subcontinental peninsula of Asia-**any Eurasian actor** could have potentially done the same thing. The bureaucratic state was **first born in China** and the agricultural state came from the **Middle East**, and those strike me as **just as relevant** to where we are now than the maritime-industrial states of post medieval Europe. Furthermore, as **India** and **China** move their way into **full industrialization** on their own terms and countries like **Japan** have long held that position dating back to the colonial era, I find **little** to argue for something called specifically ‘The Eurocene.’ That being said, the author is entirely correct that our currently unsustainable methods of development are a type of self-replicating virus imposed by force. But so too will any solutions have to follow that path.

It may come as no surprise that I, a person very into geopolitics (and making speculative realist geopolitics in particular) also take a more neutral tone on the field than this author. I think geopolitics are **as likely to get us out of this mess** as they are to dig us deeper. Aside from general environmental goals, I see **little universal** in how we will escape from **pollution** and **mass extinction** and more a **variety of paths** which depend on the **varying ecologies of different countries**. As it is, some countries will benefit from climate change and their interests cannot be said to be comparable with those who will suffer. A **stateless** world is a **de facto neoliberal** world in practice and the author’s fear of political homogenization is **not caused by realism** or **geopolitics** but rather **prevented by those same actors**. Diversity can only thrive in the **absence of grand universal projects**.

So our approaches are very clearly different as I see realist geopolitics as the garuntor [**guarantor**] of ideological, economic, and ecological diversity, **not its foe**. But Grove is an excellent writer so I enjoyed his take on it anyway.

**Grove is too pessimistic about modernity’s potential — means at best they solve nothing and at worst “martial empiricism” actively empowers fascists.**

**Tallis, 20**—senior researcher, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, University of Hamburg (Benjamin, “Un-cancelling the future,” New Perspectives, OnlineFirst, July 8, 2020, dml)

Examples of this way of thinking are plentiful but, for convenience, one need to look no further than Jairus Grove’s scintillatingly pessimistic keynote at the Hamburg Sessions (forthcoming as an essay in NP and based on his 2019 book, Savage Ecology).3 It is not that Grove doesn’t make compelling critical arguments – he does and in brilliant, imaginative ways – but that they **lack balance**. And balance **matters**, whether we are reckoning with horrendous pasts or trying to boldly imaging new futures.

To see, or certainly to dwell on, **only the bad** in what we in the West have collectively done (however, Grove or anyone else defines who we are), over the entire course of our past and present is **grossly unfair**. It also amounts, in effect, to a counsel of **despair**, however much Grove protests to the contrary or claims to eschew nihilism. In his keynote, having written off our past and present, Grove also explicitly urged us in Europe and the West to **stop imagining better**, **progressive futures**, arguing that this has led to precisely the problems he identified. Grove’s critique thus not only leaves us out of time (without an avowable past, present or future) but also leaves us **without space** for contesting negative, regressive and repressive political trends. In his book, he laments the ‘debilitating stupor’ in which the work of thinkers like Theodor Adorno and Giorgio Agamben leaves us (Grove, 2019: 238). But Grove’s own pessimism, if we took it seriously, would leave Europeans without a political leg to stand on. It would leave us in just such a **stupor** – or **worse** – with no **solid ground** and no **lever**: no way to **move the world** and no platform for **positive**, **progressive change**.

**Why bother, if everything we do only makes things worse?**

However much harm we Europeans and Westerners have done, we **haven’t done**, **don’t** and **won’t only do harm**. The real danger of Grove’s type of **timelessly pessimistic** and **literally hopeless** critique is that (again, if taken seriously) it breeds **only damaging inertia**, **inaction** and **resentment** – its hopelessness makes it a **debilitating** critique; its timelessness offers **no possibility of salvage**, let alone **progress**. It **cedes the ground** of action to those who many of us (including Grove) would **explicitly disagree with** – whether to exponents of ‘**traditional**’ approaches to IR who are **more than happy** to offer policy advice or, worse, to **authoritarians** and **populists** in practical politics (as ably described in Johanna Sumuvuori’s essay in this issue). Critical scholars **too rarely** see it as their task to construct **positive visions** of better worlds. Instead, too often they content themselves (if no one else) with evermore thoroughgoing deconstructive critique – including of other critical academics. Whether totalising or parasitic, even some of its leading proponents admit that IR’s critical project has, thus far, had insufficient impact on the world at large (Austin, 2017, 2019).

Few critical scholars will thank me for this comparison, but, in their pessimistic, misanthropic zeal, they echo what French President Emmanuel Macron called the ‘sad passions’ of the author Michel Houellebecq4 (Carre`re, 2017). They may not share Houellebecq’s politics, but many critical scholars certainly share his exhaustive (and exhausting) disenchantment with contemporary (neo)liberal societies, the state of Europe and of the West. Too often they also share his miserabilist outlook on the impossibility of change for the better and the futility or harm of even trying to improve things.

Grove does propose several forms of political action: **micro-kindnesses**, however **vague** (e.g. ‘the impossible generosity and affirmation of deconstruction’, 2019: 231); **resistant acts** by brave individuals (e.g. ‘William ‘‘Fox’’ Fallon, who sacrificed his prestigious position as head of [US Military] Central Command because he would not go along with the plan to attack Iran’, 2019: 232); embracing entirely new ‘**forms of life** 5 ’; or **welcoming apocalypse** as driver of change (2019: 229–248). Grove **will not be confused with Goldilocks anytime soon** – these forms of action each seem either **too little** or (**much**) **too much**.

Few of us would question the value of and need for kindness and, indeed, the most hopeful part of Grove’s book is the touching introduction where he details many of the kindnesses he has himself benefitted from, mainly from people in the West where he has spent most of his life. There is also, clearly, a role for resistance and for the kinds of acts that Grove notes have prevented executions and even nuclear war. Yet without a **wider programme**, without a **bigger positive vision**, kindness and resistance **cannot sufficiently change our world** for the better. Apocalypse, on the contrary, changes **too much**, **junks too much** that is good and is **rarely likely** to be an **appealing** option, or something we **can all get behind**. The apocalyptic aspect of Grove’s position, like that of many critical scholars, seeks to inflict **destructive harm** on Western institutions rather than **constructively reform** them – something Houellebecq would also relish. Apocalyptic change also smacks of the **recklessly callous**, **negative sides** of early 20th-century futurism (Marinetti, 1909), as Grove acknowledges when asking ‘How do we go wild without the cruelty of indifference?’ (2019: 280). Again, a more balanced approach to boldness would help.

To be clear, major change is needed – that was the whole point of the Hamburg Sessions and the motivation behind giving it the theme of ‘Un-Cancelling the Future’. I’ve argued elsewhere that the kind of socio-economically regressive, technocratic, defensive liberalisms that have dominated large parts of the last 40 years in the West have a lot to answer for (Tallis, 2018). So too, of course, does the type of narrowly, teleological individually atomising (neo)liberalism that neither saw (Fukuyama, 1992) nor allowed (Fisher, 2009) alternative visions of politics, societies and economies. Mark Fisher (2009), echoing the artist Gerhard Richter (Elger, 2009), called this myopic liberalism ‘Capitalist Realism’. You don’t have to be a Marxist or even a leftist to see that a **mandated lack of alternatives** and a **commensurate narrowing of possibilities** and **horizons** is a bad thing. As noted above, both climate change and sociotechnical upheavals in the ways we work and live **need bold visions** to address the challenges they pose while also seizing the opportunities they present.

It is, however, eminently possible to **recognise the full horrors** of Europe’s (colonial) pasts and presents **without immediately discounting the possibility of improvement** coming from the West, from Europe. Similarly, one can recognise the myriad problems that Europeans have caused while also **celebrating the many positive things** they have also achieved. Moreover, it is possible to use those achievements as **inspirations** for better ways of doing things – as **catalysts** to new, progressive creativity and to positive visions of the future. Just as Kraftwerk did in the fragile yet fertile Germany of the second half of the 20th century when they acknowledged the abyss yet still sought a better future, including as atonement for that past.

The cancellation of the future

William Gibson recently tweeted ‘‘In the 1920s, the phrase ‘the 21st Century’ was already popubiquitous. How often do we see the phrase ‘‘the 22nd Century’’, now?’’. And it’s true – we don’t have these dates anymore. As a boy, as a young man, I had mental pictures of the 21st Century. But I don’t have any sense of 2050 or 2100 – except as a deterioration or a collapse. (Simon Reynolds, Hamburg Sessions 2019, see essay in this issue)

I return to Kraftwerk below but first, a little more is needed on the ramifications of contemporary hopelessness. Rather than striving to create new and compelling positive, progressive visions, many thinkers content themselves with critique (Austin, 2017) while others, like Grove, see positive, progressive visions and futures – especially those coming from Europe or the wider West – as being necessarily harmful in themselves.

This is postmodernism as hangover. The depressed – and depressing – aftermath of the shortcomings, broken promises and unintended consequences of modernisms of different kinds, in which strange connections are made and selective, guilty memory runs amok (Fisher, 2014). Forgetting the good, it fuses the bewitchingly pertinent aspects of the post-positivist critical project (which influenced many of us, myself very much included), with more zealously (self-)destructive and paralysing tendencies. As Fisher puts it: ‘Deconstruction [is] a kind of pathology of scepticism, which induced hedging, infirmity of purpose and compulsory doubt’ (2014: 16). In this mode, scholarship no longer seeks to invent the train but fixates on the train crash or even pre-empts and precludes the train’s invention for fear of the seemingly inescapable imagined train crash to come.

Like Grove’s denunciation of the future, many of the critiques of (popular) modernisms are not so much **wrong** as **imbalanced** (although some are wrong of course, others not even). They take **insufficient account** of modernisms’ **multiple** and **meaningful successes** (there’s no time here, but see, e.g. Fisher, 2014: 22; or Meades, 2014, for a flavour). This leaves us in an odd situation where many of the scholars, commentators and others who criticise neoliberalism, capitalist realism and so on, find themselves in **de facto agreement** with its notion that there should be no alternative. In this view, we **simply shouldn’t do big vision politics** because our ‘schemes to improve the human condition’ have not only ‘failed’ but will **always**, **inevitably**, do **more harm than good** (Scott, 2008). This approach, all post and no modern, will take us **nowhere**, even as it **fast-forwards the academic careers** of its exponents.

The future visions that are left, on the left, tend to be Marxist ones (see, e.g. Grove, 2019: 198– 202). Tarred not only by the brush of the communisms that actually existed (and their distinctly less balanced ledger than that of modernism more widely) they understandably fail to inspire mass enthusiasm. Many of their proponents are still really more interested in explaining the failure to bring about the inevitable (full communism) in the past and present than in imagining new futures that go beyond the narrow world view and limiting subjectivity of too many Marxist approaches (see, e.g. Scribner, 2003; Sˇitera, 2015). This has done little to address the crisis of hope or to countervail prevalent contemporary pessimism.

The loss of the belief in the progressive future – that tomorrow can be better than yesterday and today – and the related erosion of faith in our ability to **positively shape our own destiny** are what Berardi (2011: 13) called ‘the slow cancellation of the future’. As Simon Reynolds noted in his Hamburg Sessions keynote (included in this issue of NP), the cancellation may have started slowly in the 1970s, but, by the 2000s, it had picked up speed and its effects could start to be seen. The first of these – its more (neo)liberal variant – was the feeling of living in an endless present. For a lot of people in the West, this has been comfortable in many ways (although often unevenly and unfairly) and has had distinct advantages over the past (the extension of rights and opportunities to broader swathes of the population) but without much hope, optimism or greater purpose. Unless it provokes the nostalgic responses outlined below, this endless present can lead to a sense of **ennui**, a **lack of direction** and **loss of momentum**.

The second, **more overtly sinister**, variant that fills the vacuum left by the dearth of positive, progressive visions for the future takes the form of **darker re-enchantments** focused on the (imagined) past (e.g. Campanella and Dassu`, 2019). Whether ‘**making America great again**’, ‘**taking back control**’ in the United Kingdom or claiming to offer an ‘**alternative for Germany**’, these movements are fundamentally premised on a **backward-looking politics** of nostalgia. The pessimism about the present and worries about the future on which these movements have each capitalised have given rise to an **increasingly defensive politics** of closing down and protecting, at the expense of opening up and integrating. Nativism and pessimism tend to go **hand in hand**: shrinking pies bring narrowed horizons and hasten the circling of wagons around **exclusive** and **chauvinistic visions** of national communities. Too often, this retro-rightism has been met only with retro-leftism or a tired centrism that merely seeks more of the same, to smooth the endless present. But that can change ...

Reclaiming the spirit of Kraftwerk

COVID-19 has cancelled the endless present6 – or at least it can if we make the best of it. The scale of the response to the pandemic highlights the degree to which **radical change is possible** if people are **persuaded** of the need. This crisis **will be** (and is **already being**) used politically. The challenge for those of us who want a more progressive future is to ensure that the disruption caused by COVID-19 is put to **positive effect** – to ensure that it is **creative** rather than **wanton disruption** – and to spur the kind of action that can **address our biggest challenges** but also to create new opportunities to **make a better** ‘Post-Coronial’ **world** (Tallis and Renic, 2020).

From climate change to the changing world of work, bold action is needed to address the causes of our biggest problems rather than simply alleviating their symptoms. But also seeing these issues as **possibilities** to be seized for progressive improvement, rather than just seeing them as **problems** to be managed will be **key**. As Merje Kuus was at pains to emphasise in her Hamburg Sessions keynote, perspective is vital (see her essay in this issue). Building resilient societies and a more equitable global order calls for the political will to **formulate** and **make the case for positive proactive policy**, not the **piecemeal passivity**, timid tinkering or (**critical**) **conservatism** that have characterised too much of European politics and public debate in recent times.

**Grove says we should replace calculative rationality with a focus on affect. Don’t do that.**

**Boler and Davis, 18**—Department of Social Justice Education, OISE/University of Toronto (Megan and Elizabeth, “The affective politics of the “post-truth” era: Feeling rules and networked subjectivity,” Emotion, Space and Society Volume 27, May 2018, Pages 75-85, dml)

While the attention to affective attunement is **potentially useful**, in deploying a definition of affect as quantitative, pre-personal, non-conscious, and non-signifying, one is left with **myriad questions** about how particular emotions are **targeted**, **produced** and **manipulated** within the affective politics of digital media. Papacharissi characterizes affective transmission as follows: “So digital, among other media, invite and transmit affect but also sustain affective feedback loops that generate and reproduce affective patterns of relating to others that are further reproduced as affect — that is, intensity that has not yet been cognitively processed as feeling, emotion, or thought” (23). Following the popular reification of affect, Papacharissi sharply distinguishes affect from emotion (2015, 13). “Affect explains the intensity with which something is experienced; it refers to just that: intensity” (2015, 135). For her, affect is a central component of how stories are formed and circulated within media flows, and affect helps provide an index of how some stories end up being salient in social media, and thus potentially have more or less political impact. While this account of affect resonates prima facie with Hochschild's concept of “deep stories” and felt truths which shape the feeling rules we see defining partisan polarization, readers are **left wanting a full articulation** of the **significance** (rather than simply the **alleged presence**) of affect as it circulates in and through digital media. This reflects a **more widespread tendency** in much scholarship to invoke “affect” in Massumi's “autonomous” sense with **little exploration** of the **complex relational manifestations** of emotions.

Affect **all too often** becomes a **mystified idea** akin to force or energy and intimates an **abstract celebration** of the uncontainable:

Disorder, marginality, and anarchy present the habitat for affect, mainly because order, mainstreaming, and hierarchy afford form that compromises the futurity of affect. Because marginal spaces support the emergence of change, affect is **inherently political**, although it **does not conform** to the structures we symbolically internalize as political. Thus, per affect theory, empowerment lies in liminality, in pre-emergence and emergence, or at the point at which new formations of the political are in the process of being imagined but **not yet articulated**. The form of affective power is pre-actualized, networked, and of a liquid nature.(2015, 19)

“Affect” so understood **pales in analytical resonance** or **utility** in contrast with earlier feminist analyses of emotion, which, as in the bitterness example above, describe the **actual shape** and **flow** of social life as it is intersubjectively produced in **specific micro-** and **macro-political contexts** of power relations. The qualitative descriptions of “affect” in social media are conceptually overshadowed by the language of emotion — and yet emotions are presented as simply what people “express”, not a web of intersubjectively produced sociality (see, e.g., Papacharissi, 2015, 15, 22, 53–54). As a result, the account is able **only to suggest broad quantitative measures** of the rate and flow of retweets as exemplifying affect.10 Affect understood as “intensity” **all too often** gestures at something it **does not explain**, while using rhetorical strategies that **further mystify the term**.

**Their critique is essentialist.**

Audrey **Alejandro 19**, Assistant Professor at the Department of Methodology, London School of Economics and Political Science, “Western Dominance in International Relations?”, Routledge Publishing, forthcoming

Since the **1970s**, a ‘critical’ movement has been developing in the humanities and social sciences denouncing the existence of ‘**Western dominance’** over the worldwide production and circulation of knowledge. **However**, thirty years after the emergence of this promising agenda in International Relations (IR), this discipline has **not** experienced a major shift. This volume offers a counter-intuitive and original contribution to the understanding of the global circulation of knowledge. **In contrast to the literature**, it argues that the internationalisation of social sciences in the designated ‘Global South’ **is not conditioned** by the existence of a presumably ‘Western dominance’. Indeed, although discriminative practices such as Eurocentrism and gatekeeping **exist**, their existence **does not lead to a unipolar structuration of IR internationalisation** around ‘the West’. Based on these empirical results, this book reflexively questions the role of critique in the **(re)production of the social and political order.** Paradoxically, the anti-Eurocentric critical discourses **reproduce the very Eurocentrism they criticise**. This book offers methodological support to address this paradox by demonstrating how one can use discourse analysis and reflexivity to produce innovative results and decentre oneself from the vision of the world one has been socialised into.

**Top — AT: Security K**

**No impact to securitization.**

Stacie E. **Goddard &** Ronald R. **Krebs 15**, Goddard, Jane Bishop Associate Professor of Political Science at Wellesley College; Krebs, Beverly and Richard Fink Professor in the Liberal Arts and Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, “Securitization Forum: The Transatlantic Divide: Why Securitization Has Not Secured a Place in American IR, Why It Should, and How It Can,” Duck of Minerva, 9-18-2015, http://duckofminerva.com/2015/09/securitization-forum-the-transatlantic-divide-why-securitization-has-not-secured-a-place-in-american-ir-why-it-should-and-how-it-can.html

Securitization theory has rightly garnered much attention among European scholars of international relations. Its basic claims are powerful: that security threats are not given, but require active construction; that the boundaries of “security” are malleable; that the declaration that a certain problem lies within the realm of security is itself a productive political act; and that “security” issues hold a trump card, demanding disproportionate resources and silencing alternative perspectives. Securitization thus highlights a familiar, even ubiquitous, political process that had received little attention in the international relations or comparative foreign policy literatures. It gave scholars a theoretical language, if not quite a set of coherent theoretical tools, with which to make sense of how a diverse set of issues, from migration to narcotics flows to global climate change, sometimes came to be treated as matters of national and global security and thereby—and this is where securitization’s critical edge came to the fore—impeded reasoned political debate. No surprise that, as Jarrod and Eric observe, securitization has been the focus of so many articles in the EJIR—and even more in such journals as the Review of International Studies and Security Dialogue. But there are (good) substantive and (not so good) sociological reasons that **securitization has failed to gain traction in North America**. First, and most important, securitization describes a process but leaves us well short of (a) a fully specified causal theory that (b) takes proper account of the politics of rhetorical contestation. According to the foundational theorists of the Copenhagen School, actors, usually elites, transform the social order from one of normal, everyday politics into a Schmittian world of crisis by identifying a dire threat to the political community. They conceive of this “securitizing move” in linguistic terms, as a speech act. As Ole Waever (1995: 55) argues, “By saying it [security], something is done (as in betting, a promise, naming a ship). . . . [T]he word ‘security’ is the act . . .” [emphasis added]. Securitization is a powerful discursive process that constitutes social reality. Countless articles and books have traced this process, and its consequences, in particular policy domains. Securitization presents itself as a **causal** account. But its **mechanisms remain obscure**, as do the **conditions** under which it operates. Why is speaking security so powerful? How do mere words twist and transform the social order? Does the invocation of security prompt a visceral emotional response? Are speech acts persuasive, by using well-known tropes to convince audiences that they must seek protection? Or does securitization operate through the politics of rhetorical coercion, silencing potential opponents? In securitization accounts, **speech acts** often seem to be **magical incantations** that upend normal politics through pathways shrouded in mystery. Equally unclear is why **some** securitizing moves resonate, while others [are **ignored**] ~~fall on deaf ears~~. Certainly not all attempts to construct threats succeed, and this is true of both traditional military concerns as well as “new” security issues. Both neoconservatives and structural realists in the United States have long insisted that **conflict with China is inevitable**, yet China has over the last **25 years** been more opportunity than threat in US political discourse—**despite** these **vigorous and persistent securitizing moves**. In very recent years, the balance has shifted, and the China threat has started to catch on: **linguistic processes alone cannot account for this change**. The US military has repeatedly declared that global climate change has profound implications for national security—but that has hardly cast aside climate change deniers, many of whom are ironically foreign policy hawks supposedly deferential to the uniformed military. Authoritative speakers have varied in the efficacy of their securitizing moves. While George W. Bush powerfully framed the events of 9/11 as a global war against American values, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a more gifted orator, struggled to convince a skeptical public that Germany presented an imminent threat to the United States. After thirty years as an active research program, securitization theory has **hardly begun to offer acceptable answers** to these questions. **Brief references to “facilitating conditions” won’t cut it**. You don’t have to subscribe to a covering-law conception of theory to find these questions important or to find securitization’s answers unsatisfying. A large part of the problem, we believe, lies in securitization’s silence on the politics of security. Its foundations in speech act theory have yielded an oddly apolitical theoretical framework. In its seminal formulation, the Copenhagen school emphasized the internal linguistic rules that must be followed for a speech act to be recognized as competent. Yet as Thierry Balzacq argues, by treating securitization as a purely rule-driven process, the Copenhagen school ignores the politics of securitization, reducing “security to a conventional procedure such as marriage or betting in which the ‘felicity circumstances’ (conditions of success) must fully prevail for the act to go through” (2005:172). Absent from this picture are fierce rhetorical battles, where coalitions counter securitizing moves with their own appeals that strike more or less deeply at underlying narratives. Absent as well are the public intellectuals and media, who question and critique securitizing moves sometimes (and not others), sometimes to good effect (and sometimes with little impact). The **audience** itself—whether the mass public or a narrower elite stratum—is **stripped of all agency**. Speaking security, even when the performance is competent, **does not sweep this politics away**. Only by delving into this politics can we shed light on the mysteries of securitization. We see rhetorical politics as constituted less by singular “securitizing moves” than by “contentious conversation”—to use Charles Tilly’s phrase. To this end, we would urge securitization theorists, as we recently have elsewhere, to move towards a “pragmatic” model that rests on four analytical wagers: that actors are both strategic and social; that legitimation works by imparting meaning to political action; that legitimation is laced through with contestation; and that the power of language emerges through contentious dialogue. We are heartened that our ambivalence about securitization—the ways in which we find it by turns appealing and dissatisfying—and our vision for how to move forward have in the last decade been echoed by (mostly) European colleagues. These critics have laid out a research agenda that would, if taken up, produce more satisfying, and more deeply political, theoretical accounts. In our own work, both individual and collective, we have tried to advance that research agenda. So long as securitization theorists resist defining the theory’s scope and mechanisms, and so long as it remains wedded to apolitical underpinnings, we think it unlikely to gain a broad following on this side of the pond. Second, securitization has been held back by another way in which it is apolitical—this time thanks to its Schmittian commitments and political vision. Successful securitization, in seminal accounts, replaces normal patterns of politics with the world of the exception, in which contest has no place. They imagine security as the ultimate trump card. But, in reality, the divide is not nearly so stark. Security **does not crowd out all other spending priorities**—or states would spend on nothing but defense and “securitized” issues. **Nor** does simply declaring something a matter of national security **guarantee its funding**—or global climate change counter-measures, including research on renewable energies, would be well-funded. Nor are security issues somehow aloof from politics: politics has never truly stopped “at the water’s edge.” Securitization considers only the politics of security. Its strangely dichotomous optic cannot see or make sense of the politics within security. In ignoring the politics within security, securitization is of course in good company. Realists of all stripes have paid little attention to domestic political contest, except as a distraction from structural imperatives. But while realism is unquestionably a powerful first-cut, this inattention to the politics within security is also among the reasons so many have found it wanting. As Arnold Wolfers long ago observed, some degree of insecurity is the normal state of affairs. But “some may find the danger to which they are exposed entirely normal and in line with their modest security expectations while others consider it unbearable to live with these same dangers.” And states, he further argues, do not actually maximize security—almost ever. “Even when there has been no question that armaments would mean more security, the cost in taxes, the reduction in social benefits, or the sheer discomfort involved have militated effectively against further effort” (1962:151, 153). A securitization perspective renders all this politics within security inexplicable. And yet, as Wolfers saw half a century ago, it is crucial.

**Alt fails---not working within the system results in rhetoric changing but not policy.**

**McCormack, 9** (Tara McCormack, PhD in International Relations from University of Westminster, 2009, accessed on 3-22-2022, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, “Critique, Security and Power: The Political Limits to Emancipatory Approaches”, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290784999\_Critique\_Security\_and\_Power\_The\_Political\_Limits\_to\_Emancipatory\_Approaches, HBisevac)

In chapter 7 I engaged with the human security framework and some of the problematic implications of ‘emancipatory’ security policy frameworks. In this chapter I argued that the **shift away** from the pluralist security framework and the elevation of cosmopolitan and emancipatory goals has served to **enforce** international **power inequalities** rather than lessen them. Weak or unstable states are subjected to greater international scrutiny and international institutions and other states have greater freedom to intervene, but the citizens of these states have no way of controlling or influencing these **international institutions** or powerful states. This shift away from the pluralist security framework has **not challenged** the **status quo**, which may help to explain why major international institutions and states can **easily adopt** a more **cosmopolitan rhetoric** in their **security policies**. As we have seen, the shift away from the pluralist security framework has entailed a shift towards a more openly hierarchical international system, in which states are differentiated according to, for example, their ability to provide human security for their citizens or their supposed democratic commitments. In this shift, the old pluralist international norms of (formal) international sovereign equality, non-intervention and ‘blindness’ to the content of a state are overturned. Instead, international institutions and states have more freedom to intervene in weak or unstable states in order to ‘protect’ and emancipate individuals globally. Critical and emancipatory security theorists argue that the goal of the emancipation of the individual means that security must be reconceptualised away from the state. As the domestic sphere is understood to be the sphere of insecurity and disorder, the international sphere represents greater emancipatory possibilities, as Tickner argues, ‘if security is to start with the individual, its ties to state sovereignty must be severed’ (1995: 189). For critical and emancipatory theorists there must be a shift towards a ‘cosmopolitan’ legal framework, for example Mary Kaldor (2001: 10), Martin Shaw (2003: 104) and Andrew Linklater (2005). For critical theorists, one of the fundamental problems with Realism is that it is unrealistic. Because it prioritises order and the existing status quo, Realism attempts to impose a particular security framework onto a complex world, ignoring the myriad threats to people emerging from their own governments and societies. Moreover, traditional international theory serves to obscure power relations and omits a study of why the system is as it is: [O]mitting myriad strands of power amounts to exaggerating the simplicity of the entire political system. Today’s conventional portrait of international politics thus too often ends up looking like a Superman comic strip, whereas it probably should resemble a Jackson Pollock. (Enloe, 2002 [1996]: 189) Yet as I have argued, contemporary critical security theorists seem to show a marked lack of engagement with their problematic (whether the international security context, or the Yugoslav break-up and wars). Without concrete engagement and analysis, however, the **critical project** is **undermined** and critical theory becomes **nothing more** than a **request** that people behave in a **nicer** way to each other. Furthermore, whilst contemporary critical security theorists argue that they present a more realistic image of the world, through exposing power relations, for example, their **lack of concrete analysis** of the problematic considered renders them actually unable to engage with existing power structures and the way in which power is being exercised in the contemporary international system. For critical and emancipatory theorists the central place of the values of the theorist mean that it cannot fulfil its promise to critically engage with contemporary power relations and emancipatory possibilities. Values must be joined with engagement with the material circumstances of the time.

**A single instance of securitization isn’t totalizing**---it’s a process, not an event!

**Ghughunishvili, 10** (Irina Ghughunishvili, CEU IR masters, 2010, accessed on 3-19-2022, Securitization of Migration in the United States after 9/11: Constructing Muslims and Arabs as Enemies, “Securitization of Migration in the United States after 9/11: Constructing Muslims and Arabs as Enemies”, https://www.etd.ceu.edu/2010/ghughunishvili\_irina.pdf, HBisevac)

As provided by the Copenhagen School **securitization theory** is **comprised** by **speech act**, acceptance of the audience and facilitating conditions or other non-securitizing actors contribute to a successful securitization. The causality or a one-way relationship between the speech act, the audience and securitizing actor, where politicians use the speech act first to justify exceptional measures, has been criticized by scholars, such as Balzacq. According to him, the one-directional relationship between the three factors, or some of them, is not the best approach. To fully grasp the dynamics, it will be more beneficial to “rather than looking for a one-directional relationship between some or all of the three factors highlighted, it could be profitable to focus on the degree of congruence between them. 26 Among other aspects of the Copenhagen School’s theoretical framework, which he criticizes, the thesis will rely on the criticism of the lack of context and the rejection of a ‘one-way causal’ relationship between the audience and the actor. The process of threat construction, according to him, can be clearer if external context, which stands independently from use of language, can be considered. 27 Balzacq opts for more context-oriented approach when it comes down to securitization through the speech act, where a single **speech does not create the discourse**, but it is **created** through a **long process**, where **context is vital**. 28 He indicates: In reality, the **speech act itself**, i.e. literally a **single security articulation** at a particular point in time, will **at best** only **very rarely explain** the entire social process that follows from it. In most cases a security scholar will rather be confronted with a process of articulations creating sequentially a threat text which turns sequentially into a securitization. 29 This type of approach seems more plausible in an empirical study, as it is more likely that a single speech will not be able to securitize an issue, but it is a lengthy process, where a the audience speaks the same language as the securitizing actors and can relate to their speeches.

**Link — T/L**

**IR and foreign policy are more complex than culture war debates — reject sweeping prescriptions that guarantee ineffective foreign policy.**

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The reality is that foreign policy has **always been contested** — and, more often than not, linked to questions of **identity** and **ideology**. But debates about war are so interwoven with our larger culture-war politics now that most questions of how to handle military conflict have been **largely reduced** to partisan scoring. And that’s a problem — not because we need to get back to some bygone bipartisan era, but because **real dissension** is vital in a democracy, especially in matters of foreign policy.

The seeds of war politics’ merging with culture-war politics arguably date back to the late 1960s, when anti-Vietnam War protests overlapped with civil rights protests and other social movements that challenged the existing social order. Over time, conservatives and liberals diverged in their attitudes toward the war, especially as liberal elites began to criticize it. Starting with the 1968 presidential election, being anti-war became more closely associated with being a liberal Democrat. And the accusation that George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee, was all for “acid, amnesty1 and abortion” helped solidify this cultural connection.

And this larger cultural split between the two parties came to a head during the Iraq War. In many ways, it’s connected to the political discourse we’re seeing with Russia and Ukraine now. Unlike now, though, the discourse during the Iraq War — in the beginning at least — exemplified the idea that politics stops at the water’s edge. Critics of then-President George W. Bush rallied behind him after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and public opinion on the war was initially quite favorable, even though Democrats were far more split than Republicans.

That national unity turned out to be short-lived, though. As political communications scholar Mary Stuckey has observed, it was during the Iraq War that the two parties began to make very distinct arguments about what it meant to be an American in relation to the war. Bush, for instance, often framed the war on terror, including the U.S. invasion of Iraq, in terms of **good** and **evil** as he tried to establish the GOP as the party of faith and strength. Democrats, meanwhile, in their 2004 party platform accused Bush and the Republicans of having an “**insufficient understanding** of our enemy” and a failure to comprehend the complexity of the situation in the Middle East.

While the Iraq War was not directly related to Bush’s religious faith, both supporters and opponents alike depicted his approach to war as reflective of his **overall philosophical approach**: The president relied on **gut** and **instinct**, not expertise, to make decisions. Likewise, Bush’s 2004 presidential campaign portrayed his Democratic opponent, then-Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, as a waffling intellectual who lacked conviction and patriotic dedication.

In other words, the debate over the Iraq War quickly became an extension of the debates Democrats and Republicans were already having in the 2000 presidential election — and even earlier — about religion, culture and Bush’s intellect and qualifications.

Ultimately, the Bush administration’s justification for the Iraq War became the subject of widespread criticism across the ideological spectrum since the rationale for invasion was shaky at best. But the narratives Democrats and Republicans employed during the invasion of Iraq and the war on terror were **still powerful** for the ways in which they preyed on domestic and **cultural disagreements** and anxieties.

These arguments also had important implications for debates over presidential war powers. While many Republicans embraced an expansive role for the president — a strong leader asserting U.S. dominance on the world stage — Democrats said in their 2008 presidential platform that they “reject[ed] the sweeping claims of ‘inherent’ presidential power,” and that their candidate, then-Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois, would better grasp intercultural nuance and policy detail.

But as president, Obama struggled with questions of war and war powers as well. Although his administration was committed to a less interventionist approach, world events still demanded attention. There were new questions to answer about American intervention in the Middle East and North Africa, as civil wars broke out in Libya and Syria. And like Bush, Obama often found himself the subject of criticism — first for going too far in Libya and then for not going far enough in Syria.

In other words, the debate around the Iraq War didn’t help either Democrats or Republicans create a **coherent set of ideas** about how to engage with foreign conflict, how to prepare for the aftermath of one, or when it makes the most sense to avoid getting involved at all. Obama was different from Bush, but the foreign-policy questions he faced were still difficult — and domestic culture-war disputes were not **especially useful** in resolving them. Yet, because of the Iraq War, the country was now set on a political course that undermined the goal of **meaningful**, **reasoned dissent** on foreign policy.

Figuring out the role the U.S. should play following the Russian invasion of Ukraine requires answering a **completely different** set of questions than the global war on terror or the U.S. response to the war in Syria required, but as we saw in Vietnam, Iraq and elsewhere, culture-war politics are once again **overshadowing** the discussion of what to do. Instead of debating the extent to which Americans should intervene in Ukraine, Republicans have attacked Biden as a weak leader — and that’s the PG-rated stuff: Many attacks from the far right have veered into even uglier culture-war territory and praise for the Russian president.

So far, most rank-and-file Republicans have unfavorable views of the Russian invasion, not sympathy toward Putin. (Instead, a partisan divide is emerging over whether the U.S. should be “doing more.”) Still, it’s not hard to figure out why the discussion of whether and how America gets involved in armed conflict has devolved into **partisan point-scoring**. Nearly everything has. But this has a **real cost**, and the answer isn’t for politics to stop at the water’s edge.

Dissenting viewpoints and **serious debate** are crucial in a democracy, and foreign policy is not an exception. Politics can and should be a place for **real debate** and **multiple viewpoints**. It is **imperative** to hold public officials accountable for their decisions. When we treat foreign policy as an extension of domestic cultural politics, we lose almost as much as we do when we act as though it’s **not up for debate at all**.

**Link — AT: Authors Biased**

**The blob is fake, and restraint cannot solve**

**Mazarr ’20** — Michael; senior political scientist at the RAND corporation. Summer 2020; “Rethinking Restraint: Why It Fails in Practice”; *The Washington Quarterly*, Volume 32, Article 2; <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2020.1771042>

There is **No Sinister** National **Security Elite**

Many **restraint** proponents use a second major **claim** to buttress their argument that **US strategy** is fundamentally **invalid** and should be radically scaled back: US **overreach** reflects the **malign influence** of a devious **national security elite** fired with dangerous visions of primacy and liberal hegemony. Not all restraint advocates make this argument, but it is a dominant theme in some of the literature’s most important works. Stephen Walt’s 2018 book The Hell of Good Intentions, for example, is an extended indictment of this group—including current and former US officials, congressional staff, think tank experts, and others—which he describes as a “**dysfunctional elite** of privileged insiders who are frequently disdainful of alternative perspectives.” 35 According to Walt, **promoting** an **interventionist** foreign **policy** provides jobs, status, and access to high-paid consultancies and political power to this group, which comprises an exclusive clique of insiders who attend the same schools and clubs and believe, for the most part, the same things about US power.

The historian and writer Andrew Bacevich denounces the same alleged cabal, agreeing that “the **ideology of national security** … serves the **interests** of those who **created** the national **security state** and those who still benefit from its continued existence”—interests that include “status, influence, and considerable wealth.” 36 The result is an **addiction** to global **hegemony** and military force, a tendency to seek out **unnecessary** enemies and **commitments**, and a ~~crippling~~ conformism that quashes dissent.37 US national security elites at the end of the Cold War, he argues in his most recent book, **coalesced** around **primacy** with “something close to unanimity.” 38

It is not clear how to treat such sprawling **assertions** when the reality—the **jumble** of **motivations**, views, relationships, and ambitions of the tens of thousands of people who comprise the national security community—is obviously so **much more complex**. Do all US foreign policy officials or experts support global engagement because it grants them jobs or speaking opportunities? How many actually attended the same schools or even know one another, and what effect does this have on their views? Do all of them embrace primacy, and to the same degree? Apart from collections of anecdotes, those convinced of the existence of such a **homogenous elite** offer **no** objective **evidence**—such as surveys, interviews, or comprehensive literature reviews—to back up these sweeping claims. “By and large,” Bacevich insists in just one example, “members of the national security elite hold the public in remarkably low regard,” **citing** as proof a **single**, dated **quote** from Dean Acheson.39

The **real** “national security **elite**,” of course, comprises **individuals** with starkly **opposing opinions**. Some favor nuclear **arms control**, some oppose it; some want more US **forces in Europe**, some fewer; some continue to support humanitarian **interventions**, whereas most are now skeptical of them. As a result, profound **arguments** have **erupted** within this group over **every** major foreign policy **issue** of the last half-century. The scholars and former government officials Hal Brands, Peter Feaver, and William Inboden explain that “intense disputes over the **Korean War**, the **Vietnam War**, détente and **arms control**, the opening to **China**, and policies in **Central America** and the **Middle East** were followed by battles over the **Gulf War**, **NATO** expansion, military **interventions** in **Haiti**, **Somalia**, and the **Balkans**, and the wars in **Afghanistan and Iraq**—not to mention heated arguments over positions toward **China**, **Iran**, **No**rth **Ko**rea, **Russia**, and **other** **issues** today.” 40 **Few officials** or experts may **rail against** the broad principle of US global **engagement**. But on specific policy questions—whether to go to war or conduct a humanitarian intervention, or what policy to adopt toward China or Cuba or Russia or Iran— **debates** in Washington are deep, **intense**, and sometimes bitter.

To take just a single example from recent history, the Obama administration’s decision to **endorse** a **surge** in **Afghanistan** came only after extended **deliberation** and **soul-searching**, and it included a major, and highly controversial, element of **restraint**—a very public **deadline** to begin a graduated **withdrawal**.41 If one were to choose the less **aggressive** or **interventionist** side of this and a dozen other recent debates, in fact, one could **assemble** a reasonable **facsimile** of the more **circumscribed** foreign policy that proponents of **restraint** themselves suggest.

It is true that **groupthink** often **grips** tighter, and dissent ebbs, during **times of crisis** or war— during the crucial escalation years in **Vietnam**, for example, or in the weeks after **9/11**. The national security community has closed ranks to an unhealthy degree at such moments. But **these are exceptions**, and they deeply complicate the argument for restraint: if US foreign policy excesses tend to emerge during emotionally charged crises or periods of rabid threat perception, the **problem** is **not** a **relentless** hegemonic **impulse**. It is overreaction at specific, desperate moments—**something** a general commitment to **restraint** is **unlikely to cure**.

**This card is long, but your argument is fake**

**Inboden et al. ’20** — William Inboden, William Powers, Jr., Executive Director of the Clements Center for National Security and an Associate Professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, served at the State Department in 2002-2005 and as senior director for strategic planning on the National Security Council staff in 2005-2007; Hal Brands, PhD, Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; Peter D. Feaver is a professor of political science and public policy at Duke University, where he heads the Program in American Grand Strategy and the Triangle Institute for Security Studies; April 29, 2020; “In Defense of the Blob”; *Foreign Affairs*; <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-29/defense-blob>

Blob **theorists view** the **establishment** as a club of **like-minded elite** insiders who control everything, take care of one another, and brush off challenges to conventional wisdom. **In reality**, the United States actually has a **healthy marketplace** of foreign policy **ideas**. **Discussion** over American foreign policy **is** loud, contentious, diverse, and generally **pragmatic**—and as a result, the nation gets the opportunity to learn from its mistakes, build on its successes, and **improve** its **performance** over time.

In both absolute and relative terms, the **expert community** dealing with foreign policy and national security in the United States is remarkably large and **heterogeneous**. Inside government, cadres of professionals make vast amounts of **technocratic knowledge** and **institutional memory** available to policymakers. Every department and agency with an international role has distinctive regional or functional expertise it can bring to bear. This in**-house knowledge** is complemented by an even larger and more **diverse** network of **experts** in the many hundreds of **think tanks** and contract research **institutions** that surround the government and offer views ranging from **right to left**, **hawk to dove**, **free trader to protectionist**, **technocratic to ideological**. Pick any policy issue and **you can put together** a lively **debate** with ease. Should the United States [engage with China](https://www.brookings.edu/research/u-s-policy-toward-china/) or contain it? Negotiate with Iran or squeeze it? [Withdraw from the Middle East](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2020-02-10/price-primacy) or redouble its efforts? Reasoned arguments on all sides are widely available, in any form you want—all **supplied** from within the supposedly monolithic **establishment**.

Moreover, unlike such communities in other leading powers, the American foreign policy **establishment** is **connected to society** rather than cut off from it, because the top several layers of U.S. national security bureaucracies are staffed by **political appointees** rather than civil servants. The **Blob** comprises government officials, **outside experts**, and many **people** who go **back and forth** between the two. Insiders know how government works and what is practical. Outsiders think independently. And in-and-outers **bridge the gaps**. Other countries simply do not have comparably large, diverse, permeable, expert communities that **encourage vigorous debate** over national policy—which is why, say, the **caliber of** U.S. **debate** about nuclear policy is more **nuanced** and better informed than in other nuclear powers, and which is why **other countries** would **love** to have such a **Blob** of their own.

The American **foreign policy** establishment, finally, is generally **more** **pragmatic** than **ideological**. It values prudence and security over novelty and creativity. It knows that thinking outside the box may be useful in testing policy assumptions, but **the box is** usually **there for a reason**, and so reflexively embracing the far-out option is dangerous. Its members have made many mistakes, individually and collectively, but several **features** of the system **enforce accountability** over time. Foreign policy **failures**, for example, **are** politically **toxic and** often **spur** **positive change**. The monumental intelligence failures that allowed the September 11 attacks to happen were followed by policy and institutional reforms that have helped prevent other mass-casualty terrorist attacks on U.S. targets for almost two decades. Early [**misjudgments** in the **Iraq** war](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iraq/2003-09-01/stumbling-war)**led to** the adoption of a **new counterinsurgency** strategy that restored stability, at least for a while. The international economic **imbalances** and financial procedures that **led to** the **2008** global financial crisis were **addressed by policies** that contributed to a decade-long recovery.

Taken together, these **virtues reinforce** one another and **help** the United States **tackle** the countless national and **global challenges** that confront a **superpower**. Blob critics claim there are no meaningful arguments over U.S. foreign policy. But this is just not true. Intense disputes over the **Korean War**, the **Vietnam War**, **détente** and **arms control**, the opening to **China**, and policies in **Central America** and the **Middle East** were followed by battles over the **Gulf War**, **NATO** expansion, military **interventions** in **Haiti**, **Somalia**, and the **Balkans**, and the wars in **Afghanistan** and **Iraq**—not to mention heated arguments over positions toward **China**, **Iran**, **North Korea**, **Russia**, and other issues today. It is true that beneath all this controversy lies a relatively **stable consensus** on the value of power, alliances, and constructive global **engagement**. Most members of the establishment believe that global **problems** usually **improve** when the **U**nited **S**tates **engages** responsibly and **worsen when** the United States **retreats**. Yet that **reflects not** some nefarious **groupthink but** the **wisdom** of professional crowds, arrived at **through** painful **trial and error** over more than a century.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

If the Blob is not a cabal, neither is its record one of dismal failure. Critics argue that the United States entered the 1990s in a position of **great power** and **prestige** and squandered that legacy through misguided wars and **interventions**, geopolitical **hubris**, and the **aggressive pursuit** of a global liberal **order** at the **expense** of the nation’s economic and **security** interests. But the story they tell doesn’t match what actually happened. American grand strategy did not change radically after the Cold War, because it was developed not just as a response to the Soviet challenge but to the foreign policy disasters of the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, **U.S. officials** decided to **maintain** the nation’s **primacy**, **thwart** dangerous **aggressors**, and build a **secure**, prosperous international **order** in which the United States could thrive. After the Cold War, they decided to **keep this strategy** going, even in the absence of an immediate peer competitor.

From George H. W. Bush to Barack Obama, post–Cold War presidents worked hard to further the efforts their predecessors started, **shaping an environment** conducive to **American interests** and ideas. They promoted free trade and globalization, maintained and even **expanded** the country’s global network of **alliances** and **military bases**, policed the global commons, and tried to **stabilize** regional **conflicts** and promote **h**uman **r**ights. Unchecked by **great-power rivals**, Washington did become more willing to use military force in the periphery on behalf of national ideals. But even then, it **hardly ran amok** in search of **monsters** to **destroy**, **abstaining** from **interventions** in **Rwanda**, the **African Great Lakes**, **Sudan**, the **Caucasus**, **Ukraine**, **Myanmar**, and **other** potential **cases**. The basic outlines of recent American strategy would be recognizable to officials stretching back generations, because its goal has remained constant: **fostering** a **world** guided by **American leadership**, rooted in American values, and protected by American power.

**Have there been** disappointments and even **disasters** along the way? **Absolutely**. Globalization and democratization were supposed to [mellow China and Russia](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-02-10/new-spheres-influence) and help them fit easily into the U.S.-led order. That hasn’t worked out as well as hoped. **No**rth **Ko**rea **went nuclear** despite a series of U.S. presidents swearing they would never let it happen. Before **9/11**, Washington didn’t take **terrorism** seriously enough; afterward, it became obsessed with stopping it at all costs. And far too many **military interventions**—from **Somalia** to **Afghanistan**, **Iraq** to **Libya**—have been misconceived and **mishandled**.

As serious as these failures were, however, they were no worse than those occurring during other periods in U.S. history. The quarter century after **World War II** saw the loss of **China**, the end of a nuclear monopoly, the erection of the **Iron Curtain** and the **Berlin Wall**, a bloody **stalemate** in **Korea**, a **communist takeover** in Cuba, and a **catastrophic war** in Vietnam. The following two decades witnessed the collapse of the **Bretton Woods** system, an energy crisis and **OPEC** oil embargo, anti-American revolutions in **Iran and Nicaragua**, a bungled intervention in **Lebanon**, **dirty** **wars** in **Central America**, the Iran-contra scandal, and the **Tiananmen Square** massacre. Some degree of **failure**, even tragedy, is **inescapable** in foreign policy. **What matters** most **is** not the presence of individual triumphs or disasters but **the collective balance** between them. From this perspective, the post–Cold War era looks significantly better, for **set against** the **failures** is a **giant success**—the emergence of a far more **peaceful**, prosperous, and **liberal** international **system**, with a prosperous and secure United States at its center.

Critics count the problems that have occurred but **ignore** the **problems** that have been **avoided**. There were **plenty of ways** the world could have gone **haywire** after 1989. Leading scholars, for example, foresaw a descent into vicious instability. **Germany and Japan** would **turn hungry** and **revisionist** again, **security vacuums** would **emerge** in **Central Europe** and **East Asia**, and **nationalism**, **aggression**, and nuclear **proliferation** would run **rampant**. “We will soon miss the Cold War,” John Mearsheimer [predicted](https://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/politics/foreign/mearsh.htm) in 1990. “The prospect of **major crises**, even wars . . . is likely to **increase** dramatically.”

Not quite. The **long peace continued**, as **great-power** relations remained relatively **calm**. German and Japanese **revisionism** **never materialized**—because those countries remained tightly embraced within a strong U.S. **alliance system** and a broader **l**iberal **i**nternational **o**rder. An outbreak of **nationalism** and ethnic aggression was **contained** in the Balkans. The countries of the former Warsaw Pact did not descend into chaos but embarked on political and economic reform, relaxing into a newly secure environment inside **NATO**. Asia did not collapse into vicious rivalries; under U.S. guidance, it continued its remarkable post-1979 stretch of peace as billions of people benefited from decades of sustained economic growth. The number of **democracies** in the world **rose** dramatically. Even **nuclear proliferation** has remained relatively [limited](https://www.atomicheritage.org/history/non-proliferation-limitation-and-reduction), as Washington continued to provide **security guarantees** to allies so they would **not pursue** independent nuclear **arsenals**, orchestrated a campaign to secure loose nuclear materials, and punished **rogue states** that tried to buck the **nonproliferation** regime. In short, after 1989, the deep global **engagement favored by the Blob** kept the world moving forward on a generally positive track, rather than regressing to the historical mean of **tyranny, depression, and war**.

Yes, **instability is returning** in both **Asia** and **Europe**, globalization and **democracy** are currently in **retreat**, [intense **competitions**](https://www.brookings.edu/research/china-and-the-return-of-great-power-strategic-competition/) with **China** and **Russia** loom, and the new **coronavirus** pandemic has reminded the world of the **downsides** of **connectivity**. But the return of **great**-**power** **rivalry** in recent years has been fueled **less by** U.S. **overreach** than by **questions about** its **stamina**. Had Washington followed the recommendations of the **Blob’s critics and retrenched** from its global commitments after 1989, rather than leaning into them, things would **look even worse** now. If the United States had pursued a strategy of **offshore balancing**, say, by winding down its **overseas obligations**, would it be sitting pretty now? It is hard to see how withdrawing from Europe in the 1990s or not expanding NATO would have encouraged less bullying from Moscow. More likely, it would simply have given a **resurgent Russia** greater freedom to **reassert** its **influence**. Pulling back from the Asia-Pacific region, similarly, would **likely** have **undermined** the United States’ **ability** to **hedge** against the negative consequences of **China’s** **rise**. And **less engagement** by Washington on a global liberal agenda in **trade**, politics, and **human rights** would **not have improved the world** or prepared it institutionally to handle global challenges, such as **pandemics** and **climate change**.

In retrospect, it is easy to identify specific policies and decisions one would want to change. It is **harder to identify an alternative** strategy that would have delivered clearly superior results—and that is the true standard by which real-world foreign policies deserve to be judged.

THE RETURN OF THE BLOB

How about the critics’ third **argument**, that **escaping** the **influence of the Blob** would **make** American **policy** more **effective** and the country more secure? As it happens, a **real-time test** of that proposition **has been running** for over three years. The **Trump** administration has **sidelined** national security **professionals**, and professionalism, to a degree unprecedented in the modern era. The president has routinely **disregarded** the advice of apolitical **career officials**, accused them of disloyalty and even [treason](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/10/appalling-attack-alexander-vindman/601000/), and **purged** the top ranks of the **administration** of anybody unwilling to toe the official line of the day (whatever that may be). The **results** of this experiment **are not encouraging**. So far it has produced **poor policy**, poor **execution**, and poor **outcomes**.

Unforced errors are one of the **hallmarks** of the Trump administration’s **foreign policy**.

The administration launched an overdue effort to confront **China** on its trade practices, only to **hobble the approach** by withdrawing from the **T**rans-**P**acific **P**artnership and starting simultaneous **trade wars** with American allies. It punished Russia for its territorial aggression and electoral sabotage, only to be **undercut** **by** the president’s embrace of Russian President [Vladimir Putin](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2019-08-12/putin-great)and by his personal vendettas relating to Ukraine. The president twice announced, and twice partially reversed, a decision to **withdraw** troops from **Syria**, thereby **battering** U.S. **credibility** without actually leaving the conflict. Thanks to diplomatic bungling and presidential credulity, **No**rth **Ko**rea is **no more contained** than it was three years ago, and **Japan**, **So**uth **Ko**rea, and the United States are all **at odds**. Because of arbitrary White House interference with **military justice** and other issues, **c**ivil-**m**ilitary **r**elations have **cratered**. What links these cases is not ideology but competence—all involved basic mistakes that were pointed out by experts inside and outside government, only to be contemptuously ignored by the White House.

Even when the administration’s policy choices have been defensible in conception, they have often been botched in execution, due to a disregard for expert advice and a disdain for the details of implementation. The administration could have tried to [remedy the defects](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2019-11-15/better-iran-deal-within-reach) of the Iran nuclear deal, for example, in a way that included European powers rather than alienating them. It could have increased pressure on Tehran with a plan for converting that pressure into lasting results. It could have gotten something in return for diplomatic concessions given to Israel and Saudi Arabia. And it could have reformed NAFTA without gratuitously harming relations with Canada and Mexico.

As for results, the current **pandemic** shows just what happens when national policy is **driven by amateur improvisation** rather than professional planning. Pandemics have been a known danger for decades, and the **Blob** **has a** suggested **playbook** for handling them—constant vigilance, early **detection** and **monitoring**, a unified national response in coordination with **global partners**, and much more. Coming into office, the Trump administration was fully briefed on the challenge—and chose to look the other way, downgrading the relevant technocrats and pushing for deep cuts in global health and disease programs. At the crucial early stages of the crisis, when a[**robust** multilateral **effort**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-04-18/pandemic-and-toll-transatlantic-discord) might have had maximum effect, the administration’s disorganization and denial left Washington on the sidelines. As the disease raced around the world and took hold in the United States, officials desperate to sound the alarm and begin **preventive measures** were **silenced** by a president unwilling to hear bad news. And once the direness of the medical situation was finally recognized, the administration tried to shift blame, going so far as to cut funding for the World Health Organization in the midst of the pandemic, simply in order to create a politically useful scapegoat.

The **establishment** makes **mistakes**, often big ones. **But** in its collective capacity, **it learns** from them and changes course—which is why **the** liberal international **order** **has not only lasted for generations** but **deepened** and broadened **over time**. [Purging experience and disinterested expertise](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2020-04-06/few-good-men) from U.S. foreign policy has already caused problems. The longer it continues, the worse things will get. And the more **many will hope for the return of the Blob.**

**No bias or ‘echo chamber’ – hegemony persists because it works. Our authors or reflexive and unbiased – critiques of primacy don’t withstand statistical scrutiny.**

**Feaver & Brands, 19** – Peter D. Feaver is a professor of political science and public policy at Duke University, where he heads the Program in American Grand Strategy and the Triangle Institute for Security Studies. Hal Brands is the Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. (Spring 2019; “Correspondence: The Establishment and U.S. Grand Strategy;” *International Security*; 43(4); pg. 197–204; doi:10.1162/isec\_c\_00347; //GrRv)

In his article “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment,” Patrick Porter argues that the continuity of U.S. grand strategy since World War II has resulted from a **group-think mentality** fostered by a powerful foreign policy elite—”the Blob”—that **stifles debate** and prevents needed **course corrections**.1 Porter’s provocative argument is ultimately **unpersuasive**, because it **overstates** the degree of **conformity and consensus** in U.S. strategy while slighting the **most obvious explanations** for the strategy’s **endurance**. Below we highlight several problems with his argument.

First, Porter **exaggerates** the degree of consensus in U.S. foreign policy since World War II. In fact, despite a bipartisan consensus on the necessity of U.S. global leadership in support of a congenial international order (what Porter calls “primacy”), intense debates about how that strategy should be operationalized have been common in U.S. foreign policy circles. Policymakers, elected officials, and policy commentators **argued heatedly** over such fundamental issues as whether to pursue a **Europe-first** or **Asia-first strategy** in the 1950s, whether and how aggressively to combat Soviet and communist influence in the developing world, whether to make or avoid defense commitments on the Asian mainland, whether to pursue détente or confrontation with the Soviet Union in the 1970s, whether to use force to reverse Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990–91, whether to **expand** the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** after the Cold War, and whether to **invade Iraq** in 2003. These debates reflected **genuine intellectual disagreements** that pitted members of the Blob against one another. Porter would likely respond that such debates were essentially about tactics, but the fact that the foreign policy community has engaged in knock-down, drag-out debates over issues of such enormous strategic importance shows that it is **not** as **unified**, and the marketplace of ideas not as limited, as Porter claims.

Second, although Porter argues that **dissenting foreign policy** **views** advocating an approach he calls “restraint” tend to be **marginalized**, departures from a **strategy of U.S. leadership** have **time and again** received a hearing at the highest levels of government. In the 1950s and 1960s, Presidents Dwight **Eisenhower** and John **Kennedy** repeatedly considered **withdrawing** U.S. **troops** from Europe.2 Similar debates occurred in Congress in the late 1960s and early 1970s. When Jimmy **Carter** took office, he **strongly favored** withdrawing U.S. troops from **South Korea**.3 In the early 1990s, the George H.W. **Bush** and Bill **Clinton** administrations initially delegated management of the crisis in the former **Yugoslavia** to the European NATO allies. In 2011, Barack **Obama** **withdrew U.S. troops from Iraq** as part of a broader move toward an offshore balancing strategy in the Middle East.4 In other words, presidents and other **political leaders** in the United States have often been willing to consider **significant changes** in U.S. strategy, and they have sometimes even implemented policies that represented a **meaningful shift toward retrenchment** and restraint.

Third, the reason that many of these departures were **not** ultimately **undertaken**—or proved fleeting—is **not** because policymakers denied them a **fair, open hearing**. It is because they were judged—or later shown—to be **substantively inferior** to more assertive policies. Eisenhower **never withdrew** U.S. troops from **Europe**, because he understood that doing so would have threatened to **destabilize** the interlocking series of arrangements that deterred the Soviet Union while pacifying Germany and **Western Europe**.5 Carter never withdrew U.S. troops from South Korea, for fear that **doing so** would have risked incentivizing **South Korean nuclear proliferation** and destabilizing the fragile balance in a critical part of the world.6 The United States ultimately took the lead in addressing the crackup of Yugoslavia when the inability of the Europeans to deal with the crisis had become clear. Obama did draw down U.S. forces in Iraq, but large swaths of that country (and Syria) were subsequently **overrun** by the [**ISIL**] Islamic State, compelling a reassertion of U.S. military and diplomatic engagement.7 In these and other cases, an emphasis on **U.S. leadership has persisted**, because that approach has been deemed—after **significant debate** or hard experience—**superior** to the alternatives.

Fourth, and related, Porter slights the **simplest explanation** for why there has been substantial consistency in U.S. strategy: **because it works.** As scholars have demonstrated, the past **seventy years** have been **among the best** in human history in terms of **rising** global and U.S. **prosperity**, the spread of democracy and human **rights**, the **avoidance** of **great power war**, and the **decline of war in general**.8 It has also been a period when the world’s leading power consistently pursued a grand strategy geared explicitly toward achieving those goals. To prove that U.S. grand strategy persists for reasons **other than utility**, Porter would have to show that U.S. leadership has **not been necessary to those outcomes** or that it is no longer necessary. **But he does not do so** (or even really **try** to do so), and his article **does not engage** the relevant social science **scholarship** and historical literature establishing a **causal connection** between **U.S. engagements** and **key aspects** of the relatively benign global order.9

Finally, **critics of primacy** consistently argue, as Porter does, that their ideas are censored or **excluded** from **policy debates**. Yet, **critics** of U.S. grand strategy are **prominent within the academy**, including at prestigious institutions such as the University of Chicago, Harvard, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Their **op-eds** and **essays** appear in the New York Times, Foreign Policy, and Foreign Affairs, among other prominent “mainstream” outlets, and **their work** receives **generous funding**. Leading **critics of primacy** are regular participants in U.S. **government–sponsored outreach initiatives** such as the National Intelligence Council’s Intelligence Associates program. Not least, although Porter and many other realists in the academy deplore key aspects of the current president’s foreign policy, that president’s own core critique of the foreign policy elite echoes those made by academic realists.10 If this is censorship, it is a remarkably ineffective form of censorship. Perhaps the reason primacy endures is **not that the marketplace of ideas is broken**, but that it is **working** **fairly well.**

**Link — AT: Experts**

**Expertise good.**

**Skylar-Mastro ’19** — Oriana; assistant professor of security studies at Georgetown University and a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. December 2, 2019; "The Surest Way to Lose to China Is to **Disparage Expertise**"; *Defense One*; https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/12/surest-way-lose-china-disparage-expertise/161598/; //CYang

In the White House, university halls, and op-eds pages, experts are **under siege**. President Trump calls them “terrible,” and so it is little surprise that most of the individuals driving his China policy are not China specialists, do not speak Mandarin, and have little in-country experience.

The most recent critique of area specialists came in the form of an op-ed by my colleague Hal Brands. The piece argues that “great power gurus” — those **primarily well-versed** in **i**nternational **r**elations theory — have a better track record at predicting Chinese behavior than China hands. Brands is not alone; many generalists believe their positions are somehow less biased and reflect **better analysis** and **strategic thinking** because they are not, in the words of Aaron Friedberg, “a card-carrying member of the **China-watching fraternity**.”

Is Hal Brands correct? The evidence he offers does not make an open-and-shut case. Robert Kagan predicted in 1997 that China would challenge the United States in the region and perhaps globally, but it didn’t happen for at least a decade and a half. Beijing’s strategy of reassuring smaller countries and prioritizing positive relations with great powers created a relatively stable and peaceful environment in Asia until, arguably, 2012. Also, whether generalists admit it or not, they have relied on the hard work of China hands in their own research. In making his argument that China will “struggle for mastery in Asia,” Friedberg relies on specialists’ assessments of Chinese history and strategic culture, as well as numerous Chinese sources translated for him by Chinese speakers. Lastly, you have to evaluate predictions as a whole. In 2014, John Mearsheimer predicted great power rivalry with proxy wars between American allies and Chinese allies and attempts by Beijing to forge ties with Canada and Mexico to weaken U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere. Neither have happened.

To state the obvious, there are people on both sides who got it wrong. All experts should be humble about their assessments and open to the ways that Chinese interests, behavior, and strategy may change. Also, the knowledge of history, strategy and theory continues to be useful tools in research, analysis and advocacy. For this reason, many foreign-policy China hands of this generation invest in building equally strong theoretical backgrounds as they do in country knowledge. But for whatever reason, we are seeing a trend of discounting area expertise. Because of this, many of us couch our research agendas in language that appeals to generalists and downplay our strong China backgrounds for the sake of publishing in political science journals or scoring tenure.

Creating a **political culture** that values **China experts** is about more than **just ego**. As Brands also argues, the **U**nited **S**tates needs a good strategy if is to prevail. Developing such a strategy is only possible by including **China experts** whose bread and butter is deciphering what motivates Chinese behavior as well as how to **shape** and **constrain** it. Even some generalists **admit** they are less proficient at the “how” and “why” than those with **area expertise**. It is one thing to predict that Chinese military power will grow, it is quite another to predict the anti-access area denial strategy that China initially adopted; or to predict that China would rely primarily on coercive diplomacy, information operations and lawfare to promote its claims in the South China Sea. China specialists can tell us why China still only has one overseas base, and why it is in Djibouti; why China has chosen to expand its power globally initially through One Belt, One Road and not a global military presence like the United States; or why China was unlikely to liberalize as it became richer.

**Link — AT: Hegemony/Exceptionalism**

**Their Ks slide into the politics they criticize — their unconditional anti-Americanism lacks academic rigor and causes fascism — our alternative worse arguments are accurate.**

**Walzer ’18** — Michael; Professor Emeritus of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University. He received his B.A. from Brandeis University in 1956 and received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1961. 2018; “A Foreign Policy for the Left”; *Yale University Press*; Accessed Online via University of Michigan Libraries; //CYang

The second shortcut, perhaps more popular than the first, is to stand up always against “imperialism”—or, a shortcut inside the shortcut, **always to oppose** American policies abroad. **Anti-Americanism** is a common left politics, which, again, sometimes gets things right and sometimes doesn’t. I believe that it got things right in Vietnam in 1967; it mostly got things right from the beginning to the end of the twentieth century in Central and South America; it got Iran right in 1953, when leftists criticized the anti-Mossadegh coup, and it got Iraq right in 2003. But that’s not enough to make the shortcut a reliable one. The defeat of **Nazism** and **Stalinism**, the two **most brutal political regimes** in world history, was in significant ways American work. Many people on the left supported that work, as we should have.

In 1967, Dwight Macdonald wrote to Mary McCarthy that the American war in Vietnam proved “that despite all the good things about our internal political-social-cultural life, we have become an imperialist power, and one that, partly because of these domestic virtues, is a most inept one.”37 We are still inept: in December 2005, with 100,000 American soldiers in Iraq, we organized an election there — and our man came in third. This result may be without precedent in imperial history. (It might suggest that we were less interested in imperial control than in promoting democracy, though the Iraqi politician who came in first wasn’t much of a democrat.) Macdonald’s understanding of US imperialism reflects a political intelligence and a moral balance that are mostly missing in contemporary anti-American writing.

Another often used shortcut is to oppose everything Israel does and to blame it for much that it hasn’t done, since it is the “lackey” of American imperialism or, alternatively, the dominant force shaping American foreign policy. The policies of recent Israeli governments require strong criticism — the occupation, the settlements, the refusal to suppress Jewish thugs and terrorists on the West Bank. But much of the left attack on Israel has little to do with its policies and more to do with its existence, which is taken to be the root cause of all evils in the Middle East. This view violates all the requirements of realism — by which I mean simply a readiness to see the world as it really is.

The last shortcut is to support every government that calls itself **leftist or anti-imperialist** and sets itself **against America**n interests. This is different from the old Stalinist shortcut: support the Soviet Union, whatever it does, because it is the first proletarian dictatorship and the first workers’ paradise. That kind of politics is, I think, definitively finished, though it had a brief afterlife focused on China and then, with very few believers, on Albania and **No**rth **Ko**rea. The more recent version celebrates Maximal Leaders like Gamal Nasser, Fidel Castro, or Hugo Chávez; there are also short-lived infatuations, such as Michel Foucault’s affair with the future Ayatollah Khomeini. Leftist enthusiasm for **populist dictatorships** is one of our **sad stories**, which ends when resources run out, the failure to build the economy suddenly becomes undeniable, and the military takes over. But often the Maximal Leader is a military ~~man himself~~ [person themselves], and the repressive role of the army simply becomes **more obvious** over time. In Latin America today, the better left is represented by socialists and social-democrats in countries like Chile, Brazil, and Costa Rica who reject demagogic populism and struggle to produce economic growth, greater equality, and a stronger welfare state — and who attract less enthusiasm from American leftists than they deserve.38

There is a lot to be said for the **default position**. We should work in the place we know best to make things better. The improvement of **humanity** begins at home. This argument has special force for Americans, who live in an increasingly unequal society that is also a near-hegemonic world power. We need to be wary of adventures abroad that make our work at home more difficult.

Still, good leftists can’t avoid internationalism. We will be engaged again and again in arguments about what we should do or what we should urge the United States to do to help people in trouble or comrades abroad. Sometimes there is nothing that the United States can do, at least nothing it is likely to do right. But even when we oppose American action in other countries, we can be active ourselves — providing moral, political, and financial support to [people] ~~men and women~~ fighting in self-defense or in defense of others. There is no magic answer to the question, What should we do? But the ideological shortcuts I’ve just described, **lazily adopted** and rigidly held, have served us badly in the past and are almost certain to serve us badly in the future. Sticking with them means that we will get things right **only by accident**.

Political intelligence and moral sensitivity work much better than ideology, and they are what should guide our choice of comrades and our decisions about when and how to act abroad. **Dictators** and terrorists are **never our comrades**. We should embrace only those ~~men and women~~ [people] who really believe in and practice democracy and equality. We should act abroad only with those who **share our commitments** and then, only in ways consistent with those commitments. This is the politics that I want to call left internationalism.

**Aligning with China against the US because of ‘human rights’ is academic garbage propagated by Chinese media.**

**Hung ’20** — Ho Fung; Henry M. and Elizabeth P. Wiesenfeld Professor in Political Economy at the Sociology Department and the Paul H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University. They received their bachelor degree from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, MA degree from SUNY-Binghamton, and PhD degree in Sociology from Johns Hopkins. June 5, 2020; “As U.S. Injustices Rage, China’s Condemnation Reeks of Cynicism”; *Foreign Policy*; <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/05/us-injustice-protests-china-condemnation-cynical/>; //CYang

Beijing’s criticism of the **U**nited **S**tates, however, differs from that seen around the globe. China’s critique does not stem from a **genuine concern** for universal **h**uman **r**ights and the well-being of African Americans. The Chinese people have not been given any opportunity to protest in solidarity with Americans — or against the abuses of black residents in China itself. **Anti-black racism** remains rampant on the Chinese internet, untouched by censors who seek to **crush opinions** the government dislikes. Its motivation is simply to tell the **U**nited **S**tates, and everybody else, to stop criticizing China over its own **human rights abuses**. Underneath Beijing’s commentary on the U.S. unrest is a deeply cynical voice that asks: If the U.S. authorities can do it, why shouldn’t we?

Last Friday afternoon, Trump held a press conference to denounce China’s plan to devise a national security law to crack down on Hong Kong’s dissents. He threatened to end U.S. recognition of Hong Kong’s special trading status and to sanction Chinese officials hurting Hong Kong’s freedom. It is going to bring real damage to **Chinese companies** and **wealthy elites** who have been using Hong Kong as a back door to gain access to foreign capital, sensitive technology, and channels to relocate their wealth overseas.

That night, after Trump’s speech, major cities across the United States were engulfed in flames, National Guards were mobilized, and protesters clashed with riot police near the White House. The president reportedly hid briefly in a bunker. The Chinese authorities have been heavily criticized for their crackdown on **Hong Kong protests**, for the Uighur concentration camps, and for the arrests of rights lawyers. Beijing must be delighted to see the U.S. **global reputation** tarnished as its problems of racism and police brutality are brought into the spotlight. It would be surprising if Beijing did not seize the moment to **criticize** the double standards of the White House. This cynicism underlines Beijing’s response to criticism of its bullying behavior in the international arena. When an international tribunal in The Hague ruled in favor of the Philippines against Chinese claims of sovereignty over the South China Sea in 2016, Beijing made it clear it would not abide by the ruling. It pointed out that the United States violated international law all the time and, hypocritically, hadn’t even acceded to the relevant U.N. convention itself.

Such rhetoric has grown common over the last few decades, as the **C**hinese **C**ommunist **P**arty gradually abandoned its appeal for a more just social system and world order. Instead, the party has become **increasingly explicit** in referring to the global domination by Western powers as a **license** for its own imperial ambition. Jiang Shigong, an influential official scholar who advises the Chinese government on Hong Kong policy and global governance, even wrote recently that China should “absorb the skills and achievements” of the British and American empires to construct its own “world empire” for the sake of the Chinese people and the world.

For those in the United States and elsewhere who aspire for more equality, justice, and liberty, it is a mistake to see Beijing as an **exotic progressive** force with which to ally. Beijing points to the violence and injustice of the **U**nited **S**tates to exonerate itself from its own **egregious violence** and injustices. Police brutality and racism in the United States are unimaginably horrific. But U.S. authorities today are not using these protests as an excuse to arrest dissenting legislators and professors, to wholly outlaw peaceful assembly and rights organizations, to pressure companies and universities to fire employees sympathetic with the protesters, to arrest people for criticizing the government on social media, or to lock up 1 million minorities in reeducation camps. These **abuses are routine** in China and becoming routine in Hong Kong.

**Russia’s worse.**

**Siegle & Smith ’22** — Joseph Siegle; the director of research at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Jeffrey Smith; the founding director of the pro-democracy nonprofit organization Vanguard Africa. May 30, 2022; "Putin’s World Order Would Be Devastating for Africa"; Foreign Policy; https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/05/30/russia-war-africa/; //CYang

But African leaders should have a **more fundamental concern** than these — at least, those who are committed to advancing peace and democracy. Putin is attempting to undermine the global order that has guided international relations for the better part of the last century. Building on Russia’s previous annexation of Crimea and parts of northern Georgia as well as its prior occupation of Ukraine’s Donbas region, Putin is taking a **sledgehammer** to the foundation of the once stable **post-World War II** order.

This attempt to normalize expansionist ambitions will have **profound consequences** for Africa. Would-be tsars across the continent — who, like Putin, have evaded term limits to stay in power indefinitely while eliminating their political opposition — are watching closely, asking if Putin can get away with this **brazen overreach** and flout the rules-based order, then why can’t they. It is a reasonable question to ask. At stake are established notions of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the independence of member states, which **suddenly become** more temporal, arbitrary, and open to **violent contestation**.

Perhaps the most eloquent defense of the existing order, premised on these foundational principles, came from Kenya’s permanent representative to the United Nations: ambassador Martin Kimani, who warned Putin and the Russian military to respect its border with Ukraine, using Africa’s own colonial past to highlight the dangers of stoking the “**embers of dead empires**.”

So what does a Russian-shaped international order look like for Africa?

A primary feature is the challenge to the **inviolability** of established boundaries. There are currently some 100 contested borders on the continent, most of them stemming from arbitrarily drawn colonial boundaries. These have, for the most part, been managed peacefully by successive African governments, rooted in a respect for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity that were enshrined in the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 and later reaffirmed in the Constitutive Act of the African Union in 2001. Established during the postcolonial independence period, many African states were born out of a commitment to self-determination. Ironically, this is the **central issue** being contested today by **Russia’s invasion of Ukraine**.

If the lesson from Putin’s invasion of Ukraine is that might makes right, then Africa’s political geography could be **perpetually in dispute**. In other words, if the overlapping security guarantees provided by both the U.N. and AU charters can be violated with impunity, then what is to stop African leaders who envy Putin’s **aggressive brand** of authoritarianism from following suit?

Already, we see this happening in some parts of Africa.

The volatile African Great Lakes region stands out for the fragility of its borders. The eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, has become a target for exploitation by authoritarian leaders in neighboring Rwanda and Uganda. Rwandan President Paul Kagame, officially in power since 2000, and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, in power since 1986, have routinely marched their troops and proxies as well as directed their allied rebel groups to seize Congolese territory, loot natural resources, and kill citizens with alarming impunity. In October 2021, Congolese authorities reported clashing with Rwandan troops, who allegedly occupied several villages before retreating. And as recently as March, the Congolese army presented evidence that the Kagame regime was actively backing a rebellion in eastern Congo. Disregarding borders is particularly precarious in the Great Lakes region because it carries with it the potential to reignite one of the most cataclysmic conflicts in recent history.

Similarly, Moscow has played a destabilizing role in Africa. Recent years have illuminated a “new scramble for Africa” as external actors seek to aggressively plant their politics, governance, and economic flags across the continent. Russia has been at the forefront of this predatory behavior by **repeatedly propping** up isolated and authoritarian leaders — most notably in Libya, Central African Republic, Mali, and Sudan — to advance Moscow’s patently anti-democratic influence.

Through the deployment of **shadowy and unaccountable** mercenary groups, polarizing disinformation campaigns, election interference, and arms-for-resource deals, Russia has gained influence while fostering instability and the increased **h**uman **r**ights abuses that ultimately result from it.

Russia has also fomented — both covertly and overtly — and been quick to support the many unconstitutional seizures of power recently witnessed in Africa. The **spate of coups** and increasing instances of African leaders scrapping term limits, for example, better suit Moscow’s vision of remaking the international order in its autocratic mold.

That a Russian-shaped order in Africa would be more oppressive is crucial to note since most of the 16 ongoing internal conflicts on the continent have deep roots in authoritarian forms of governance. None of Africa’s established democracies, in contrast, are in conflict. More authoritarianism, then, can be expected to yield more conflict.

Tolerance for predatory interstate behavior globally, moreover, will embolden elevated forms of repression domestically in African states. After all, if the enshrined principles of self-determination and popular participation are not respected in a high-profile instance, such as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, then what international actors can be compelled to penalize the intimidation or jailing of opposition leaders, the shuttering of independent media outlets, and the brazen rigging of elections in Africa? Growing autocracy would do a **grave injustice** to the 75 percent of Africans who **regularly state** that democracy is their preferred form of government. The inevitable repression that will result from an unfettered international order would also lead to a spike in refugee flows and **internally displaced** populations.

It took the trauma of World War II to compel the international community to unite, recognize, and sign onto the principles outlined in the U.N. Charter. Intrinsic to this global system — forged from hard-learned and costly experiences — was the importance of collective security to deter and push back against authoritarian bullies in Europe and elsewhere.

The Organisation of African Unity and later the AU adopted many of these core values. Indeed, drawing on its own hard-earned lessons from colonialism, the challenges of securing peace following the brutal wars of the 1990s, and the aftermath of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis, the AU rightly recognized the importance of action when faced with violations of such universal principles.

While often underappreciated and unevenly applied, the U.N. and AU frameworks provide a layer of international accountability against extralegal actions as well as a critical starting point to build the solidarity that is needed to address the challenges that the global community faces.

As Africans grapple with the more present and disastrous aftershocks of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, it is important to recognize the threat this form of authoritarian expansion will have on the continent if it is normalized. History shows us that impunity is **contagious**. And apathy in the face of **imminent threat** is **foolhardy**. The clear threats emanating from Putin’s worldview defy the principles that are **central** to an international order that both the U.N. and **AU** helped foster.

**Analyzing and rejecting hegemonic missteps is consistent with affirming hegemony as a net force for good.**

**Dubowitz & Schanzer ‘20** — Mark Dubowitz is the chief executive of FDD, a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan policy institute. Jonathan Schanzer is senior vice president for research at FDD, where he oversees the work of the organization’s experts and scholars. December 15, 2020; “Retain American Power, Do Not Restrain It”; *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*; <https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2020/12/15/defending-forward-retain-american-power-do-not-restrain-it/>; //CYang

Today’s restrainers similarly seek to **capitalize** on the suffering and difficulties associated with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the broader fight against terrorism, when they argue for the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. forces from these and other conflicts.11 Restrainers, however, often conflate the initial decision to intervene at all with how a conflict is **subsequently managed** or how eventually to withdraw. These are **different policy decisions**. Indeed, one can be critical of the 2003 **invasion of Iraq** and how the war was managed – while also believing that Washington should retain a modest U.S. military presence to help prevent a return of the Islamic State and to counter the influence of Iran.

Restrainers have also attempted to leverage the Great Recession and the current economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic to incite populist passions.12 They do this by falsely suggesting that defense spending is the primary source of the federal deficit and debt.13 Defense spending is near post-World War II lows in terms of percentage of U.S. gross domestic product and percentage of federal spending.

Restrainers consistently paint existing and potential conflicts and U.S. military deployments with the same brush, warning of another “forever war.”14 However, not every conflict leads to an interminable quagmire. Even the so-called War on Terror, despite its headaches, so far has helped prevent another major foreign terrorist attack on the United States, which many had predicted to be inevitable after 9/11.

The term “forever war” is itself curious. History, unfortunately, is a forever war — the chronicle of states’ struggles with their enemies. To be sure, one can write a truly wondrous history of human achievement. But sadly, as the Spanish writer George Santayana observed, “only the dead have seen the end of war.”15

Restrainers operate under the **mistaken assertion** that the world would be a **safer** or **better** place if U.S. influence would **simply recede**.16 The 20th century tells another story. As the historian Robert Kagan argued in his 2012 book The World America Made, the U.S.-led world order has heralded a global rise in liberalism and **h**uman **r**ights, better **education** and **health**, **greater wealth**, and more access to information.17

Equally puzzling is the notion that the world’s problems and conflicts are of little consequence to the United States.18 What happens abroad inevitably affects Americans at home. Al-Qaeda launched the 9/11 attacks despite America’s best efforts to steer clear of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, where al-Qaeda was and is based. The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor despite Washington’s best efforts to stay out of the fray. Isolationists initially blocked then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt from providing greater support to an embattled Britain, and millions of lives were lost from not confronting German leader Adolf Hitler sooner.19

The best way to protect American interests is to engage internationally and maintain a well-designed, forward-deployed military presence alongside allies and partners. As Jakub J. Grygiel and A. Wess Mitchell have noted, U.S. deployments of varying magnitude along what they call the “unquiet frontier” that stretches from the Baltic Sea to the South China Sea counter the rise of revisionist powers such as China, Russia, and Iran.20 Support for U.S. allies, coupled with a U.S. military presence in forward bases, helps deter gathering threats.21

When Washington plays an **outsized role** in shaping and maintaining the international **rules-based order**, Americans and people around the world are safer and **more prosperous**. That is what the United States has done, for the most part, since World War II. And that leadership role has helped ensure that global conflicts such as the Cold War did not erupt into **devastating military confrontations**.

Admittedly, the U.S.-led international order certainly has not prevented all wars. There have been costly mistakes along the way. But responding to those mistakes by ignoring **persistent threats** and drawing down U.S. military posture for its own sake would be **shortsighted** and **dangerous**.

Those who welcome the retreat of U.S. power have yet to **fully answer** one **important question**: What happens after the United States goes home? When the British Empire unraveled after World War II, the United States stepped into the void, promoting an international system based on the rule of law. Who will follow the United States? The alternatives are frightening.

Russia is far less equipped to become a superpower but would be a **particularly predatory**, **corrupt**, and **avaricious** one under Russian President Vladimir Putin. China, for its part, actively seeks global leadership. The Chinese Communist Party’s **authoritarian hostility** to democracy; weaponization of data;22 **h**uman **r**ights abuses;23 support for rogue states such as Iran, North Korea, and Pakistan;24 threats to Hong Kong and Taiwan;25 militarization of the **S**outh **C**hina **S**ea;26 and massive theft of **i**ntellectual **p**roperty27 should all serve as warnings about a Chinese-led world order. And let us all dispense with the fiction that the European Union could be an alternative to the United States in defending democracies.

**US military presence is non-coercive and a force for good — allies welcome our troops because of the security and economic benefits. Large-N studies prove that hegemony ensures peace and prosperity.**

Timothy **Kane ‘19**. JP Conte Fellow in Immigration Studies at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University; PhD in economics from UC San Diego. "The United States as a Promethean Power." Hoover Institution. 6-17-2019. <https://www.hoover.org/research/united-states-promethean-power>

The global scope of American military power has been described in many ways: **hegemony**, **primacy**, and **unipolarity**. Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth (2012)1 cover the nuances of the terminology well, and I agree with their preference for the term “Deep Engagement” that Joseph Nye coined in a 1995 article.2 The complex patterns and nuances of engagement remain **poorly understood**, with a focus on **conflict** that ignores the **preponderance of cases**, where U.S. forces have been **peacefully based for decades**. In short, foreign policy has **focused on the heat instead of the light** — countless studies, essays, and books on Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq stand in **contrast** to the **negligible attention** given to countries where the U.S. maintained large-scale and long-term troop basing such as **Belgium**, **Korea**, **Turkey**, and **Kuwait**.

Is the **U**nited **S**tates an empire? We may just as well debate whether an elephant most closely resembles a **T**yrannosaurus **Rex** or **Triceratops**. Some will point to the imperial characteristics that are reflected in the **U**nited **S**tates force posture. **But** characteristics of dinosaurs or empires (size, martial strength, breadth) really have **no meaning** in a world where that entire order is **extinct**. The **21st century** is filled with a **new order** of **nation-states**, **markedly different** from eras prior to 1945.

**American power** is best understood not by its type: hard, soft, or smart, but its **motivation**. This is not to say the “imperial” motivation has disappeared from human affairs; self-preservation and domination are instinctive human qualities. But there is a **new aspect** to **i**nternational **r**elations that has been in place for more than a century, a form of **altruism**, illustrated by the **widespread support** that exists in the U.S. and other countries for **universal human rights**. For many decades now, nations have routinely sought to advance something beyond their narrow national interests. I call this a **Promethean motivation**, and America a Promethean power.

The phrase is rooted in the myth of Prometheus, the rebellious god of ancient Greek mythology who stole fire from Zeus and gave it to the human race, sparking the beginning of technology, growth, civilization, and prosperity. Zeus was the ruler of the Gods of Olympus, archetype of the emperor/king. The Gods were rulers, and humans were mere subjects. Prometheus represents rebellion, the trickster God, undercutting the authority of the imperial order. Legend has it that Prometheus tricked Zeus — repeatedly — in order to help uplift the human race.

Critics of American intervention **reflexively** use the term **“imperial”** when discussing foreign affairs. By far the dominant theme of imperialism in American foreign policy has been voiced by Leftist thinkers such as Howard Zinn, Gabriel and Joyce Kolko, and Gore Vidal. But since 1990, the end of the Cold War, **neo-isolationists** on the right have adopted the term as well, notably Pat **Buchanan** and Congressman Ron **Paul**. Thus the tendency is for thinkers on the **political extremes** — globalists on the left, nationalists on the right — to find common cause, whereas centrists tend to view American power more favorably, as do many foreign scholars.

Following the 9/11 attacks and concerns about state failure abroad, proponents of American intervention began suggesting American empire in explicit and favorable ways. Such voices included Richard Haas, Sebastian Mallaby, and Max Boot. The fullest expression of this new theme is found in Colossus, a 2004 book by Niall Ferguson3 (now a colleague at the Hoover Institution), who argued “not merely that the United States is an empire, but that it always has been an empire” and that the ultimate threat to the nation is its own “absence of a will to power.” The book is an unappreciated gem, but one wonders if Ferguson and his intellectual opponents share the same framework, which refuses to draw a line between imperial states of the 15th-19th centuries and the modern states of the 21st.

Ferguson wonderfully skewers the slipperiness of the term hegemon, which remains “the most popular term among writers on international relations.” Hegemony refers to a coercive state, like an empire, but one that aims to create **mutually beneficial relationships**. Trying to define the nature of state power by the distribution of benefits (exploitative or shared) misses the point. The point is: what are first principles that motivate foreign action?

America on the world stage should be understood in the context of its revolutionary founding. The republic’s anti-imperial birth and its sense of manifest destiny have colored foreign affairs from early on. Consider again Thomas Jefferson’s “Empire of Liberty,” which was more than a poetic phrase. In 1809 Jefferson wrote to his successor James Madison, “I am persuaded no constitution was ever before so well calculated as ours for extensive empire & self-government.” In one of his final letters, written in 1824, Jefferson wrote, “where this progress will stop no-one can say. Barbarism has, in the meantime, been receding before the steady step of amelioration; and will in time, I trust, disappear from the earth.”

To simplify matters, let’s accept the framework of definitions on the Left (and also popularly understood by Americans throughout history). Define an empire as a nation that exploits foreign peoples, aiming to colonize them and/or extract their resources for the advantage of the empire and at the cost of the foreigners. And for the sake of clarity, recognize a bright line that distinguishes imperial relationships as those where subjugated peoples do not want but are forced to abide by foreign intervention. To be specific, the U.S. role in South Korea **fails the imperial test**, as does the post-1955 role of the U.S. in **Germany** and **Japan**. Those three countries accounted for nearly **three-quarters** of U.S. troop deployments since 1950. Not to mention **Spain**, **Turkey**, **Taiwan**, and **Kuwait**. All of these are **voluntary alliances**, and qualitatively distinct from forces based in Iraq.

For the **Leftist criticism** of American empire to hold, **ev**idence of domination should be **easy to see**. One would expect to see the countries of the world that are occupied by American troops suffering economic decline as a result, or at a minimum a relative decline. Here **the critique falls apart**. The countries of the world that have hosted the greatest number of American troops since 1950 have **grown the fastest economically**. Furthermore, host countries have experienced **faster declines in child mortality**, **faster increase in overall longevity**, **faster growth in infrastructure**, and even greater improvements in the broadly measured human development index (**HDI**). Consider as evidence the average economic growth rates presented in table 2, reproduced from Jones and Kane (2012).4

The record shows that **America’s engagement** with allied nations is **unequivocally beneficial** for those countries. But the context is what matters for future policy choices. **Public perceptions** of world affairs are dominated by negatives: bombings in Iraqi cities, AIDS rampant in Africa, genocides, earthquakes. Foreign policy experts focus on negatives of a subtler nature: the dilemma over Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons, the poppy trade and corruption in Afghanistan, the strategic mystery that is China. **Yet** despite real and looming crises, the **underlying theme** of the American century is a **patient march of human prosperity**, deepening and broadening as economic growth unfolds in the free world.

The American strategy of patient, forward deployment of U.S. troops, even and especially when it is not self-interested, has **benefitted our allies and the world**. America’s engagement in Asia and Europe since 1945 created a security umbrella fostering **peace** and **unprecedented prosperity**. If this model were applied to the Middle East — supporting allies rather than hunting monsters — it would reshape the region’s future for the better. On this point, Fallows might agree.

The question that haunts contemporary foreign policy is **not** whether the U.S. military is a force for good around the globe. **It is**. The question is: Can Promethean power be sustained? Does the United States have the willpower to maintain a forward force posture?

**Russia and China’s “new world order” would be a nightmare for African decolonial sovereignty.**

**Mhaka ’22** -- Johannesburg-based social and political commentator (Tafi Mhaka, 4-7-2022, "Russia’s new world order is bad news for Africa," Al Jazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/4/10/russias-new-world-order-is-bad-news-for-africa, accessed 7-5-2022) -- nikki

On March 30, just a day after a Russian missile hit an administrative building in the port city of Mykolaiv in southern Ukraine, killing at least 12 people, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov made the case for the establishment of new world order. In a videotaped message to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, Lavrov claimed the world is “living through a very serious stage in the history of international relations”. He added, “We, together with you, and with our sympathisers will move towards a multipolar, just, democratic world order”. Lavrov’s sentiments echoed Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping’s February 4 joint statement announcing the beginning of a new era in international relations. In that statement, the two leaders not only called for a new, multipolar order but lamented the West’s “unilateral approaches to addressing international issues”, claiming such attitudes “incite contradictions, differences and confrontation” and hamper “the development and progress of mankind”. Without a doubt, this is a credible observation, especially regarding the United States’ policies across the world. For example, Washington has sanctioned Zimbabwe’s government – and rightfully so – for committing gross human rights abuses, but continues to support the equally repressive Ugandan government with military hardware, cash and training. Last month, the US Senate passed a resolution urging “international criminal courts to investigate Putin, his security council and military leaders for possible war crimes” in Ukraine. Nevertheless, Washington still refuses to recognise the International Criminal Court (ICC), or cooperate in any way with its investigation into possible war crimes committed by US troops in Afghanistan. The hypocrisy of the US is also apparent in its approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite Israel’s countless, well-documented human rights and international law violations, decades-long illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, and apartheid policies against the Palestinian population, the US has blocked 53 United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions critical of Israel in the last five decades. And it is not only Russia and China that are disturbed by the West’s apparent hypocrisy in the international arena. Africa too has grave concerns about the current global order, and has long been calling for the UN to undergo substantial reform to address the deep-rooted injustices in its handling of international affairs. In 2005, for instance, the African Union (AU) adopted the Ezulwini Consensus, calling for a more representative and democratic UNSC, in which Africa, like all other world regions, is represented. And speaking at the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in February, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed renewed the call for Africa to be granted a larger role in the UN. In this context, it may seem understandable for Africa to support the multipolar world order Russia claims to be building with the help of China. However, Beijing and Moscow are not calling for any reform that would diminish the enormous sway they readily have over world affairs. They are also not acting in a way that demonstrates under this new order they would hold themselves to the same standards as everyone else or that less powerful states and peoples would have better access to justice. Indeed, as recently as in 2021, China blocked a UN Security Council statement condemning the military coup in Myanmar. And between 2011 and 2019, Russia vetoed no less than 14 UNSC resolutions on Syria. These great powers are evidently selective and casual proponents of democracy and human rights – just like their nemesis, the US. But African nations now appear hell-bent on ignoring the hypocrisy demonstrated by Russia and China, and eagerly awaiting the emergence of their new world order. The dangers of idolising Putin’s Russia, Xi’s China Putin’s popularity is at an outstandingly irrational and possibly dangerous high in Africa. Despite the illegality and brutality of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, for example, Putin’s name adorns long-distance buses in Zimbabwe. And African leaders also seem reluctant to punish or even caution the Russian leader for its destructive “special military operation” in Ukraine. At the recent UN General Assembly vote on a resolution calling for Russia’s suspension from the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), for example, the majority of African states either abstained – such as South Africa – or outright voted no – like Ethiopia. Meanwhile, South Africa’s influential opposition leader Julius Malema has urged Putin to “teach” Ukraine and NATO a lesson because “we need a new world order”. He has also claimed that Putin has given the Russian army clear instructions to avoid “civilian casualties” in Ukraine. This is despite the UN’s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights recording 1,900 civilian casualties – with 726 people killed, including 52 children – mostly caused by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. In light of the disdain for territorial integrity, humanity and the right to life Putin’s Russia is currently showing in Ukraine, Africans should stop and think how the Russian leader’s proposed new world order would likely work out for them. And it is not only the carnage caused by Russia in Ukraine that should make Africa think twice about supporting the new world order promoted by Moscow and Beijing. Under Putin, Russia has been inundated by state-affiliated and state-sponsored political filth and terror. Putin’s political rivals and anyone daring to act against the interests of the Kremlin, including journalists, have faced assassination attempts both in Russia and abroad. Many, including former Federal Security Service agent Alexander Litvinenko and journalist Anna Politkovskaya, have been killed. Human rights groups and independent media organisations have been targeted and shut down. Elections have been turned into a sham and private enterprise has been all but killed. Under Putin’s orders, the Russian military waged many immoral wars across the world – Russia’s indiscriminate shelling of residential areas in Syria and Georgia claimed thousands of lives. Similarly, China under Xi is a hotbed of repression. His administration has arbitrarily detained, tortured and mistreated millions of Turkic Muslims in the northwestern Xinjiang region. It has also frequently targeted intellectuals, civil rights activists and journalists and moved to restrict LGBTQ and women’s rights. Thus, Malema and other African leaders who look forward to Putin’s new world order should stop and consider what they are wishing for. An illiberal world order led by despots with blood-soaked histories cannot help Africa fulfil its democratic aspirations. Africa must chart its own path Africa does not need to subscribe to Chinese, Russian or American interpretations or manifestations of democracy and multilateralism. It simply needs to secure equal rights and representations in a genuinely progressive multipolar international system that safeguards its democratic and economic interests as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the AU. The ill-advised and misplaced enthusiasm for Putin’s strongman politics is a sombre reflection of Africa’s failures and imprecise trajectory under the toothless AU. Almost 21 years after its establishment, the AU carries very little weight on the continent and it has almost no voice on the global stage. And while its pursuit of permanent representation on the UNSC is an extremely praiseworthy and essential exercise, it has gradually turned into an expedient and intermittently expressed soundbite. Be that as it may, Africa should focus on establishing a world order that is defined by strong, independent and democratic multilateral institutions. Undoubtedly, that is what China and Russia are eager to avoid or destroy, because they want the licence to intimidate, repress, silence and kill, both at home and abroad.

**The best studies go aff — err on the side of a consensus of empirical research — our evidence assumes every skeptic.**

Stephen **Brooks &** William **Wohlforth 16**. William, Daniel Webster Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College. Stephen Brooks, Ph. D in Political Science from Yale, Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College, Senior Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University. Page 103-108

Consistency with influential relevant theories lends **credence** to the expectation that **US security commitments** actually can shape the strategic environment as deep engagement presupposes. But it is far from conclusive. Not all analysts endorse the theories we discussed in chapter 5. These theories make strong assumptions that states generally act rationally and focus primarily on security. Allowing misperceptions, emotions, domestic politics, desire for status, or concern for honor into the picture might alter the verdict on the strategy’s net expected effects. And to model the strategy’s expected effects we had to simplify things by selecting two mechanisms— **assurance** and **deterrence**— and examining their effects independently, thus missing potentially **powerful positive interactions** between them.

This chapter moves beyond theory to examine patterns of evidence. If the theoretical arguments about the security effects of deep engagement are right, what sort of evidence should we see? Two major bodies of evidence are most important: general **empirical findings** concerning the strategy’s key mechanisms and **regionally focused research**.

General Patterns of Evidence Three key questions about US security provision have received the most extensive analysis. First, do alliances such as those sustained by the United States actually deter war and increase security? Second, does such security provision actually hinder nuclear proliferation? And third, does limiting proliferation actually increase security?

Deterrence Effectiveness The determinants of deterrence success and failure have attracted scores of quantitative and case study tests. Much of the case study work yields a cautionary finding: that deterrence is much harder in practice than in theory, because standard models assume away the complexities of human psychology and domestic politics that tend to make some states hard to deter and might cause deterrence policies to backfire. 1 Many quantitative findings, mean- while, are mutually contradictory or are clearly not relevant to extended deterrence. But **some relevant results receive broad support:**

* **Alliances** generally do **have a deterrent effect**. In a study spanning nearly **two centuries**, **Johnson** and **Leeds** found “support for the hypothesis that defensive alliances deter the **initiation of disputes**.” They conclude that “defensive alliances lower the **probability of international conflict** and are thus a good policy option for states seeking to maintain peace in the world.” Sechser and Fuhrmann similarly find that formal defense pacts with nuclear states have significant deterrence benefits. 2 3
* The overall balance of military forces (including nuclear) between states does not appear to influence deterrence; the **local balance of military forces** in the **specific theater** in which **deterrence** is actually **practiced**, however, **is key**. 4
* **Forward- deployed troops enhance the deterrent effect** of alliances with overseas allies. 5
* Strong mutual interests and ties enhance deterrence. 6
* Case studies **strongly ratify** the theoretical expectation that it is easier to **defend** a given status quo than to **challenge it forcefully**: compellence (sometimes termed “coercion” or “coercive diplomacy”) is extremely hard.

The most important finding to emerge from this voluminous research is that alliances— especially with **nuclear- armed allies** like the United States— **actually work** in deterring conflict. This is all the more striking in view of the fact that what scholars call “selection bias” probably **works against it**. The **U**nited States is more inclined to offer— and protégés to seek— alliance rela- tionships in settings where the **probability** of military **conflicts** is **higher than average**. The fact that alliances work to deter conflict in precisely the situations where **deterrence** is likely to be **especially hard** is noteworthy.

More specifically, these findings buttress the key theoretical implication that if the United States is interested in deterring military challenges to the status quo in key regions, relying only on **latent military capabilities** in the US **homeland** is likely to be **far less effective** than having an **overseas military posture**. Similarly, they lend support to the general proposition that a forward deterrence posture is **strongly appealing** to a status quo power, because defending a given status quo is **far cheaper than overturning it**, and, once a favorable status quo is successfully overturned, **restoring** the status quo ante can be expected to be **fearsomely costly**. Recognizing the significance of these **findings clearly casts doubt** on the “**wait on the sidelines and decide whether to intervene later” approach** that is so strongly favored by **retrenchment proponents**.

The Causes of Nuclear Proliferation Matthew Kroenig highlights a number of reasons why US policymakers seek to limit the spread of nuclear weapons: “Fear that nuclear proliferation might deter [US leaders] from using military **intervention** to pursue their interests, reduce the effectiveness of their **coercive diplomacy**, trigger **regional instability**, undermine their **alliance structures**, dissipate their strategic attention, and set off **further nuclear proliferation** within their sphere of influence.” These are not the only reasons for concern about nuclear proliferation; also notable are the enhanced prospects of **nuclear accidents** and the greater risk of **leakage** of **nuclear material to terrorists**. 9 8

Do deep engagement’s security ties serve to contain the spread of **nuclear weapons**? The literature on the causes of proliferation is massive and faces challenges as great as any in international relations. With few cases to study, severe challenges in gathering evidence about inevitably secretive nuclear programs, and a large number of factors in play on both the demand and the supply sides, **findings are decidedly mixed**. Alliance relationships are just one piece of this complex puzzle, one that is hard to isolate from all the other factors in play. And empirical studies face the same selection bias problem just discussed: Nuclear powers are more likely to offer security guarantees to states confronting a serious threat and thus facing above- average incentives to acquire nuclear weapons. Indeed, alliance guarantees might be offered to states actively considering the nuclear option precisely in order to try to forestall that decision. Like a strong drug given only to very sick patients, alliances thus may have a powerful effect even if they sometimes fail to work as hoped. 10

Bearing these challenges in mind, the **most relevant** findings that emerge **from this literature are**:

* The **most recent statistical analysis** of the precise question at issue concludes that “security guarantees **significantly reduce proliferation** proclivity among their recipients.” In addition, states with such guarantees are less likely to **export** sensitive **nuclear material and technology** to other nonnuclear states. 12 11
* **Case study research** underscores that the complexity of motivations for acquiring nuclear weapons cannot be reduced to security: domestic politics, economic interests, and prestige all matter. 13
* Multiple **independently conceived** and **executed** recent case studies nonetheless reveal that **security alliances** help explain numerous allied decisions not to proliferate even when security is not always the main driver of leaders’ interest in a nuclear program. As Nuno Monteiro and Alexandre Debs stress, “States whose security goals are subsumed by their sponsors’ own aims have **never acquired the bomb**. … This finding highlights the role of U.S. security commitments in **stymieing nuclear proliferation**: U.S. protégés will only **seek the bomb** if they **doubt U.S. protection** of their core security goals.” 15 14
* **Multiple independently** conceived and executed recent **case research** projects further unpack the conditions that decrease the likelihood of allied proliferation, centering on the **credibility** of the **alliance commitment.** In addition, in some cases of prevention failure, the alliances allow the patron to influence the ally’s nuclear program subsequently, decreasing further proliferation risks. 17
* Security alliances lower the likelihood of **proliferation cascades**. To be sure, many predicted cascades did not occur. But security **provision**, mainly by the **United States**, is a **key** reason why. The **most comprehensive statistical analysis** finds that states are more likely to proliferate in response to neighbors when **three conditions are met**: (1) there is an **intense security rivalry** between the two countries; (2) the prospective proliferating state **does not have a security guarantee** from a **nuclear**- armed **patron**; and (3) the potential proliferator has the industrial and technical capacity to launch an indigenous nuclear program. 18 19 16

In sum, as Monteiro and Debs note, “Despite grave concerns that more states would seek a nuclear deterrent to counter U.S. power preponderance,” in fact “the spread of nuclear weapons **decelerated** with the **end of the Cold War** in 1989.” Their research, as well as that of **scores of scholars** using **multiple methods** and representing many **contrasting theoretical perspectives**, shows that US **security guarantees** and the counter- proliferation policy **deep engagement** allows are a **big part** of the **reason why**. 20

The Costs of Nuclear Proliferation General empirical findings thus lend support to the proposition that security alliances impede nuclear proliferation. But is this a net contributor to global security? Most practitioners and policy analysts would probably not even bring this up as a question and would automatically answer yes if it were raised. Yet a small but very prominent group of theorists within the academy reach a different answer: some of the same realist precepts that generate the theoretical prediction that retrenchment would increase demand for nuclear weapons also suggest that proliferation might **increase security** such that the net effect of retrenchment could be neutral. Most notably, “**nuclear optimists**” like Kenneth **Waltz** contend that **deterrence** essentially solves the security problem for all **nuclear- armed states**, largely eliminating the direct use of force among them. It follows that US retrenchment might generate an initial decrease in security followed by an **increase as insecure states acquire nuclear capabilities**, ultimately leaving no net effect on international security. 21

This perspective is countered by “**nuclear pessimists**” such as Scott Sagan. Reaching outside realism to organization theory and other bodies of social science research, they see major security downsides from **new nuclear states**. **Copious research** produced by Sagan and others casts doubt on the expectation that **governments** can be **relied upon** to create **secure** and **controlled** **nuclear forces**. The more nuclear states there are, the higher the probability that the organizational, psychological, and civil- military pathologies Sagan identifies will turn an episode like one of the numerous “**near misses” he uncovers** into actual nuclear use. As Campbell Craig warns, “One day a **warning system will fail**, or **an official will panic**, or a terrorist **attack will be misconstrued**, and **the missiles will fly**.” 22 23

Looking beyond these kinds of factors, it is notable that powerful reasons to question the assessment of proliferation optimists also emerge even if one assumes, as they do, that states are rational and seek only to maximize their security. First, nuclear deterrence can only work by **raising the risk of nuclear war**. For deterrence to be **credible**, there has to be a **nonzero chance** of nuclear use. If nuclear use is **impossible**, **deterrence cannot be credible**. It follows that every nuclear deterrence relationship depends on some probability of 24 nuclear use. The more such relationships there are, **the greater the risk of nuclear war**. Proliferation therefore increases the chances of nuclear war even in a perfectly rationalist world. Proliferation optimists cannot logically deny that nuclear spread increases the risk of nuclear war. Their argument must be that the security gains of nuclear spread outweigh this enhanced risk.

Estimating that risk is not simply a matter of pondering the conditions under which leaders will choose to unleash nuclear war. Rather, as Schelling established, the question is whether states will run the risk of using nuclear weapons. Nuclear crisis bargaining is about a “**competition in risk taking**.” Kroenig counts some twenty cases in which states—including prominently the United States—ran real risks of nuclear war in order to prevail in crises. As Kroenig notes, “By asking whether states can be deterred or not … proliferation optimists are **asking the wrong question**. The right question to ask is: **what risk of nuclear war** is a specific state willing to run against a **particular opponent** in a **given crisis**?” The more nuclear- armed states there are, the more the opportunities for such risk- taking and the **greater the probability of nuclear use**. 27 26 25

**Russia’s worse.**

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That Africa is the first among the world’s regions to feel the devastating human effects of climate change is now widely acknowledged. Arguably more significant than the **economic boons** Russia stands to realize from the aforementioned deals are the adverse environmental effects that resource mining could have on the populations of these countries.

Putin’s promise to help bring stability to the Central African Republic also invites a human approach to the analysis of Russia’s Africa policy. According to the UN, the protracted conflict has displaced more than 642,000 people. During the past year, the actions of Putin’s associate Yevgeny Prigozhin and Prigozhin’s **private military company**, Wagner Group, in the CAR have faced increasing scrutiny. Columbia University professor Kimberly Marten, for example, has highlighted the group’s **mercenary interests** in **CAR’s** mineral-rich **mines**. Discerning exactly what Putin’s promise entails therefore has a particular **humanitarian urgency**.

Foreign policy and domestic policy are inextricably connected. For this reason, it is important also to examine the impact of foreign policy on domestic social attitudes. Russia has a **notoriously poor record on racism**, particularly when it comes to **African migrants**, as the Los Angeles Times highlighted back in 2014. Since the country hosted the FIFA World Cup in 2018, these problems have been **exacerbated** by the presence of many Africans who outstayed their Fan Visas in hope of seeking asylum or finding work. In March of this year, Interior Ministry official Andrei Krayushkin confirmed that 5,500 of these individuals remained in Russia.

Mixed race **African Russians** also continue to face **discrimination and abuse**, as this Calvert Journal report shows. In the case of Russia’s “pivot to the East,” official foreign policy has fostered positive attitudes among the Russian population toward China and its people. To what extent the Kremlin’s pivot to Africa will have an analogous effect remains to be seen, but attention should be paid to whether Putin’s overtures to African leaders have any tangible effect on the lives of Russia’s own African population.

Africa is not, as Belgium’s King Leopold contemptuously called it, a “magnificent cake” that exists purely to sate the appetites of great powers—**Russia among them**. Rather, it is an umbrella term that includes a plethora of independent actors with their own agendas distinct from those of Moscow, Beijing, or indeed Washington. As the South China Morning Post recently reported, **Russia is playing catch-up** to China and the West in terms of developing economic ties with the continent. With African nations—and the continent as a whole—in ascendance on the international stage, it is time to rethink the way we analyze great powers’ Africa policies. And Russia’s policy is a good place to start.

**Russia will interfere with African elections to support unstable autocracies.**

**Gathara 19**, Communications consultant, writer, and award-winning political cartoonist based in Nairobi., (Patrick, “Russia has joined the ‘scramble’ for Africa”, Aljazeera, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/11/10/russia-has-joined-the-scramble-for-africa) //CHC-DS

However, as it seeks to reassert itself on the world stage, Africa is still seen as providing “low-cost, high-profile” opportunities to burnish its prestige.

Still, the Africa of today is very different from that of the 1970s and 1980s and while maintaining some of the tactics that were successful in yesteryears, such as the use of proxy forces in places like the Central African Republic and the sale of light and heavy weapons to regimes with dubious human rights records, Russia has evolved others more in tune with the times.

According to Proekt (The Project), an independent Moscow-based online investigative news outlet, Kremlin-linked teams have used social media **“troll farms”** and **spin doctors** to interfere in politics and elections in 20 countries on the continent, particularly in Francophone Africa, but with mixed success so far. In 2018 they failed in their attempt to **engineer** the re-election of President Erie Radzaunarimampianina in Madagascar and have been linked to **interference** in elections in Zimbabwe.

According to the Financial Times “across Africa, Moscow has deployed teams of **military instructors** to train elite presidential guards, sent arms shipments and **assisted shaky autocrats** with election strategies. It has also promised to build nuclear power plants and develop oil wells and diamond mines.”

The Guardian has also reported on leaked documents showing a **wide-scale Russian effort** “to bolster its presence in at least 13 countries across Africa by building relations with existing rulers, striking military deals, and grooming a new generation of ‘leaders’ and **undercover ‘agents’**.”

The goal of Russian efforts seems largely unchanged from the Soviet days – essentially to counter and limit the influence of others on the continent. The benefits for autocrats seeking to hang on to power on the continent is similarly easy to ascertain. However, for their youthful subjects, many of whom have little experience or recollection of the Soviet Union, the renewed Russian interest is likely to be viewed with scepticism.

**Russia’s just as capitalist in Africa.**

**Adibe 19**, Jideofor Adibe is a Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria, (Jideofor, “What does Russia really want from Africa?”, Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/11/14/what-does-russia-really-want-from-africa/>) //CHC-DS

Russia’s interest in Africa

It will be simplistic to frame the just-concluded Russia-Africa summit as a copy-cat jamboree organized by Russia to latch on the bandwagon of the increasingly fashionable trend of organizing and institutionalizing Africa summits by countries like China, India, Japan, France, and the United States. The truth is that, since the 2000s, there has been a noticeable **re-awakening** of Russia’s interest in Africa. Indeed, between 2005 and 2015, Africa’s trade with Russia grew by 185 percent, and Russia has **several reasons** to engage Africa more intensely.

Goal 1: Projecting power on the global stage

In supporting African countries—who, notably, constitute the largest voting bloc in the United Nations—Russia is cultivating allies in its challenge to the current United States and Euro-Atlantic-dominated security order. This strategy is not going unnoticed: Indeed, in 2018 former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton accused Russia of selling arms to African countries in exchange for votes at the United Nations, among other nefarious motivations.

Goal 2: Accessing **raw materials** and **natural resources**

**Russia**—just like other major world powers—also **covets** many of Africa’s raw materials and is creating joint projects and investments in order to access them. From the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Central African Republic, Russian companies are **scaling up** their activities in the mining of resources such as coltan, cobalt, gold, and diamonds. In Zimbabwe, for instance, a joint venture between Russia’s JSC Afromet and Zimbabwe’s Pen East Ltd is developing one of the **world’s largest** deposits of platinum group metal. In Angola, Russian mining company Alroser recently increased its stake in local producer Catoca to 41 percent, in a deal that provides the diamond giant with a production base outside Russia. Despite joint ownership with Angola, Catoca operates **under Russian management**. Remarkably, about one-third of Russia’s African imports are agricultural, including fruit, cocoa, coffee, and potatoes.

Goal 3: Arms exports and security

In recent years, Russia had become the largest supplier of arms to Africa, accounting for 35 percent of arms exports to the region, followed by China (17 percent), United States (9.6 percent), and France (6.9 percent). Since 2015, Russia has signed over 20 bilateral military cooperation agreements with African states. A Russian citizen, Valeriy Zakharov, has even been appointed to be a national security advisor to the president of the Central African Republic (CAR), Faustin-Archange Touadéra.

Russian arms are attractive to African leaders because, besides being relatively cheap, deals with Russia are **not** often **held up by human rights concerns** cited by other countries like France and the U.S. For instance, when the U.S. was dilly-dallying on selling arms to Nigeria to fight Boko Haram in 2014 upon allegations of human rights abuses by Nigerian soldiers, Nigeria turned to Russia and was able to place an order for 12 attack helicopters.

Goal 4: Supporting energy and power development in Africa through Russian companies

Lack of affordable, reliable electricity in Africa makes the region a prime and **lucrative location** for Russia’s energy and power industry. Several state-owned Russian companies such as **Gazprom**, **Lukoil**, **Rostec and Rosatom** are active in Africa, with activities largely concentrated in Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, and Uganda. So far, Rosatom has signed memorandums and agreements to develop nuclear energy with 18 African countries, including Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Zambia, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Ethiopia. In 2018 alone, Rosatom agreed to build four 1200 MW VVER-type nuclear reactors in Egypt—with construction and maintenance valued at $60 billion—with a Russian loan of up to $25 billion at an annual interest rate of 3 percent.

Russia also wants to use its mostly state-owned oil and gas companies to create **new streams of energy supply**. In 2018, for instance, Nigerian oil and gas exploration company Oranto Petroleum announced that it would be cooperating with Russia’s largest oil producer, Rosneft, to develop **21 oil assets** across 17 African countries. Several Russian companies have also made significant investments in Algeria’s oil and gas industries and in Libya, Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, and Egypt.

**Link — AT: Imperialism**

**The U.S. has been the cause of anti-imperialism globally — four waves of empire building, and dismantlement are intrinsically US driven.**

**Ikenberry & Deudney ‘15** — John Ikenberry is a theorist of international relations and United States foreign policy, and the Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. Daniel Deudney is an American political scientist and Associate Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University. August 2015; “America’s Impact: The End of Empire and the Globalization of the Westphalian System”; *Princeton Scholar*; [http://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/gji3/files/am-impact-dd-gji-final-1-august-2015.pdf; //CYang](http://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/gji3/files/am-impact-dd-gji-final-1-august-2015.pdf;%20//CYang) **[\*\*NOTE\*\* — this card was the subject of an ethics challenge in a college debate because the original cutting (original card cutter unknown) omitted paragraphs — this card was then recut from scratch]**

In contemporary debates, this argument undercuts, modifies, and qualifies characterizations held by so many of the **U**nited **S**tates as essentially imperial, and the American order as an empire. In our rendering, the **U**nited **S**tate is not the last **Western empire**, but the first **anti-imperial** and **post-imperial great power** in the **global system**. Our argument is thus focused on the consequences of American foreign policy for the evolution of the international system, and we do not in this confined treatment offer an explanation for the origins of U.S. foreign policy. In short, we offer an argument about impacts rather than the sources of America’s antiimperial and pro-Westphalian role.

Empires and State Systems: Historical Patterns

Empire has been the historically predominant form of order in world politics. Looking at a time frame of several millennia, there was no global anarchic system until the European explorations and subsequent imperial and colonial ventures connected desperate regional systems, doing so approximately five hundred years ago.7 Prior to this emergence of a globalscope system, the pattern of world politics was characterized by regional systems. These regional systems were initially very anarchic, and marked by high levels of military competition. But almost universally, they tended to consolidate into regional empires which had fairly limited interactions with polities outside their regions.8 Thus, it was empires – not anarchic state systems – that typically dominated the regional systems in all parts of the world.

Within this global pattern of regional empires, European political order was distinctly anomalous because it persisted so long as an anarchy. Despite repeated efforts to consolidate Europe into one empire – or what the Europeans referred to as “universal monarchy” – this region remained a plural, multi-state political order. After the Peace of Westphalia ending the Thirties Year War, this plural anarchic system, the Westphalian system, and was sustained by a rough balance of power among its autonomous states and the weakness of the claimants of European empire. This Westphalian system was based on a roughly equal distribution of power among its major units, sustained by various balancing practices that thwarted a succession of regional European empire-builders, and had an elaborate system of public international law and ideological justification.9 While this system rested on a balance of power, it was juridically crystallized into a system of mutually recognized sovereigns.

Outside of Europe, however, the European states, including those that were most active in preventing empire within Europe, were extraordinarily successful in conquering and colonizing vast areas across oceanic distances.10 The Europeans did not invent empire, but they were spectacularly successful at empire building on a global scope, largely because of the imbalance of power that stemmed from European innovations in technology and organization.11 The Europeans conquered and dominated empires, states, and peoples in every previously loosely coupled or isolated regional system across the world. The Europeans also successfully planted numerous colonies of settlers, mainly in the temperate zones in North and South America, Oceania, and the southern tip of Africa.12 States from the Western European core of the Westphalian system thus brought into existence a global-scale political system made up of vast multi-continental empires of conquered peoples and a scattering of colonial “new Europes.”13

This pattern of European empire building was different from its predecessors, not just in its global scope, but also because the European states were continuously warring against one another for dominance within Europe. These struggles between states within Europe against empire in Europe were fought on a global scale. Thus the first “world war,” defined as a war fought across multiple continents, occurred in the later 18th century. In this struggle Britain sought to thwart French attempts to dominate Europe and the battle lines were in Europe, North America, South Asia, and across the global oceans. This pattern of the globalization of intraEuropean warfare continued in the 20th century with the wars triggered by German efforts to dominate Europe. The growing imbalance of power between the Europeans and the rest of the world during the 18th and 19th century enabled the Europeans to easily expand their empires at the expense of non-Europeans. But during the same periods, the Europeans found it very difficult to conquer each other within Europe. Thus vast armies wrought great destruction fighting over tiny parcels of land in Europe, while comparatively small European imperial expeditionary forces readily mastered non-European armies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Thus a balance of power underpinned the Westphalian system in Europe, while an imbalance of power between Europe and the world underpinned imperial expansion.

Anti-imperial and anti-colonial rebellions and resistance are as old as empires, but successful rebellion against European imperial rule outside Europe began in the 18th century with the revolt of the colonial settler colonies in the Americas – first in North America and then in South America. This first wave of settler-colony rebellion marked the end of what historians refer to as the “first British empire,” as well as the first great European empire in the Americas, that of Spain. The success of this first wave of anti-imperial rebellion in Spanish America was crucially facilitated by the weakening of Spain during the Napoleonic wars for domination within Europe.

In the later-19th century, European empire building outside of Europe entered a second wave, enabled by the new industrial technologies that further amplified the imbalance of power between Europeans and non-Europeans, which in turn allowed the Europeans to extend their imperial domination into the large interior spaces of the continents, particularly in Africa and Asia.14 In the 20th century, further wars among the core European states weakened Britain, France, and Holland, the leading European colonial powers, thus creating opportunities for antiimperial independence movements in Asia and Africa. Paradoxically, the fact that the Europeans were continuously fighting one another fueled their imperial ambitions and successes, while at the same time, such wars weakened them and helped enable the success of rebellions against their empires.15 Thus as the British empire was reaching its territorial zenith in the early years of the 20th century, Britain was critically weakened by the world wars in Europe and Asia against the aspiring German and Japanese empire builders.

The territorial aggression of the Axis Powers constitute a third wave of empire building which was short lived and thwarted by the successful mobilization of the “United Nations,” a coalition led by the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China. A fourth wave of empire building, by the Soviet Union and the international communist movement in the second half of the 20th century, was thwarted and dismantled by the United States and its allies.

The Pattern of American Anti-Imperial, Anti-Colonial, and Pro-Westphalian Impacts

Against the backdrop of this evolution of the international system and the four waves of **empire** building and dismantlement, it becomes possible to see **more clearly** the many ways in which the **U**nited **S**tates played **important anti-imperial**, anti-colonial, and pro-Westphalian roles. 16

In each of the four waves of empire building and dismantlement, the United States had an impact. The **U**nited **S**tates was the first “**new nation**” to emerge from a **rebel**lion against European imperial rule during the first wave of modern empire. The United States also supported the independence of other European settler colonies throughout the Americas and, with the Monroe Doctrine, helped **sustain their independence** against European efforts to **recolonize** parts of the Americas. In the second wave of late 19th century empire-building, the United States, despite its great relative power, did not establish an empire of its own of any significance or duration. And during the latter part of the 20th century, the United States pushed **European decolonization**, thus facilitating the breakup of second wave empires. In the great world wars in the 20th century, the United States played an **important role** in thwarting a third **wave of imperial projects** of **Germany**, **Japan**, and **Italy**. In the second half of the 20th century, the United States played decisive roles, both ideological and military, in thwarting the fourth wave of empire building, the expansion of the communist great power, the Soviet Union, as well as communist coups and revolutions in many weak and small independent states.

The United States also played a variety of important roles in **building and strengthening** Westphalian institutions, moderating **inter-state anarchy**, and facilitating the ability of states to survive as **independent members** of international society. From its inception, the United States was precocious in its support for the law of nations, the institutions of the society of states, particularly the laws of war and neutrality, and public international law, as a means of restraining war and aggression. In both the 19th and 20th centuries, the **U**nited **S**tates, first regionally and then globally, inspired and helped **legitimate anti-colonial** and anti-imperial **independence movements** and national liberation struggles among peoples struggling against empires all over the world. In the 20th century, the United States led the efforts to institutionalize Westphalian norms of non-aggression and sovereign independence, first with the League of Nations and then with the United Nations Charter. In the second half of the 20th century, the American-led liberal international order institutionalized **free trade** and **multilateral cooperation**, thus providing the infrastructure for a global economic system, thus enabling **smaller** and weaker **states** to sustain their sovereign. Also in the second half of the 20th century, the American system of military alliances contributed to the dampening of violent conflicts among allied states, particularly in Europe and East Asia, thus protecting the Westphalian system from the return of violent conflict and empire-building.

**Link — AT: IR**

**IR is great --- leads to better decisions which help avoid war.**

**Reiter 15**—Professor of Political Science at Emory University [Dan, “Scholars Help Policymakers Know Their Tools,” *War on the Rocks*, 27 Aug, <https://warontherocks.com/2015/08/scholars-help-policymakers-know-their-tools/>, accessed 11 Jan 2017]

This critique is both narrowly true and narrow in perspective. Context is of course important, but foreign policy choices are **not sui generis**, there are patterns across space and time that **inform decision-making**. Policymakers recognize this and routinely draw lessons from history when making foreign policy decisions. As noted below, policymakers in other areas such as development and public health routinely rely on broader, more general studies to craft policy. And, **broader scholarship** can **improve** foreign policy performance, as evidenced by the ability of IR academics to build on their own work to **predict outcomes**, including for example forecasting the lengths of the conventional and insurgency phases of the U.S.–Iraq conflict in the 2000s.

But, even if one were to accept the limits of general work, there is a growing body of academic work that evaluates foreign policy tools as applied to a specific country or region. These studies ask questions such as whether:

Development projects reduced insurgent violence in Afghanistan; Drone strikes reduced insurgent violence in Pakistan; Development programs increased civic participation and social capital in Sudan; Building cell phone towers in Iraq reduced insurgent violence; Attempts to reintegrate combatants into society in Burundi succeeded; Security sector reform in Liberia increased the legitimacy of the government there; Road projects in India reduced insurgent violence; We can understand peacekeeping’s failure in Congo; Israel’s targeted assassinations reduced violent attacks from militants.

This is not by any means a dismissal of professional intelligence work. Academics are not intelligence analysts: They do not have access to contemporary intelligence data, nor are they generally trained to do things like examine the latest satellite photos of North Korean nuclear activities and make judgments about North Korea’s current plutonium production. And certainly, academic IR work can never replace professional intelligence work. But the best policy decisions marry timely, specific intelligence with academic work that has a more general perspective.

A third critique is that much of this academic work on foreign policy tools is unusable by policymakers because it is too quantitative and technically complex. Here, echoing a point made by Erik Voeten, there is a **danger** in **not appreciating** the importance of rigorous research design, including sophisticated quantitative techniques, for **crafting effective policy**. Sophisticated research design is not the enemy of effective policy, it is **critically necessary** for it. Certainly, the current academic focus on building research designs that permit causal inference speaks exactly to what policymakers care about the most: if implementing a certain policy will cause the desired outcome.

Or, put differently, **bad research** designs make for **bad public policy**. A classic example is school busing. In the 1960s and early 1970s, some cities adopted voluntary integration programs for public schools, in which families could volunteer to bus their children to schools in neighborhoods with different racial majorities. Policymakers used the favorable results for the voluntary programs to make the improper inference that mandatory busing policies would also work. The result was bad public policy and violence in the streets.

Sophisticated technical methods can improve our ability to make **causal inferences**, and can help solve other **empirical problems**. Consider that the heart of successful counterinsurgency is, according to U.S. military doctrine, winning the support of the population. Assessing whether certain policies do win public support requires collecting opinion data. A conventional method for measuring popular opinion is the survey, but of course, individuals in insurgency-stricken areas may be unwilling to reveal their true opinions to a survey-taker out of fear for their personal safety. Methodologists have crafted sophisticated techniques for addressing this issue, improving our ability to measure public support for the government in these areas. These techniques have been used to assess better the determinants of public support in insurgency-affected countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India.

Going forward, we will continue to need advanced methodologies to address pressing policy questions. Consider the U.S. military’s commitment to gender integration. The implementation of this commitment will be best informed if it rests on rigorous social science that address outstanding questions. Is there a Sacagawea effect, in which mixed gender units engaged in counterinsurgency are more effective than male-only units? How might mixed gender affect small unit cohesion in combat? How might mixed gender units reduce the incidence of sexual assault, both within the military and of assault committed by troops against civilians?

Certainly, **other areas** of public policy understand the importance of rigorous research design. Economic and development policy communities read the work of and employ economics Ph.D.s. Policymakers incorporate the findings of sophisticated studies on policy areas such as **microfinance**, **gender empowerment**, and **foreign aid**, knowing the best policy decisions must incorporate these studies’ findings.

Or consider public health policy. **Lives are literally on the line** as decision-makers must make decisions about issues such as **vaccinations**, **nutritional recommendations**, and **air quality**. Policymakers know they must use sophisticated technical studies executed by epidemiologists and other public health academics to craft the best policies.

Critics will argue that some U.S. policymakers remain alienated from contemporary academic IR work, with the suggestion that if IR academics let go of an obsession with technique, they will then be better able to connect with policymakers and help them craft better policy. I agree that IR academics need to find ways to communicate their results in clear, non-technical language. But the **technical components** of the work **need to be there**. Stripping them out **directly undermines** the ability of the research to give the **right** kinds of policy **recommendations**.

Let me conclude by noting that I am sympathetic to the concern that IR academics should think about the big picture as well as smaller questions, the forest of grand strategy as well as the trees of foreign policy tools. IR academics have the potential to **make real contributions** to big picture **debates**, to think hard about the essence of grand strategy by assembling a framework that effectively integrates foreign policy means and ends. The nature of the IR subfield and its integration of political economy and security, and its ability to think about structure as well as units, make it especially well positioned to consider these broad questions. The ability of IR academics to contribute to contemporary foreign policy debates is one of many reasons why political science should retain the subfield of IR and resist the temptation to replace the traditional empirical subfields of IR, comparative, and American with new subfields of conflict, political economy, behavior, and institutions.

Like good carpenters, foreign policymakers need to know their tools. Rigorous IR research is the only way to evaluate them effectively.

**Link — AT: Predictions**

**Predictions are inevitable and accurate.**

**Ward** & Metternich **13** [Michael D. Ward received his B.S. degree in Chemistry from the William Paterson College of New Jersey in 1977 and his Ph.D. degree at Princeton University in 1981. He was a Welch postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas, Austin, between 1981 and 1982. He joined the research staff at Standard Oil of Ohio in Cleveland in 1982, and in 1984 he became a member of the research staff at the Dupont Central Research and Development Laboratories in Wilmington, Delaware. Ward joined the faculty of the Department of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science at the University of Minnesota in 1990, where he held a joint appointment in the Department of Chemistry. Ward was named a Distinguished McKnight University Professor in 1999, and he was the Director of the University of Minnesota Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC) from 1998 — 2005. Dr Nils W. Metternich is an Associate Professor in International Relations at the School of Public Policy. He joined the Department in 2013 and holds a PhD in political science from the University of Essex. Prior to joining UCL he was a postdoctoral research fellow at Duke University (2011-12). "Learning from the Past and Stepping into the Future: Toward a New Generation of Conflict Prediction." https://experts.syr.edu/en/publications/learning-from-the-past-and-stepping-into-the-future-toward-a-new-]

Political events are frequently framed as **unpredictable**. Who could have predicted the **Arab Spring**, **9/11**, or the end of the **cold war**? This skepticism about prediction reflects an underlying desire to forecast. Predicting political events is difficult because they result from **complex** social **processes**. However, in recent years, our capacity to collect **info**rmation on social **behavior** and our ability to **process large data** have increased to **degrees** only foreseen in **science fiction**. This new ability to analyze and predict behavior confronts a demand for better political **forecasts** that may serve to inform and even help to **structure effective policies** in a world in which **prediction** in everyday life has become **commonplace**.

Only a decade ago, scholars interested in civil wars undertook their research with **constrained resources**, **limited data**, and **statistical estimation capabilities** that seem underdeveloped by current standards. **Still**, major advances did result from these efforts. Consider “Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War” by **Fearon** and **Laitin** (2003), one of the most venerated and cited articles about the onset of civil wars. Published in 2003, it has over **3,000 citations** in scholar.google.com and almost 900 citations in the Web of Science (as of April 2013). It has been cited **prominently** in virtually **every** social science **discipline** in journals ranging from Acta Sociologica to World Politics; and it is the most downloaded article from the American Political Science Review. 2 This article is rightly regarded as an **important**, foundational piece of **scholarship**. However, in the summer of 2012, it was used by Jacqueline Stevens in a New York Times Op-Ed as evidence that political scientists are **bad forecasters**. That claim was **wildly off the mark** in that Fearon and Laitin do not focus on forecasting, and Stevens ignored other, actual forecasting efforts in political science. Stevens’ **funding point**—which was taken up by the US Congress—was that government on quantitative approaches was being **wasted** on efforts that did not provide **accurate policy** advice. In contrast to Stevens, we argue that conflict research in political science can be **substantially improved** by **more**, not less, **attention to predictions** through quantitative approaches.

We argue that the increasing availability of **disaggregated data** and **advanced estimation tech**niques are making forecasts of conflict more **accurate** and **precise**, thereby helping to evaluate the utility of different models and winnow the good from the bad. **Forecasting** also helps to **prevent overfitting** and reduces **confirmation bias**. As such, forecasting efforts can be used to help **validate models**, to gain greater confidence in the resulting **estimates**, and to ultimately present **robust models** that may allow us to improve the **interaction** with **decision makers** seeking **greater clarity** about the implications of **potential actions.**

**imperfect predictions are better than the alternatives — even if things are complex**

Ulfelder 11 – Research Director at Political Instability Task Force

(Jay, “Why Political Instability Forecasts Are Less Precise Than We’d Like (and Why It’s Still Worth Doing)”, 5-5, dartthrowingchimp.wordpress.com/2011/05/05/why-political-instability-forecasts-are-less-precise-than-wed-like-and-why-its-still-worth-doing/)

If this is the best we can do, then what’s the point? Well, consider the alternatives. For starters, we might decide to skip statistical forecasting altogether and just target our interventions at cases identified by expert judgment as likely onsets. Unfortunately, those expert judgments are probably going to be an **even less reliable** guide than our statistical forecasts, so this “solution” only **exacerbates our problem**. Alternatively, we could take no preventive action and just respond to events as they occur. If the net costs of responding to crises as they happen are roughly equivalent to the net costs of prevention, then this is a reasonable choice. Maybe responding to crises isn’t really all that costly; maybe preventive action isn’t effective; or maybe preventive action is potentially effective but also extremely expensive. Under these circumstances, early warning is not going to be as useful as we forecasters would like. If, however, any of those last statements are false–if responding to crises already underway is very costly, or if preventive action is (relatively) cheap and sometimes effective–then we have an incentive to use forecasts to help guide that action, in spite of the lingering uncertainty about exactly where and when those crises will occur. Even in situations where preventive action isn’t feasible or desirable, reasonably accurate forecasts can still be useful if they spur interested observers to **plan for contingencies** they otherwise might not have considered. For example, policy-makers in one country might be rooting for a dictatorship in another country to fall but still fail to plan for that event because they don’t expect it to happen any time soon. A forecasting model which identifies that dictatorship as being at high or increasing risk of collapse might encourage those policy-makers to reconsider their expectations and, in so doing, lead them to **prepare better** for that event. Where does that leave us? For me, the bottom line is this: even though forecasts of political instability are never going to be as precise as we’d like, they can still be accurate enough to be helpful, as long as the events they predict are ones for which prevention or preparation stand a decent chance of making a (positive) difference.

**Link — AT: Realism**

**Realists did not justify imperialism, their evidence is in the context of colonial NOT post-colonial realism. People understand immoral actions and the plan wouldn’t actively increase war.**

**Karkour 22** [Haro L Karkour is an IR theorist and a Lecturer in International Relations at Cardiff University, 4-1-2022, Realist Variations on Imperialism and Race, SpringerLink, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-99360-3\_2] Eric

It is common for post-colonial scholarship in IR to present **sweeping generalisations** about realist analysis of imperialism. In a famous paper, for instance, Enrol Henderson argues that Realism (with capital R to encompass all strands), ‘roots its conception of anarchy in the Hobbesian view of the state of nature’ (Henderson, 2013, 80). Echoing Charles Mills, Henderson argues that this conception was not applicable to ‘the general state of mankind’ but rather intended to describe the state of affairs of ‘non-whites’ to rationalise imperialistic violence against them and the appropriation of their land. Thus, ‘a non-white people, indeed the very non-white people upon whose land his fellow Europeans were then encroaching, is his only real-life example of people in a [Hobbesian] state of nature’ (Mills, 1997, 65; cited in Henderson, 2013, 80). It follows that, the concerns among realists and idealists with anarchy are grounded in a racist discourse that is concerned with the obligations of superior peoples to impose order on the anarchic domains of inferior peoples in order to prevent the chaos presumed to be endemic in the latter from spilling over into the former’s territories or self-proclaimed spheres of interest. Similarly, the realist and idealist concern with power was grounded in a racist discourse concerned largely with the power of whites to control the tropics, subjugate its people, steal its resources and superimpose themselves through colonial administration. (Henderson, 2013, 85)

**There are two problems** with **Henderson’s** **generalisation** about **realism**. First, the ‘**Hobbesian’** state of nature Henderson associates with **realism** has been **rejected** **by classical realists**. For example, in response to Martin Wight’s Hobbesian interpretation of his work, Morgenthau replied in a letter to International Affairs: To say that a truth is “hidden” in an “extreme” dictum can hardly be called an endorsement of the dictum. To call a position “extreme” is not to identify oneself with the position but to disassociate oneself from it … I was trying to establish the point, in contrast to Hobbes’s, that moral principles are universal and, hence, are not created by the state. (Morgenthau, 1959; on Carr’s rejection of Hobbesianism see, for instance, Linklater, 2000; Molloy, 2021)

Secondly, the concept of anarchy was indeed central to neo-realists such as Waltz (whom Henderson cites most extensively), but not to classical realists. In response to those who take it as ‘a matter of course that anarchy [is] a basic assumption of Morgenthau’s “realist’ theory” for instance, Hartmut Behr and Amelia Heath argue that ‘although this may be true for Waltz, it is not the case for Morgenthau’ (Behr & Heath, 2009, 332). Since ‘**the term anarchy is** **mentioned** in Politics Among Nations **only three times**; and when Morgenthau refers to it, it is in a critical dissociation from Hobbes’ (Behr & Heath, 2009, 332). Importantly, Behr and Heath note that Politics Among Nations originated as a reflexive attempt to critique the ideological rationalisation of power. It was only later that ‘a plethora of neo-realists became cooks in the “kitchen of power”’ (Behr & Heath, 2009, 345). In this sense, Morgenthau’s **(classical) realism** and Waltz’s (**neo)realism** are diametrically opposed in their aims and methodologies: the former rejects the ‘value free’ social science of the latter and **pursues** instead **a normative critique of power** (Karkour & Giese, 2020; Roesch, 2014; Williams, 2013). Morgenthau’s critique of power runs counter to any social science that proceeds on the basis of its rationalisation, let alone the rationalisation of empire. Akin to Morgenthau, in The Structure of Nations and Empires, Niebuhr presents a critique of power as an instrument of imperialism. The ‘pretentions’ of power, according to Niebuhr, ‘are the source of evil, whether they are expressed by kings and emperors or by commissars and revolutionary statesmen’ (Niebuhr, 1959, 298).

**It is** thus simply **not true**, pace Henderson and other post-colonial IR theorists (as cited below), that classical realists such as Morgenthau and Niebuhr **either justified or omitted** **imperialism** from their analyses of international politics. **Morgenthau**, as well as Niebuhr (but unlike Carr), **rejected** the Marxist explanation of **imperialism** as **rooted in laissez faire capitalism** and the social question in Western democracies. **Instead, they presented a long** **durée explanation of imperial domination**: imperial domination, according to Morgenthau and Niebuhr, was a political problem that pre-dated the capitalist structure of the global economy. ‘The economic interpretation of imperialism’ that Marxism proposes, according to Morgenthau, ‘erects a limited historic experience, based on a few isolated cases, into a universal law of history’ (Morgenthau, 1978, 53). The notion that ‘capitalist societies’ wage wars in search of ‘markets for their products and sufficient investments for their capital’ did not stand to empirical scrutiny according to Morgenthau (1978, 52). For ‘during the entire period of mature capitalism’ Morgenthau observed, ‘no war, with the exception of the Boer War, was waged by major powers exclusively or even predominantly for economic objectives’ (Morgenthau, 1978, 53). Furthermore, ‘the main period of colonial expansion which the economic theories tend to identify with imperialism precedes the age of mature capitalism’ and ‘Louis XIV, Peter the Great, the Napoleon I were the great imperialists of the modern pre-capitalist age’ (Morgenthau, 1978, 54). ‘What the precapitalist imperialist, the capitalist imperialist, and the “imperialistic” capitalist want’ thus Morgenthau concluded, ‘is power, not economic gain’ (Morgenthau, 1978, 55). To counter imperialism, therefore, the scholar ought to address the problem of power—namely to limit power, through an ethic of humility. Morgenthau incorporated such an ‘ethic of humility’ into his, largely misunderstood among post-colonial scholars, conception of the national interest. This ‘ethic of humility’ calls for the acknowledgement of the deceptive nature of power and acceptance of the ‘lesser evil’. It is based on the premises, which Morgenthau summarises in Scientific Man Versus Power Politics as follows, Neither science nor ethics nor politics can resolve the conflict between politics and ethics into harmony. We have no choice between power and the common good. To act successfully, that is, **according to the rules of the political art, is political wisdom**. **To know** with despair that **the political act is inevitably evil**, and to act nevertheless, **is** **moral courage**. To choose among several expedient actions the least evil one is moral judgment. In the combination of political wisdom, moral courage, and moral judgment, **man** **reconciles his political nature with his moral destiny.** (Morgenthau, 1946, 173)

**Realism is the most ethical paradigm for international relations — it accepts the inherent insecurity of the nuclear age as a precondition for genuine hospitality. Rejecting national sovereignty and borders lapses into liberal interventionism and global nuclear civil war.**

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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**.

**Balance-of-power concerns structure state behavior, even if they can’t explain everything states do. The aff can’t change the House of IR.**

**Blagden, 18**—Senior Lecturer in International Security at the Strategy and Security Institute, Department of Politics, University of Exeter (David, “Realism, Uncertainty, and the Security Dilemma: Identity and the Tantalizing Promise of Transformed International Relations,” *Constructivism Reconsidered: Past, Present, and Future*, Chapter 12, pg 205-216, dml)

The previous section documented how social variables **might** be taken as having the **potential** to transform international politics. This section now turns to an explanation of why it is so **hard to fulfill** such seeming transformational promise. Running throughout is the argument that while playing a particular social role or expressing a particular cultural identity are certainly state interests, they are **necessarily subordinate** to political **survival** (as a sovereign entity with control over its own foreign policy), “physiological” **security** (the safety from death and harm of the state’s population), and economic **prosperity** (a baseline level of which is necessary to ensure physiological security). Put simply, if a state and its population do not exist, it **cannot achieve anything else**—such as fulfilling a social role or expressing a cultural identity—either.36 And since survival, security, and prosperity all have a material base—as Wendt recognizes via his “rump materialism” (he simply does not think the material base yields determinate outcomes)—so too must states necessarily put the defense of such interests ahead of social role fulfillment if they want to be in a position to play any sort of role in future.37 That is **not to suggest** that states **do not** sometimes—or, indeed, often—make ideationally driven foreign policy choices that are **detrimental** to their other interests. It is simply a description of states’ **incentive structure**, which **much of the time** they end up following.

It is necessary at this point to defend the notion that there is, in fact, a **material base independent of the social world** and that characteristics of that material base can yield **causal outcomes**. After all, military technology does not descend as **manna from heaven**, but rather is created via **human agency** in response to perceived threats, and thus it necessarily contains a dose of military culture and broader social identity from the outset. The same goes for the overall share of national economic resources allocated to defense, and indeed, money itself is a socially constructed store of value, albeit one premised upon underlying materially underpinned wealth.38 Any assessment of strategic priorities is necessarily filtered through the strategic-cultural lens of the institution(s) doing the assessing; asking one’s navy for an analysis of the relative merits of sea denial versus power projection, for example, necessarily delivers an answer infused with that navy’s historical trajectory, its sense of its role in the nation and the world, its internal politics, and so forth. The broader question of whether the sea— like other geographical features—constitutes a strategic barrier or a highway similarly requires cultural interpretation.

Even technologies with such seemingly self-evident destructive power as nuclear weapons are not self-evidently “good” or “bad,” either morally or strategically, absent social interpretation. One might see them as “bad” because of the potential humanitarian consequences of their use (or because of the constraints they impose on conventional military options), or “good” because of the casualties in conventional war they prevent (and deterrence that they enable at low relative cost). Their political meaning is thus socially constructed, even if the physiological effects on human bodies of their detonation have only one possible outcome. If military technology and resources require a social component to be both developed and meaningfully deployed, then Wendt’s contention that there is indeed a “rump” material base but that it is simply indeterminate—in the absence of a friend/enemy distinction—as a cause of international outcomes becomes alluring.39

Crucially, however, each of these social choices involves a **decisive material effect** that is **not open to interpretation**. It may be debatable whether nuclear weapons are “**good**” or “**bad**,” but the **effect** that one will have on the city and its population of frail, carbon-based human animals over which it detonates represents a **single**, **determinate outcome**—and a state facing another state armed with them must therefore make certain necessary calculations based around that capability.40 In the same vein, while the strategic threat/opportunity constituted by geographical features, such as the oceanic moats enjoyed by the United States and United Kingdom, may be a matter of interpretation, the **underlying material factor**—humans’ inability to cross water without spending resources on capital (ships) that could otherwise have been spent on further ground forces—yields certain **necessary outcomes**. Indeed, the very **foundation** of relations between major powers after 1945—secure second-strike nuclear deterrence and its disincentivization of conventional aggression41—rests on a physical “**fact**”: the relative impenetrability of water to the electro-magnetic spectrum and the associated survivability that it provides to ballistic missile submarines.

The same goes for the decision over what **share of** national economic **resources** to allocate to defense. Choosing a proportion may indeed be a **socially** and **ideationally informed political choice**, but the **underlying size** of the resource pools—and the military potentiality that they underpin— rests on the total size of the state’s capital stock (both human and physical), which is **not a matter of social interpretation**. And while military technology is indeed developed in response to human agency, it is done so from within the technical bounds of the feasible. Such rebuttals apply more widely: while the balance of power, including resources and technology, is indeed necessarily interpreted through states’ social lenses, it nonetheless **conditions the bounds of the possible** even in the absence of social content. And when those possibilities include hostile use, certain behaviors are necessitated by prudent states seeking survival for their populations.

Realists should indeed be castigated if they infer predictions solely from the balance of currently existing military hardware—a thin and intellectually impoverished understanding of relative power—and critics are correct to point out that a large stock of materiel is not the same as being able to compel another to do that which they would not otherwise have done, in line with the behavioral output understanding of power commonly associated with Dahl (as distinct from the input understanding).42 But viewing total state power in terms of **overall assets**, defined as the state’s total stock of physical,43 financial,44 and human capital,45 does a **better job** of first encompassing all the **relevant resources**—equipment, stores of value, human bodies and brains—and, second, providing an **effective measurable proxy** for the **underlying causes** of behavioral power (given that the latter can only be observed **ex post**, and is therefore **not an effective predictor** of outcomes). None of this is to **deny** that there is a **social element** to the construction of all these power resources, or indeed that the “material” itself involves a large dose of social input, and this chapter is therefore not attempting to “settle” the debate over the precise nature of the relationship. It is simply to point out, rather, that states’ power resources and their effects are **not wholly socially constructed** and that the nonsocial element **produces certain effects**.

Turning to specific arguments over states’ pursuit of status, the notion that achieving a particular elevated status and thus fulfilling a certain international-social role might be a goal of states is relatively uncontentious.46 For instance, one insightful recent constructivist work on Britain’s pursuit of international status suggests at the outset that states’ social roles are not the same as their interests, ambitions, values, or capabilities.47 Yet the same work later asserts that social role actually produces national interests, thus implying that states cannot in fact have interests besides those constituted by identity.48 Such conceptual tensions are symptomatic of a theoretical dilemma: the more minimal former assertion is the harder to refute, yet the more ambitious latter claim is necessary if constructivists are to escape the realist retort that fulfilling a social role is merely an interest of states—and a subordinate one to materially underpinned survival at that—rather than the interest. Escaping this retort is in turn necessary if constructivists are to be able to claim that anarchy is indeed what states make of it socially, since transforming the prevailing culture of anarchy would require states to lower their guard against each other—and thus accept higher risk to their survival, at least while the hoped-for transformation was taking place—in pursuit of an international-social value.

The less contentious point—that playing a particular social role is one of multiple interests—opens the way to conceding that the most fundamental state interests remain “political” survival (of state territory and institutions), “biological” security (of the citizenry’s bodies), and preserving some baseline level of economic prosperity, since a state that cannot survive cannot achieve anything else. But if that is the case, then from these materially underpinned vital interests follows a need to be capable of defending them against potential foes—and that, if it comes to it, means accomplishing certain military missions.49 Such military capability is necessarily underpinned by material resources, even as it also has a socially constructed dimension. Such capability can be provided independently (internal balancing), via allies (external balancing), or through some combination of the two—prudent strategy, including eschewing avoidable confrontation and aligning with the preferences of powerful allies, is a key aspect of state success50—but either way, it rests on some friendly actor’s underlying resources. And reliance on external balancing brings its own dangers, as recently experienced by European NATO, when one’s allies turn coercive.51

In short, such an analysis—while conceding that social role and status are important to states, all else held equal, and that such concerns sometimes drive them to act in imprudent ways—nonetheless suggests that hedging against abandonment, coercion, or outright destruction via balance-of-power positioning is **likely to remain pervasive**. This is **not to say** that there will not be variation in the **extent** and **severity** of such competition. All manner of ideational variables might exacerbate or reduce tensions, as discussed above, and even in the absence of such social forces, overt, intensive competition may yield self-destructive outcomes if it increases another side’s insecurity and causes them to adopt a more offensively capable strategic posture in response.52 The point, rather, is simply that conflict will never be a **wholly absent possibility** and that that reality **must condition states’ calculations**—often to the point of some level of defensive hedging, if the state has the resources and technology to make that feasible—even in times of broadly cooperative relations.

A similar retort can be made against the claims that threat perception and military doctrine are both so **fundamentally skewed** by culture that they may be **commonly** and **wholly disconnected** from balance-of-power concerns, and which subsequently allow for an end to military balancing, mutual threat, and security competition. While this short chapter is clearly not the place for an extensive review, the success of many states— particularly resource-rich ones—in aping military technological and professional best practice would seem to suggest that much of the time states are able to achieve what Gray, borrowing from marketing theory, dubs “good enough” force postures in the face of strategic uncertainty.53 Similarly, when states do “die” in the face of foreign aggression—a rare occurrence in post-1945 international politics—it is more often as a consequence of their relative military weakness and geographical vulnerability than as a consequence of a failure to perceive a looming threat.54 Indeed, a key contribution of the neoclassical realist research program has been to demonstrate that while domestic-political variables may **filter strategic behavior** in multifarious and often nefarious ways, there are still **underlying balance-of-power structural pressures** at the international-systemic level that states **usually respond to**, even if they do so **belatedly** or **imperfectly**.55 In short, while Waltzian “socialization” toward accurately perceiving threats and formulating effective military doctrine may frequently be hindered—and sometimes terminally compromised—by cultural factors, as a description of the **workings of the international system** as a whole (as he intended his theory to be), realist predictions of enduring concern and possible competition over the distribution of material power are **not undermined** by this recognition.56 Tellingly, despite their strong **ideational commitments** toward democracy promotion and human rights enforcement under the banner of upholding international order, Western states have recently had the reprioritization of balancing against increasingly capable rivals forced upon them by developments in the balance of power, whether that be China’s rise in Asia for the United States or Russia’s (partial) resurgence in Europe for the rest of NATO.57

Finally, even **national identity** and the **nationalism** it engenders—the ideational “master variable” underpinning the nation-state system—is itself forged by the interaction of **political group identity** and the **survival imperative** under structural anarchy. To paraphrase Tilly, war **makes the state**, and the state **makes war**.58 Modern nation-states may have **originated** as political groups of individually weak human beings with some shared identity connection, but their choice to **form states** as protective war machines capable of generating the military power necessary to defend against similar political units, and the subsequent mutual reinforcement of national identity and state strength, is **very much consistent** with realism’s predictions of the **consequences of international structural anarchy**. Indeed, as noted earlier, Mearsheimer uses these grounds to argue that nationalism and realism are mutually supportive theories.59 In the post– Cold War world, moreover, mutually threatening political groups’ need to generate the military power necessary for security under anarchy—the security dilemma, in short—helps to explain the explosion of ferocious ethnonationalist and sectarian conflict within and between the new states emerging from the collapse of previously multiethnic communist federations, secular Middle Eastern autocracies, and so forth.60 Such conflict has in turn forged the identity of the states and state-like entities emerging from it. In short, while it is **certainly not impossible** for national identities to shift, as noted above, the **process** of their generation nonetheless suggests that they are **endogenous** to—rather than **readily capable of exogenously shifting** to transform—international systemic security competition and balance-of-power positioning, that they are as much a dependent variable as an independent variable.

Uncertainty and the Menacing Shadow of the Future

The previous section outlined why some of the otherwise most convincing constructivist variables at work in international politics nevertheless **cannot promise** to transform international politics away from a world of “**realist**,” **security-motivated balance-of-power positioning**. This section turns to discuss why this is something that social variables will **continue to struggle with** as long as there is an international system.

The **principal barrier** to states ever setting aside their inclination to guard against each other and instead embrace each other as “friends”—**no matter how strong** their leaders’ or citizens’ desire to **transform the culture** of international anarchy—is **uncertainty** over others’ intentions, particularly their future intentions.61 Following the logic of the prisoners’ dilemma, a state62 that trusts that another means it no harm while the other state concludes that it now has an opportunity to pursue advantage may be punished severely for its complacency, rendering such trust perilous, particularly in security affairs, where defection from cooperation could result in the end of the “game” for one party.63

The meaning and implications of this “uncertainty” assumption merit consideration, however. Human beings are constantly trying to impose certainty on a contingent world via cognitive heuristics and neural shortcuts, for the sake of their own mental well-being.64 Indeed, since humans derive meaning and value from the self-imposed certainty of ideational reinforcement, so too they can derive benefit from the entrenchment of both amity with and enmity against “others,” even when this creates other complications and dangers.65 As a result, much of international politics is influenced by habit, both the habit of friendship and the habit of animosity.66 “Uncertainty” also means different things to different people: for realists, it is a condition from which to infer fear about others’ possible behavior; for constructivists, by contrast, it may simply refer to the inherent indeterminacy of information until it is imbued with social content.67 It may be possible to build trust in others’ benign intent over time and thereby escape security competition, meanwhile, through their costly signaling: forgoing capabilities and policy options that a potential aggressor would not want to do without.68 States can also have the certain “friendship” of those with whom they are balancing against a third-party threat, and if that threat is long-lived, then so too may be the certainty of alliance.69

Illustrating this “uncertainty about uncertainty,”70 consider one of the highest profile oft-invoked security dilemmas: the Cold War escalation of U.S.-Soviet hostility, during which the most seminal security dilemma theorization took place.71 Robert Jervis—one of the concept’s foremost progenitors—subsequently questioned whether the Cold War can be understood as a security dilemma after all, understood as a tragic cycle of mutual threat between nonrevisionist security seekers driven by uncertainty over the other’s intentions. Neither side was “uncertain” over whether the other was an adversary. And as subsequent archival revelations document, each side did want to destroy the other, and correctly inferred as much of its opponent.72

Jervis’s “recantation” of the Cold War-as-security-dilemma is itself bounded, however, and this bounding sheds light on the ways in which varieties of uncertainty can still operate even between states with “certain” mutual intent. “Greedy” states versus “security-seeking” states are themselves binary ideal types that mask an underlying spectrum. Practically all states are greedy, in terms of wanting to improve their lot, if the costs are low enough.73 Conversely, few states are greedy to the point of total unconcern for security; not even Nazi Germany desired limitless global war. While there may not have been uncertainty over each side’s Cold War intent, therefore—enmity-driven desire to defeat and ultimately destroy the other—there was still uncertainty over underlying motivations. 74 A desire to exterminate an enemy population may entail quite different behavior than a desire for ideological supremacy, for example, and the two may therefore merit different policy responses, even though both fall within the domain of “hostile” intent. Such doubt over motivations—even within the cognitively “certain” domain of U.S.-Soviet enmity—still added up to a variety of security dilemma: the **most salient question** for Americans was not “**is the Soviet Union an enemy?**” but rather “**what might Moscow do** about situation X, in Y circumstances, at time Z?” The same is evident in major power politics today. Washington is not “uncertain” over whether or not China and Russia are its “adversaries,” defined in broad and obvious terms, but there is a **high degree of uncertainty** over what **types** of rivals they represent and their **associated future strategic choices**. Recognition of uncertainty’s nonbinary nature, in short, **does not undermine** the argument that states’ inability to know others’ future behavior with perfect reliability **incentivizes them to worry** about possible future dangers. Realists disagree over prospects for avoiding security competition through signaling motivations, of course,75 but all variants are united by recognizing the enduring significance of the balance of material power.76

On top of these qualifications to the uncertainty-over-intentions assumption come disagreements over the most appropriate response to such uncertainty. Conceding that we can never know another state’s future intentions with mathematical certainty, and therefore that the worst-case outcome—surprise attack by a concealed aggressor—will always remain a hypothetical possibility **does not** necessarily **imply** that security is **maximized** by treating such a scenario as **likely**. Provoking war for fear of possible future war is like committing suicide for fear of death, and given the balancing often generated by hostile behavior, provoking others into uniting against oneself through attempted power maximization can ultimately reduce one’s security.77 While worst-case contingencies **always merit consideration**, policy planning—particularly decisions over how much of the national resource base to devote to defense (“guns”) versus consumption and productive investment (“butter”)78—**necessitates probabilistic calculations** of the relative dangers of **overarmament** (provoking balancing alongside domestic economic immiseration) versus **underarmament** (attack by a better-armed adversary).79 Intense security competition can therefore be an irrational and self-defeating response to mere uncertainty over future intentions, in the absence of other threat data.80 Both “realist” and “constructivist” variables can feature among this threat data and therefore play a crucial part in determining the optimal strategic response to such intentions uncertainty, and that in turn conditions whether the potential threat posed by each side’s capabilities, be they latent or realized, manifests itself as a security dilemma. For many realists, the offense-defense balance of technology and geography determines whether uncertainty over others’ intentions merits military confrontation and determines the (in)stability of states’ strategic relations.81 For constructivists, the solidarity/enmity borne of sociocultural similarity/difference may be equally decisive.

But **neither** of these observations—that uncertainty neither carries a single meaning nor prescribes a single strategy—undermines the **core claim** that survival has a **material base** that necessitates **continual security-motivated concern** for one’s position in the balance of power. Survival may indeed be “**multiply realizable**,” with social/ideational variables informing the path taken, alongside various “realist” variables. But given all states’ need to safeguard a materially based hierarchy of interests without wholesale reliance on others’ politically contingent (and therefore capricious) benevolence—whether that be potential abandonment by erstwhile allies, potential attack by erstwhile neutrals, or potential coercion by either—their position in the balance of power will **always remain relevant** to their future security. And given that situation, the conditions for **mutual threat** and an associated **security dilemma** to re-emerge are **unlikely to be permanently expunged**, despite such a deterioration going unrealized indefinitely in many cases due to other overlying factors.82 Fear of future conflict—at least against some state, if not against any specific state—thus remains an **endemic feature** of international politics. And much of that is still down to the enduring concerns of structurally based realism: international-systemic anarchy, its absence of a reliable sovereign enforcer of global peace, and the associated dangers of offensively capable peers of unreliably benevolent intent.

Tellingly, while many contemporary states have achieved mutual “friendship,” they have rarely sustained it once the strategic factors holding them together—such as alliance against a mutual threat, shared membership of a great(er) power’s dependency network, or some other mutually beneficial exchange—have disappeared. This suggests that such “friendship” is as much a dependent variable (an outcome of realist balancing behavior) as an independent variable (a transformational force in international politics).83 Even within the zone of friendship that had come to characterize the European “community” by the late 1980s, for example—probably the deepest case of intersubjective recognition, cooperation, and sovereignty pooling to date—Britain and France still worried intensely about the potential power imbalances created by German reunification, and they were not content until reunified German power was subordinated via a restated US commitment to NATO.84 As noted previously, moreover, via both Trump and Brexit—ideationally motivated shifts in foreign policy orientation85—Euro-Atlantic security relations have recently displayed a dramatic backsliding, raising the specter of alliance breakdown and coercive confrontation. The relative power of all sides is critical to their ability to resist/dispense such coercion and safeguard future security even in the possible absence of alliance support. Even within the EU, the ability of members to resist or dispense coercion comes down to relative power: witness Greece’s experience at German hands in the context of the Eurozone crisis, and contrast it with the lack of sanction for Franco-German breaches of EU rules.86 And between NATO and Russia, a 1990s moment of optimism over developing friendship has retrenched to coercive confrontation as an outcome of each other’s choices.87 All these developments—which can be interpreted as negative movement along the spectrum between cooperation and conflict—illustrate the continuing centrality of relative power to safeguarding a hierarchy of national interests without dependence on the changeable commitments of others.

As a consequence, the **base conditions** for the security dilemma will **always exist** between sovereign states under anarchy, even if it lies wholly **dormant** for most states most of the time, thanks to overlying factors. Interstate friendship does not render deterioration to a security dilemma **impossible**, and neither does interstate animosity **preclude** stable and durable **cooperation**.88 So while identity—which in any case is “**sticky**” and **slow to change**—certainly matters to security relations, it is **unlikely to trump** some combination of **power** and **informational variables**.89 Of course, if international relations were transformed by the emergence of a single world-state, the system would no longer be anarchic and the units-formerly-known-asstates would not need to rely on relative power for their security, and thus such competition would end.90 That requirement, however, does not look likely to be fulfilled anytime soon.

Conclusion

Conflict and cooperation is not some binary “**either/or**” condition, but rather a **spectrum**. So too the security concerns borne of uncertainty over motivations are not some irreversible “on/off” switch, be that permanently severe or permanently solved. There is certainly far more peace in the world than the most pessimistic readings of realism would seem to imply,91 and ideational similarity and solidarity—as well as the power and informational variables beloved of realists—clearly have something to do with this. Interests within the parameters of continuing to survive are **socially constituted**, and even the route to survival itself represents an ideationally informed choice. But the need to safeguard a **materially underpinned hierarchy of interests** if states are to continue to exist—a necessary prerequisite to performing any kind of social role—still incentivizes them to **value their position** in the balance of power as a **safeguard** against future dangers. Of course, states **can** and **do** disregard certain incentive structures in favor of others.92 But until **all** states are known to have done so—a **high bar indeed**—the potential for security competition to re-emerge in the international system will **continue to exist**. And knowing that, states will continue to prize the capabilities to provide for their own security . . . and so on, creating enduring conditions for security dilemmas to one day reappear, even though they go overlain by other factors in most international relationships most of the time.

Both realists and constructivists therefore have work to do, in terms of both refining their paradigmatic cores and recognizing the necessity of analytically eclectic cross-pollination to explain many of the **most pressing questions** of real-world international politics. Realists must do more to incorporate identity as a variable that produces systemically significant variation in behavior rather than as some adjunct bolt-on, whether that be via the post-1990s boom of neoclassical theorization or attempts at microfoundationally elaborated structural realism.93 Porter’s work on the interaction of power and habit in determining US grand strategy is a good recent example, while—as noted earlier—Snyder’s Myths of Empire remains a key benchmark.94 Constructivists, for their part, must continue to investigate the relationship between states’ potentially infinite array of socially constituted interests, their materially underpinned hierarchy of core survival requirements, and the enduring concern for relative power that the latter generates. Along the way, both sides must be **circumspect** in their appeals to allegedly “**smoking-gun**” examples. For realists to claim that structure alone explains World War II or the Cold War, for example— missing the universalist ideologies of German Nazism, Soviet communism, or US liberalism—would be a stretch indeed. Equally, constructivists’ most beloved examples—amicable US-Canadian relations along an easily passable land border, the relative underarmament of Germany and Japan, greater American fear of a few North Korean atomic bombs than hundreds of British thermonuclear warheads, the rise of European Union, and so forth—can all be readily explained with reference to balances of capability and information. “Analytic eclecticism” is easy to profess, but the most pressing contemporary questions of world politics require that theorists practice it too.

For those **not interested** in resolving **paradigm wars** or “**isms**” debates, meanwhile, the intersection of **material-structural pressures** on state behavior with socially constituted foreign policy preferences **provides ample scope** for investigating **crucial real-world questions** of our time. Viewed in rationalist terms, this might involve investigating the role of social variables in informing leaders’ utility functions, and thus their preference orderings under the overall structural constraint of needing to ensure continued survival. Just how far could the United States meddle in the Middle East at the behest of domestic interests, for example, before it critically harmed its power position vis-à-vis China? Extending the previous point, has US unipolarity created unique space for a “crazy” foreign policy that disregards the balance of power—both by the United States itself and by close US allies—and will this change if or when unipolarity wanes?95 Relatedly, just how far can the likes of Germany and Japan sustain their pacifistic foreign policy orientations in the face of US relative decline or disengagement and the likely associated need for them to provide more for their own security? Changing tack, how does a small power like Sweden—say—make its trade-off between providing mobile forces for an EU Battlegroup (a cause it values), on the one hand, and maintaining large amounts of conscripts and armor on its eastern border to hedge against Russia (a threat that it cannot be rid of), on the other? Are UK efforts to rebrand as an “aid superpower” facilitated by a nuclear deterrent and the US alliance, say, providing leeway to follow an ideational foreign policy under the cover of a “good enough” military umbrella? In short, there is scope for **any number** of midlevel theories of foreign policy under the **constraint of still recognizing** that interstate balance-of-power considerations **continue to structure** the international system.

**Link — AT: Russia**

**Russia’s imperialism won’t stop in Ukraine. Beating Russia is the first step.**

**Rukh 22** [Sotsialnyi Rukh, (Ukr. ‘Social Movement’) a Ukrainian democratic-socialist left organization that fights against capitalism and xenophobia. Social Movement unites social activists and trade unions in the struggle to build a better world without the dictatorship of capital, patriarchy, and discrimination; The Russian Socialist Movement, a political organization whose vision of democratic socialism is based on communal ownership of property, political freedom and self-determination. They believe that only a mass movement—of socialists, unions, feminists, antifascists and environmental activists—armed with class-based solidarity and egalitarianism can end the rule of capital in Russia; 4-7-2022; "Against Russian Imperialism"; Lefteast; https://lefteast.org/against-russian-imperialism/; KL]

Although the majority of the left has condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the left camp’s unity is still lacking. We would like to address those on the left who still stick to “a plague on both houses” position that views the war as an inter-imperialist war.

It is **high time** the left **woke up** and carried out a “**concrete analysis** of the **concrete situation**” instead of reproducing **worn-out frameworks** from the Cold War. Overlooking Russian imperialism is a **terrible mistake** for the left. It is Putin, **not NATO**, who is waging war on Ukraine. That is why it is **essential** to shift our focus from Western imperialism to Putin’s **aggressive imperialism**, which has an **ideological** and **political** basis in addition to an economic one.

Russian imperialism consists of two elements. Firstly, it involves **revisionist Russian nationalism**. After 2012, Putin and his establishment moved from a civic concept of the nation (as rossiysky, “related to Russia”) to an **exclusive**, **ethnically** based concept of **Russianness** (as russkiy, “ethnically/culturally Russian”). His aggression in **2014** and in **2022** was **legitimized** by the return of “**originally**” Russian lands. Moreover, this concept of (ethnic) “Russianness” revives the **nineteenth-century** imperial concept of the Russian nation, which reduces Ukrainian and Belarusian identity to **regional identities**. According to this view, Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians are a **single people**. Employing this concept in **official rhetoric** implies the **negation** of independent Ukrainian statehood. That is why we cannot say with any degree of certainty that Putin only wants the recognition of Russian sovereignty over Crimea and the Donbas. Putin may desire to either annex or subdue the whole of Ukraine, threats which appear in his article “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians” and in his speech on February 21, 2022. Finally, the perspective of Ukraine-Russia peace talks look rather bleak, as Russia’s negotiation team is headed by former Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky, one of the most dedicated believers in the ideology of russkiy mir (the ethnic Russian world) — a world where, **believe us**, **no one** will be happy.

Secondly, even though Putin’s aggression is hard to explain rationally, current events have demonstrated that it may be reasonable enough, nevertheless, to take Russian imperialist rhetoric at face value. Russian imperialism is fueled by the desire to **change** the so-called “**world order**.” Thus, Putin’s demand for NATO’s withdrawal from Eastern Europe may signal that Russia may **not stop** with Ukraine, and **Poland**, **Latvia**, **Lithuania**, or **Estonia** may be the **next targets** of Putin’s aggression. It is **very naïve** to demand to **demilitarize** Eastern Europe, because in the light of **current circumstances**, that will only be **appeasing** Putin and will make Eastern European countries **vulnerable** to Putin’s aggression. Discourse about **NATO expansion obscures** Putin’s desire to divide the spheres of influence in Europe between the US and Russia. Being in the Russian sphere of influence means a country’s political subordination to Russia and subjection to the expansion of Russian capital. The cases of Georgia and Ukraine demonstrate that Putin is ready to use force to influence the political affairs of countries which he believes wish to leave the Russian sphere of influence. It is important to understand that Putin’s understanding of key agents in the world order is **basically limited** to the **US** and **China**. He **does not recognize** other countries’ sovereignty, regarding them as satellites of one of these agents of the international order.

Putin and his establishment are very **cynical**. They use the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, American intervention in Afghanistan, and the invasion of Iraq as a shield for the bombing of Ukraine. In this context, the left must show consistency and say no to all imperialist aggression in the world. Today the imperialist aggressor is Russia, not NATO, and if Russia is not stopped in Ukraine, it will definitely continue its aggression.

Furthermore, we must have **no illusions** about Putin’s regime. It offers **no alternative** to Western capitalism. It is an **authoritarian**, **oligarchic capitalism**. The level of **inequality** in Russia has **risen significantly** during the 20 years of his leadership. Putin is not only an **enemy** of the **working class**, but also an enemy to all forms of **democracy**. Popular participation in politics and voluntary associations is treated with **suspicion** in Russia. Putin is essentially an **anti-Communist** and an enemy to everything the left fought for in the twentieth century and is fighting for in the twenty-first. In his worldview, the strong have a **right to beat** the weak, the rich have the **right to exploit** the poor, and strongmen in power have the **right to make decisions** on behalf of their **disempowered population**. This worldview must be dealt a **severe blow** in Ukraine. In order for **political change** to come about inside of Russia, the Russian army **must be defeated** in Ukraine.

We want to address a highly controversial demand, that of military aid to Ukraine. We understand the repercussions of militarization for the progressive left movement worldwide and the left’s resistance to NATO expansion or Western intervention. However, more context is needed to provide a fuller picture. First of all, NATO countries provided weapons to Russia despite the 2014 embargo (France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, and Spain). Thus, the discussion about whether weapons sent to the region end up in the right or wrong hands sounds a bit belated. They are already in bad hands, and EU countries would only be righting their earlier wrongs by providing weapons to Ukraine. Moreover, the alternative security guarantees that the Ukrainian government has proposed require the involvement of a number of countries, and probably can be achieved only with their involvement, too. Secondly, as numerous articles have emphasized, the Azov regiment is a problem. However, unlike in 2014, the far right is not playing a prominent role in today’s war, which has become a people’s war — and our comrades on the **anti-authoritarian left** of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus are fighting together **against imperialism**. As has become clear in the last few days, Russia is trying to compensate for its failure on the ground with air attacks. Air **defense** will not give Azov any additional power, but it will help Ukraine **keep control** of its territory and **reduce civilian deaths** even if negotiations fail.

In our opinion, the Left should demand:

* the immediate withdrawal of all Russian armed forces from Ukraine
* **new** targeted, personal **sanctions** on Putin and his multimillionaires. (It is important to understand that Putin and his establishment care only about their own private assets; they are oblivious to the state of the Russian economy overall. The left can also use this demand to expose the hypocrisy of those who sponsored Putin’s regime and army and even now continue selling weapons to Russia)
* the sanctioning of Russian **oil** and **gas**
* increased **military support** to Ukraine, in particular the provision of air defense systems
* the introduction of UN peacekeepers from non-NATO countries to protect civilians, including the protection of green corridors and the protection of nuclear power plants (Russia’s veto in the UN Security Council can be overcome at the General Assembly)

The left should also support those Ukrainian leftists who are resisting, giving them visibility, centering their voices, and supporting them financially. We recognize that it is the millions of Ukrainian essential workers and humanitarian aid volunteers who make further resistance possible.

A number of other demands — support for all refugees in Europe regardless of citizenship, the cancellation of Ukraine’s foreign debt, sanctions against Russian oligarchs, etc. — are broadly accepted on the left and, therefore, we do not discuss them here.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine sets a terrible precedent for the resolution of conflicts which involve the risk of **nuclear war**. This is why the Left must come up with our own vision of international relations and the architecture of international security which may include multilateral nuclear disarmament (which will be binding for all nuclear powers) and the institutionalization of international economic responses to any imperialist aggression in the world. The **military defeat** of Russia should be the **first step** towards the **democratization** of the global order and the formations of an international security system, and the **international left** must make a **contribution** to this cause.

**Putin is an evil, entitled brat. His dream is to bring back imperial empire.**

**Hartnett 22** [Lynne Hartnett; associate professor of Russian history at Villanova University; 3-2-2022; "The long history of Russian imperialism shaping Putin’s war"; Washington Post; https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/03/02/long-history-russian-imperialism-shaping-putins-war/; KL]

The world is trying to make sense of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s violent invasion of Ukraine. But his attack is not rooted in any rational calculation of costs and benefits.

Instead, Putin is making an **ill-conceived gambit** to reclaim his nation’s stature as an **imperial power** and assert Russia’s prestige, authority and will on the world stage. Putin has positioned himself as a frustrated representative of an aggrieved fallen empire — for example, lamenting “the paralysis of power and will” that led to the complete “degradation and oblivion” of the Soviet Union in 1991. Though this grievance seems situated within what Putin has called the tragedy of the Soviet collapse, his imperial inspiration extends even deeper into the country’s past. As Putin described it in a **2012 speech**, the revival of Russian national consciousness **necessitates** that Russians **connect** to their **past** and realize that they have “a **common**, **continuous** history spanning over **1,000 years**.”

Putin understands the post-Soviet global order through the prism of **Russia’s long history**. And that history is **inextricably tied** to Russia’s dynamic **imperial mission** both in the past and today.

The first “Russian” state was established in present-day Kyiv in the 9th century. But Kievan Rus’ fell into ruin with the Mongol conquest of the 13th century, becoming a decentralized group of principalities that each owed fealty and tribute to the Mongol khans.

By the late 15th century, though, the principality of Moscow, led by Grand Prince Ivan III, turned the tables of fortune on the Mongols. Ivan, known to history as Ivan the Great, renounced his land’s subordination to the Mongols and declared the sovereignty of Russia. Ivan then subdued his neighbors, annexed their territory and centralized Moscow’s authority.

Ivan the Great came to power less than a decade after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Cultivating his imperial standing with his marriage to the niece of the last Byzantine emperor, Ivan claimed Byzantium’s legacy for Muscovite Russia and adopted the title of czar for himself. As czar, he asserted Russia’s international influence and stature by establishing diplomatic relations with foreign powers and building the Kremlin to serve as an architectural manifestation of Russia’s new imperial power.

By the start of the 16th century, the Russian **czars** firmly conceived of their land as a **great empire**. For them, Moscow was the Third Rome — the heir to the Roman and Byzantine empires. Though their imperial predecessors’ empires had fallen, the Russian czars resolved to hold **absolute power** to ensure the dynamic and **continued expansion** of theirs.

In the 1550s, the czar known later as Ivan the Terrible extended his country’s territory along the southern Volga down to the Caspian Sea. Twenty-five years later, Ivan sponsored expeditions that initiated several decades of conquest and colonization of Siberia and large swaths of Central Asia.

By 1648, Russia had moved across a continent and reached the Pacific coast to become an enormous state with an unrivaled land mass. It was a full-fledged colonial enterprise.

In 1654, Czar Alexis seized the territory that lay between Russia and the Dnieper River. This included much of present-day Ukraine, including Kyiv. While the dominions around Moscow were known as Great Russia or simply Russia, much of what is present-day Ukraine was deemed Little Russia in a clear reflection of its peripheral, colonized status.

Alexis’s son Peter the Great took Russia’s imperialist mission to new heights. With a revamped army and newly founded navy, Peter the Great defeated Sweden and expanded his empire in every direction. In recognition of his military victories and territorial conquests, Peter in 1721 declared Russia to be an empire and he, its emperor.

Several decades later, another great, the Empress Catherine, pushed the empire’s boundaries farther west through the partitions of Poland. Catherine also took advantage of the weakening power of the Ottoman Empire to expand Russia southward and create the region of Novorossiya, which included the southern sections of present-day Ukraine. She then solidified Russia’s position on the Black Sea by annexing Crimea in 1783.

Many of Russia’s imperial conquests were hard-won. In 1818, when Russian forces attempted to conquer the Northern Caucasus, they encountered a population that refused to be subdued. In answer to the guerrilla warfare that the indigenous population unleashed against the invaders, Russia burned villages to the ground, incinerated forests and took civilians as hostages. Although by 1864 Russia had incorporated the region into its empire, ethnic and religious tensions percolated and would erupt in a new wave of violence over a century later with the Chechen Wars in the 1990s.

**Convinced** that Russia’s status as a global power depended on its **expansive empire**, Russian czars — safe and secure in their St. Petersburg palaces — expended **vast sums** of money and the **lives** of young Russian soldiers to maintain **imperial glory**. Territory was **purchased** with the lives of both **conquering armies** and their **resisters** while Russian rulers transformed the cities of the **metropole** with monuments erected to honor **imperial victories** and **expansion**.

When Russia erupted in revolution in 1917, the empire collapsed. Initially, the Bolsheviks expressed antipathy toward imperialism. Indeed, they contended that regions like Ukraine that declared their independence would be free from the weight of empire. But the dislocation that came with the end of World War I did not bring the worldwide socialist revolution that Vladimir Lenin expected. As a socialist island in a sea of global capitalism, the Russian Empire was resurrected by Lenin and the Bolsheviks within the federal structure of the Soviet Union. For the next 70 years, Russia’s traditional imperial mission became entangled with the expansionist aims of communism.

To meet the surging economic and military power of the United States, the Soviet Union in the late 1940s established satellite states throughout Eastern Europe, with communist governments overseen by Moscow. Using tanks, artillery and repression, the Soviets kept the communist bloc until the 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev could no longer use military force to retain power. The Soviets’ imperial project was in peril.

These liberatory impulses unleashed a ripple effect within the Soviet Union itself, with the Baltic States and the Caucasus calling for independence from Moscow. By the end of 1991, nationalist sentiments within the assortment of nations that the Soviet Union had inherited from the czarist imperialist state led to demands for autonomy and spelled the end of the U.S.S.R.

When Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin as president of the Russian Federation in **1999**, he claimed that his country was **entitled** to exert a **privileged influence** over the **post-Soviet states**. Yet many of these nations balked at the local cronyism and corruption that seemed to come with Moscow’s continued influence. In the early 2000s, popular uprisings in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan — collectively deemed the Color Revolutions — demonstrated these countries’ spirit of independence and, thereby, the limits of Russia’s and Putin’s control of the region.

For Putin, this equated to an inglorious lack of prestige and power. Ukraine’s Revolution of Dignity that overthrew Putin’s supporter, President Viktor Yanukovych, in 2014 only intensified this perception. The Russian president’s decision to move into eastern Ukraine and annex Crimea was the **opening salvo** to reclaim the power that imperial failure had eroded.

Beyond economic sanctions, Putin faced **little consequence** for this 2014 power play, and his **geopolitical machinations** surged. Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and Donald Trump’s subsequent derision of NATO probably convinced Putin of his ability to extend Russia’s global sway without substantial obstacles.

Over the past several years, as Putin has **increasingly constricted** Russian civil society, limited his country’s **independent media** and **news sources**, and **imprisoned** domestic opposition leaders, he has enhanced his ability to pursue his aims unencumbered. Reviving the **imperialist dreams** of his **czarist forebears**, Putin moved to reclaim the empire that he believes was unjustly pilfered from Russia.

But the determined resistance of the Ukrainian people to Russian aggression has shown the **folly** of Putin’s vision of renewed imperial grandeur. Having found independence from Moscow in the years since 1991, Ukrainians have no desire to return to their **previous colonial status**. Despite Russia’s superior military might, the Ukrainian people have made a stand for their sovereignty and their freedom, earning support and respect around the world.

Conquest and glory have thus far eluded Putin and his forces. Instead of finding renewed prestige through the global order, Putin finds himself isolated and condemned, and his 21st-century version of Russian imperialism vilified and reviled rather than championed.

**Prolif, war,**

Strikethrough for ableist language

**Brands 22** [Hal Brands; Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies; 3-14-2022; "Why blaming NATO for Ukraine war is Vladimir Putin’s **biggest lie**"; ThePrint; https://theprint.in/opinion/why-blaming-nato-for-ukraine-war-is-vladimir-putins-biggest-lie/872350/; KL]

The great NATO enlargement debate never ends. In the 1990s, U.S. officials and academics argued about whether pushing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization into Eastern Europe was likely to sustain the post-Cold War peace or prematurely end it. More recently, critics have charged that Russia’s war in Ukraine is a natural response to the aggressive expansion of America’s most powerful alliance.

Now Russian officials, and even President Vladimir Putin himself, have echoed — and sometimes directly cited — American scholars such as political scientist John Mearsheimer, who argues that the current crisis “is the West’s fault.”

The “blame NATO” argument tells a story of hubris, arrogance and tragedy. It holds that there was a golden chance for lasting peace in Europe, but the U.S. threw it all away. Rather than conciliating a defeated rival, Washington repeatedly humiliated it by expanding a vast military alliance up to Russia’s borders and even into the former Soviet Union. This pursuit of American hegemony in a liberal-democratic guise eventually provoked a violent rebuke.

In this telling, Putin’s wars against Georgia and Ukraine are just the natural response of one great power whose vital interests are being heedlessly threatened by another.

The argument isn’t wholly wrong. Putin’s wars are indeed meant, in part, to push Western influence back from Russia’s frontiers. But the idea that NATO expansion is the root of today’s problems is morally and geopolitically bizarre.

Far from being a historic blunder, NATO expansion was one of the **great American successes** of the post-Cold War era. Far from being the act of a domineering superpower, it was part of a long tradition of **vulnerable states begging** to join America’s liberal empire. And far from posing a mortal threat to Moscow, NATO enlargement actually provided Russia with far greater **security** than it could have provided itself.

NATO’s big bang

NATO was founded in 1949 with 12 members in Western Europe and North America. It gradually added additional states — Turkey, Greece, West Germany, Spain — over the course of the Cold War. But the big bang of enlargement came once the superpower conflict ended. NATO incorporated the former East Germany into the alliance in 1990; it then added three Eastern European countries (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic) in 1999; then seven more, including the Baltic states, in 2004.

To understand why NATO grew so rapidly, we have to remember something that nearly everyone has now forgotten: There was **no guarantee** that Europe would be mostly **stable**, **peaceful** and **democratic** after the Cold War. In fact, many of the analysts who now view NATO expansion as a catastrophe once warned that a post-Cold War Europe could become a **violent hellscape**.

It wasn’t an outlandish scenario. A reunified Germany might once again try to **dominate** its neighbors; the old enmity between Moscow and Berlin could **reignite**. The collapse of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe could liberate those states to pursue long-suppressed **territorial claims** and **nationalist agendas**. **Ethnic tensions** and **nuclear proliferation** might **explode** as the Cold War order crumbled.

If the U.S. pulled back once the Soviet threat was gone, there would be no extra-European superpower to **put out fires** on a continent with lots of **geopolitical kindling**. “The prospect of major crises, even wars, in Europe is likely to **increase dramatically**,” Mearsheimer predicted in 1990.

NATO enlargement was the **logical answer** to these fears. Expansion was a way of binding a reunified Germany to the West and surrounding it with democratic allies. Joining NATO required new members to lay aside any **revanchist designs**, while allowing them to pursue economic and **political reforms** rather than investing heavily in military capabilities to defend their newly won autonomy.

NATO’s move to the east also ensured that Poland and other states that easily could have built **nuclear weapons** didn’t need to, because they had **American protection**. Most important, enlargement kept the U.S. firmly planted in Europe, by preventing the centerpiece of the transatlantic relationship from becoming obsolete.

**No other initiative** could have accomplished these objectives. Partnership for Peace — a series of loose security cooperation agreements with former Soviet-bloc states — didn’t offer the ironclad guarantees that came with NATO membership. (If you want to understand the difference between “security partner” and “**NATO ally**,” just look at what is happening today to **Ukraine**, one of the former.)

The idea of creating a pan-European security architecture (one that included Russia) had the same defect; plus, it would have given Moscow veto power over the security arrangements of the countries the Soviet Union had so recently dominated.

Only American power and promises could provide **stability** in Europe, and NATO was the continent’s **critical link** to the U.S. Since 1949, Washington had tamped down rivalries between old enemies such as France and Germany, while also protecting them from external threats. After 1991, NATO expansion took this zone of peace, prosperity and cooperation that had emerged in Western Europe and moved it into Eastern Europe as well.

The revolutionary nature of this achievement seemed obvious not so long ago. “Why has Europe been so peaceful since 1989?” Mearsheimer asked in 2010. The answer, he acknowledged, was because “America has continued to serve as Europe’s pacifier,” protecting the continent from dangers within and without.

Russia as the victim

Today, of course, the critics don’t buy this account. They argue that NATO expansion represented crude power politics, as the U.S. exploited the Soviet collapse to engorge its own empire. What resulted, pundits such as Thomas Friedman contend, was a sort of Weimar Russia — a country whose dignity was affronted, security imperiled and democracy undermined by a harsh, humiliating peace.

There is a kernel of truth here, too. Once Russian democracy began to wobble in 1993-94, officials in the Bill Clinton administration saw NATO expansion — in part — as a way of preventing a potentially resurgent, aggressive Russia from rebuilding the Soviet sphere of influence. Russian leaders of all stripes griped about NATO expansion from the early 1990s onward, warning that it could jeopardize the peace of the continent.

In hindsight, NATO expansion was one of several issues — including disputes over the Balkans and the collapse of the Russian economy in the late 1990s — that gradually soured Russia’s relationship with the West. Yet this story omits three vital facts.

First, all policies have costs. The price of NATO expansion was a certain alienation of Russian elites — although we often forget that Clinton softened the blow by continually courting Russian President Boris Yeltsin, bringing Russia into elite Western institutions such as the Group of Seven, and making Moscow a partner in the intervention in Bosnia in 1995-96. Yet the cost of not expanding NATO might have been **forfeiting** much of the stability that initiative provided. **Trade-offs** are **inevitable** in foreign policy: There was no magic middle path that would have provided all the benefits with none of the costs.

Second, if NATO expansion was a manifestation of American empire, it was a remarkably **benign** and **consensual** form of empire. When Clinton decided to pursue enlargement, he did so at the urging of the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians. The Baltic countries and others were soon **banging at the door**. The states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were **desperate** to **join America’s** sphere of influence, because they were desperate to leave Moscow’s.

This, too, was part of an older pattern: The U.S. has often extended its influence by “**invitation**” rather than imposition. The creation of NATO in 1949 was mostly a European idea: Countries that were terrified of Moscow sought protection from Washington. One reason Putin’s wars to keep countries from escaping Moscow’s empire are so abhorrent to Americans is that the U.S. empire has trouble keeping members out.

Putin may not see it that way. All that matters to him is that the mightiest peacetime alliance in history has crept closer to Russian soil. But here a third fact becomes relevant: Russia was one of the biggest beneficiaries of NATO’s move east.

Making Russia safer

Open terrain has often left Russia vulnerable to invasion and instability emanating from Europe. Napoleonic France, Imperial Germany and Nazi Germany all swept through Eastern Europe to wreak havoc on Russian or Soviet territory. This is one reason why the great strategist George Kennan opposed NATO expansion — because it would surely re-activate this fear of encroachment from the west.

Yet this was a red herring, because NATO posed no military threat. The alliance committed, in 1997, not to permanently station foreign troops in Eastern Europe. After the Cold War, America steadily withdrew most of its troops and all of its heavy armor from the continent. U.S. allies engaged in a veritable race to disarm.

The prospect that NATO could invade Russia, even had it wanted to, was laughable. What the alliance could do was tame the perils that might otherwise have menaced the Russian state.

Germany could hardly threaten Russia: It was nestled snugly into an alliance that also served as a strategic straitjacket. NATO, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev had candidly said in 1990, could “play a containing role” vis-à-vis Berlin. Moscow didn’t have to worry about a nuclear Poland — Warsaw didn’t need nukes because it had the protection of the United States. Aside from the Balkan wars of the 1990s, Eastern Europe was comparatively free of the geopolitical intrigues and military quarrels that might have made Russia jumpy.

NATO expansion hadn’t just alleviated Europe’s security problems; it had protected Russia’s vital interests as well. Moscow might have lost an empire, but it had gained remarkable safety from external attack.

Putin’s easy excuse

So what went wrong? Why couldn’t Putin make his peace with a larger NATO?

Part of the answer is that NATO expansion wasn’t really the problem, in the sense that Russia didn’t need that pretext to seek renewed hegemony in its near-abroad. The Soviet Union, and the Russian empire before it, had traditionally sought to **control countries** along their frontiers and used **brutal means** to do it. To say that NATO expansion caused Russian belligerence is thus to make an **extremely dubious assertion**: that absent NATO expansion, Moscow would have been a **satisfied**, **status quo** power.

And this is exactly why a bigger NATO has posed a real problem for Putin. After all, safety from external attack isn’t the only thing that states and rulers want. They want glory, greatness and the privileges of empire. For 20 years, Putin has been **publicly lusting** after the sphere of influence that the Soviet Union once enjoyed. NATO expansion stood athwart that ambition, by giving Moscow’s former vassals the ability to resist its pressure.

NATO also threatened a certain type of Russian government — an autocracy that was **never secure** in its own rule. A democratic Russia wouldn’t so much have minded being neighbors with Western-leaning democracies, because political liberty in those countries wouldn’t have threatened to set a subversive example for anti-Putin Russians.

Yet, as Russia became more autocratic in the early 2000s, and as Putin’s popularity declined with the Russian economy after 2008, the imperative of preventing ideological spillover from a U.S.-backed democratic community loomed large.

So Putin began pushing back against NATO’s eastward march. In 2008, he invaded Georgia, a country that was moving — too slowly for its own safety — toward the West. Since 2014, he has been waging war against Ukraine, in hopes of rebuilding the Russian empire and halting Kiev’s westward drift. America’s vision of Europe has now run into Putin’s program of violent coercion.

West missed the danger signs

To be sure, U.S. officials made mistakes along the way. Because Russia was prostrate, militarily and economically, during the 1990s, Washington acquired a bad habit of issuing security guarantees without really considering how it would fulfill them in a crisis. The Pentagon has thus been scrambling, since 2014, to devise a credible defense of NATO’s eastern flank.

As Russia regained its strength, U.S. officials also failed to grasp the danger of provoking Putin without adequately deterring him. When, in 2008, NATO declined to endorse membership for Georgia and Ukraine but issued a vague statement saying that they would someday join the alliance, it created the worst of all worlds — giving Putin both the pretext and the time to pre-empt future expansion by tearing those two countries apart.

Yet there is a curious morality in accounts that blame the West, which sought to protect **vulnerable** states in Eastern Europe, for the current carnage, rather than blaming Putin, who has worked to **dismember** and **intimidate** those countries. It is sloppy thinking to tally up the costs of NATO expansion without considering the historic achievements of a policy that served American, European and even certain Russian interests remarkably well.

And if nothing else, NATO expansion pushed the dividing line between Moscow and the democratic world to the east after one Cold War — a factor of great significance now that a second cold war is underway.

The legacy of NATO expansion isn’t simply a matter of historical interest. Americans’ understanding of the past has always influenced their view of what policies to pursue **in the future**. During the 1920s and 1930s, the widespread, if inaccurate, belief that America had entered World War I to serve the interests of **banks** and **arms manufacturers** had a [**crushing**] ~~paralyzing~~ effect on U.S. policy amid the **totalitarian aggression** that set off **World War II**.

Today, the U.S. faces a long, nasty struggle to contain Putin’s imperial project and protect an endangered world order. Introspection is an admirable quality, but the last thing America needs is another bout of **self-flagellation** rooted in another misapprehension of the past. — Bloomberg

**Link — AT: Sinophobia**

**Rejecting the corrupt moves of the Chinese government isn’t inevitably Sinophobic or against Chinese citizens.**

**Zhao ’21** — Xiran Jay; they are a Chinese #1 New York Times bestselling author and YouTuber. March 22, 2021; “On Anti-Asian Hate Crimes — And How You Can Help”; *Youtube*; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYEf8K7cEtQ; //CYang](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYEf8K7cEtQ;%20//CYang) **[\*\*NOTE\*\* — this is an edited version of the Youtube transcript that’s been edited for capitalization/spelling/mistakes in the voice recognition software — the full text of the transcript is inserted below for reference]**

i've been thinking a lot about the role media plays in egging these hate crimes on not just trump and his china blaming nonsense but also the daily legitimate reports about the terrible things the chinese government is doing like arbitrarily detaining two canadians to bully canada into releasing monzo committing genocide against the uyghurs and other ethnic minorities cracking down on hong kong's democracy pulling shady neo-colonious moves in southeast asia and africa and much much worse and we should criticize the chinese government international pressure is the only thing that can get them to back off but i'm wondering what this non-stop positioning of china as that ominous foreign boogeyman does to the perception of chinese people as a whole and other asians and pacific islanders by extension i used to not flinch when people would say china without information about kovid or china is playing the long game to world domination because i instinctively know that they're talking about the chinese government not ordinary citizens because i as someone who was born and raised in mainland china i'm well aware that the chinese government does not represent me but now i'm wondering if the average person who grew up in the west can conceptualize this if they're aware that the average chinese citizen has no political power or influence over whether these atrocities are happening you hear a lot about what the chinese government is doing but do you ever hear about what's happening in china for ordinary people do you have any idea what they're thinking whenever i speak up against white supremacy and the lingering impact of western colonialism there's always some guy in my comments who is like well china has a han supremacist problem and is colonizing africa right now yes and i criticize both the chinese and western governments but somehow just because of my name and face some people equate me to this ominous evil in their minds that it's china we can talk all day about how i don't even have chinese citizenship anymore i'm legally a canadian but i don't want to make it seem like it'd be okay to see all citizens of the people's republic of china as the enemy either if you want to know what it's like for an average chinese citizen imagine if trump and his goons appointed themselves your government leaders because of their connections and you had absolutely no option of voting them out imagine not even being able to criticize trump without worrying that the police might pay you a visit my family sees the stuff american comedians say about trump they see a selfie i took with justin trudeau and they are stunned in china politicians don't go on campaigns to win support they don't take selfies with random people they do what their higher ups tell them to do it's like ordinary citizens are base level employees at a massive company and civil servants are the managers we occasionally hear stuff about the top bosses like xi jinping but ultimately we have no influence on the direction they decide to take the company and in everything we see in public we have to maintain the position of oh yeah our company is the best however most mainland chinese people that i know are not blindly loyal to the ccp they've just been conditioned to not voice dissent out of fear of punishment but the grievances have their own way of slipping out there are endless sensitive terms that get automatically blocked on chinese social media but discussions still happen using all sorts of slang to bypass the filters the chinese people are always one step ahead of the censors we make jokes about getting invited to tea whenever we say something out of line we laugh at government propaganda we use vpns to go on youtube and twitter and facebook we mock the socialist values cj king loves to talk about because we're well aware that china has an attempted socialism in decades and it is in fact one of the most capitalist countries on earth if it were true that all mainland chinese people are brainwashed the government wouldn't need to crack down so hard on free speech i am chinese but i do not feel proud that the chinese government is getting so powerful it even makes me feel hopeless sometimes when i think about how other countries are too tangled up in their own messes and too economically dependent on china to seriously stand up to the ccp and chinese citizens themselves have too much to lose to rise up in a mass revolution it is so infuriating to see that a few hundred people up high in the ccp have their grip on that much power and there's currently no reliable force out there that we can depend on to take them down this is not what i want the future to look like i do not want the world to end up in a second world war that god forbid escalates beyond cold but at the same time that we're rightfully calling the ccp out for its atrocities

I've been thinking a lot about the role media plays in egging these hate crimes on. Not just Trump and his China blaming nonsense, but also the **daily legitimate reports** about the terrible things the Chinese government is doing like **arbitrarily detaining** two Canadians to bully Canada into releasing Monzo, committing genocide against the Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities, cracking down on Hong Kong's democracy, pulling **shady neocolonial moves** in Southeast Asia and Africa and **much, much worse** and we **should criticize** the Chinese government.

International pressure is the **only thing** that can get them to back off but I'm wondering what this non-stop positioning of China as that ominous foreign boogeyman does to the perception of Chinese people as a whole and other Asians and Pacific Islanders by extension. I used to not flinch when people would say China without information about COVID or China is playing the long game to world domination because I instinctively know that they're talking about the Chinese government not ordinary citizens because I as someone who was **born and raised** in mainland China.

I'm well aware that the **Chinese government** does not represent me but now I'm wondering if the average person who grew up in the West can conceptualize this if they're aware that the average Chinese citizen has no **political power or influence** over whether these **atrocities** are happening. You hear a lot about what the Chinese government is doing but do you ever hear about what's happening in China for ordinary people? Do you have any idea what they're thinking whenever I speak up against white supremacy and the lingering impact of Western Colonialism there's always some guy in my comments who is like well China has a Han supremacist problem and is colonizing Africa right now. Yes. I criticize both the Chinese and Western governments but somehow just because of my name and face some people equate me to this ominous evil in their minds. That it's China we can talk all day about.

I don't even have Chinese citizenship anymore. I'm legally a Canadian but I don't want to make it seem like it'd be okay to see all citizens of the People's Republic of China as the enemy either. If you want to know what it's like for an average Chinese citizen, imagine if Trump and his goons appointed themselves your **government leaders** because of their connections and you had **absolutely no option** of voting them out. Imagine not even being able to criticize Trump without worrying that the police might pay you a visit. My family sees the stuff American comedians say about Trump. They see a selfie I took with Justin Trudeau and they are stunned in China politicians don't go on campaigns to win support. They don't take selfies with random people they do what their **higher ups** tell them to do it's like ordinary citizens are **base level employees** at a massive company and civil servants are the managers we occasionally hear stuff about the top bosses like Xi Jinping but ultimately we have no influence on the direction they decide to take the company and in everything we see in public, we have to maintain the position of oh yeah our company is the best.

However, most mainland Chinese people that I know are not blindly loyal to the CCP, they've just been conditioned to not voice dissent out of fear of punishment, but the grievances have their own way of slipping out. There are endless **sensitive terms** that get **automatically blocked** on Chinese social media but discussions still happen using all sorts of slang to bypass the filters — the Chinese people are always one step ahead of the censors. We make jokes about getting invited to tea whenever we say something out of line. We laugh at government propaganda. We use VPNs to go on Youtube and Twitter and Facebook. We mock the socialist values Xi Jinping loves to talk about because we're well aware that China hasn’t attempted socialism in decades, and it is in fact one of the most capitalist countries on Earth. If it were true that all mainland Chinese people are brainwashed the government wouldn't need to crack down so hard on free speech. I am Chinese, but I do not feel proud that the Chinese government is getting **so powerful**. It even makes me feel hopeless sometimes when I think about how other countries are too tangled up in their own messes and too economically dependent on China to seriously stand up to the CCP and Chinese citizens themselves have too much to lose to rise up in a mass revolution it is so infuriating to see that a few hundred people up **high in the CCP** have their grip on that much power and there's currently no reliable force out there that we can depend on to take them down. This is not what I want the future to look like. I do not want the world to end up in a second World War that God forbid escalates beyond Cold, but at the same time that we're **rightfully calling** the CCP out for its atrocities.

**Link — AT: Space Col**

**Space col solves extinction---staying on the rock exacerbates polarization.**

**Kennedy 19**, Dr. Fred Kennedy was the inaugural Director of the U. S. Department of Defense (DOD) Space Development Agency (SDA), established by Acting Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan on 12 March 2019. The SDA mission is to define and monitor the DOD’s future threat-driven space architecture and to accelerate the development and fielding of new military space capabilities necessary to ensure U.S. technological and military advantage in space for national defense., (Fred, “To Colonize Space Or Not To Colonize: That Is The Question (For All Of Us)”, Forbes, https://www.forbes.com/sites/fredkennedy/2019/12/18/to-colonize-or-not-to-colonize--that-is-the-question-for-all-of-us/?sh=b3375652367f) //CHC-DS

Yet **a wave of interest** in pursuing solar system colonization is building, whether its initial focus is the Moon, Mars, or O’Neill-style space habitats. Jeff Bezos has argued eloquently for moving heavy industry off the home planet, **preserving Earth** as a nature reserve, and building the space-based infrastructure that will lower barriers and create opportunities for vast economic and cultural growth (similar to how the Internet and a revolution in microelectronics has allowed Amazon and numerous other companies to achieve spectacular wealth). Elon Musk and **Stephen Hawking** both suggested the need for a “hedge” population of humans on Mars to allow human civilization to reboot itself in the event of a **catastrophe on Earth** – an eggs-in-several-baskets approach which actually complements the arguments made by Bezos. And while both are valid reasons for pursuing colonization, there’s a stronger, overarching rationale that clinches it.

I’ll assert that a **fundamental truth** – repeatedly borne out by history – is that expanding, outwardly-focused civilizations are far **less likely to turn on themselves**, and far more likely to expend their fecundity on growing habitations, conducting important research and creating wealth for their citizens. A civilization that **turns away from** discovery and **growth stagnates** – a point made by NASA’s Chief Historian Steven Dick as well as Mars exploration advocate Robert Zubrin.

As a species, we have yet to resolve problems of extreme **political polarization** (both internal to nation states as well as among them), inequalities in wealth distribution, deficiencies in civil liberties, environmental depredations and war. Forgoing opportunities to expand our presence into the cosmos to achieve better outcomes here at home hasn’t eliminated these scourges.

What’s more, the **“cabin fever”** often decried by opponents of colonization (when applied to small, isolated outposts far from Earth) turns out to be a potential problem for our own planet. **Without a relief valve** for ideological pilgrims or staunch individualists who might just prefer to be on their own despite the inevitable hardships, we may well run the risk of **exacerbating** the **polarization** and internecine strife we strive so hard to quell. Focusing humanity’s attention and imagination on a grand project may well give us the running room we need to address these problems. But the decision cannot be made by one country, or one company, or one segment of the human population. If we do this, it will of necessity be a truly international endeavor, a cross-sector endeavor (with all commercial, civil, and defense interests engaged and cooperating).

The good news: Critical technologies such as propulsion and power generation systems will **improve over time**. Transit durations between celestial destinations will shorten (in the same way sailing vessels gave way to steam ships and then to airliners and perhaps, one day, to point-to-point ballistic reusable rockets). Methods for obtaining critical resources on other planets will be **refined** and enhanced. **Genetic engineering** may be used to better adapt humans, their crops and other biota to life in space or on other planetary surfaces – to withstand the effects of low or micro-gravity, radiation, and the psychological effects of long-duration spaceflight.

As nation after nation lands their inaugural exploratory vessels on our Earth’s moon, and as billionaire space enthusiasts race to launch passengers, satellites and other cargo into orbit, it’s clearly time for us to sit down as a species and debate whether our future will be one highlighted primarily by growth and discovery, opening the solar system to settlement and economic development, or one that eschews outward expansion for conservation and preservation. Doing so would allow us to focus our attentions on this planet, leaving the solar system in its natural state, a celestial Antarctica stretching beyond Neptune.

I vote for growth. But one person, or one company, one community, one nation, isn’t a plurality here. This debate - postponed for more than 50 years – is one worth having. **Humanity’s future** will be decided by its outcome.

**Staying on the rock guarantees extinction---expansion and abundance of energy in space solve.**

**Futurism 13**, a Recurrent Ventures media company based out of New York City, (“The Benefits of Colonizing Space: Space Habitats and The O'Neill Cylinder”, <https://futurism.com/space-habitats-and-the-oneill-cylinder>) //CHC-DS

Many argue that the world is in a state of crisis and that the human race is the cause. As a species, we are approaching an important turning point in our history, and if we make the wrong decisions we might be facing a future of **deprivation**, **over population**, **hunger**, and **instability**. Ultimately, many believe that we will eventually be forced to colonize space. Last year, the 100 Starship Symposium set on course a project to design and build an economical and practical spacecraft for interstellar travel.

But with the very immediate worries about over population, it might **not** be **a good idea to wait** for interstellar travel and the colonization of other worlds. Fortunately, there are also many suggestions in place for large space structures designed as places for people to live in their millions, much like a city is on Earth. Of course, building a space habitat comes with thousands of challenges, including: construction in space, recreating a livable atmosphere, recycling waste, producing artificial gravity, transporting food and materials to the habitat, and convincing people such a venture is worth it.

There's no strict definition for a 'space habitat', but it's generally agreed to be a permanent human living facility on a celestial body such as 'Mars One' (extra-terrestrial planets, moons, or in a spaceship orbiting the Earth). We may have **no choice but to build** one of these in the future, be it initiated as a **matter of survival** or an undeniable demand because of our desire to explore and gain new knowledge by expanding in space. Ultimately, there are a number of incentives to building such a habitat.

For governmental bodies and world leaders faced with a huge and **unsustainable population**, the concept of a space habitat would be attractive. Using the materials available in the Solar System, there is the potential to build enough surface area within space habitats to possibly house billions and even **trillions** of people. Populations would have the space to expand sustainably without destroying any current ecosystems, as well as **relieving** the **pressure off Earth** to provide resources. The planetary population could be **stabilized** and supported with the extra space to inhabit and develop agricultural plantations for food.

The expansion into space also offers up a wealth of privatized opportunities, such as access to energy and other interplanetary resources. **On Earth**, utilizing the Sun's energy via solar cells is a disappointingly inefficient process with **unavoidable problems** associated with the atmosphere and night. In space, solar panels would have access to nearly continuous light from the Sun, and in Earth's orbit this would give us 1400 watts of power per square meter (with 100% efficiency). This **abundance of energy** would mean that we could travel throughout much of the Solar System without a terribly significant drop in power.

Material resources would also be in **abundance** throughout the entire Solar System (especially if you include mining opportunities on Mars, Luna, and other moons). Asteroids contain almost all of the stable elements in the periodic table, and without gravity, extracting and transporting them for our uses could be done with ease. NASA is working on a project where one could manufacture fuel, building materials, water, and oxygen just from resources found the Moon. The shift from Earth based manufacturing and plantation to industries in space may not just become feasible, but incredibly economically beneficial.

**Math says existential risk is significantly curtailed if we colonize space.**

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In 2021, a new era of space exploration dawned with the first privately organized flights ferrying civilian passengers across the line that separates our planet from the rest of the universe. Much of the media coverage of the three flights launched by Virgin Galactic, Blue Origin and SpaceX has either been of the “isn’t this cool” variety or has characterized these endeavours as symbols of inequality. As such, the question of what the value of human spaceflight is has gone largely unanswered.

Supporters of space exploration sometimes suggest that sending robotic probes to the remote corners of the solar system and beyond can teach us what we need to know about the universe at less cost and risk than sending people. Yet, for the **safety of our descendants** and to reach humanity’s full potential, we must become **a multiplanetary species**.

**Existential risk**

Humans have a **one in six chance** of **going extinct** this century according to Oxford Philosopher Toby Ord. In his book, The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity, Dr **Ord** lays out a variety of **long-tail risks** that are both **existential** and very **difficult to mitigate**. These include nature-based risks like **asteroids**, large-scale **volcanic eruptions** and **stellar explosions**. Although we can track many of these phenomena, we do not have the technology (nor are we likely to develop it anytime soon) to prevent large eruptions or redirect large asteroids. Initial efforts to nudge space objects are just beginning. This is to say nothing of the human-created risks of **nuclear war** or **bioweapons** intentionally or unintentionally released on the public, a scenario made easier to imagine by the current pandemic.

As long as humanity is **grouped together** on a single planet there will always be a possibility that all of us can be killed at once. It is equivalent to having everyone in a single building: **there is always a risk greater than zero** of a collapse or fire that kills everyone. By **establishing**, at first, small **outposts** and eventually larger scale settlements on other planets, the risk of our species being destroyed is **significantly curtailed**.

Realizing humanity’s potential

On a more positive note, human habitation in a greater variety of settings will radically expedite science and commerce. While we currently have small-scale experimentation with manufacturing items in micro and zero gravity on the International Space Station, the potential for us to set up large-scale industry in different physics requires us to have a presence on other celestial locations.

Large-scale settlements of people are hubs of innovation and human flourishing. Just think of how many more discoveries and marvels could be created by 80 billion people in the future instead of today’s 8 billion. Our current planet has a **limited carrying capacity** but our solar system can accommodate many more people than any single planet can.

Just as cultural and geographic variety contributes to the richness of our current society, further expanding the diversity of human settings would continue to **expand** the **creativity** of our species. Space travel itself has already been an incredible inspiration to numerous scientists, engineers and artists with many people citing seeing the moon landing as one of the most formative events of their lives.

Hastening science and technology development

The technologies we develop on our way to becoming a multiplanetary species will also benefit us here on earth. Today, **satellites** are used to **monitor** carbon and other **greenhouse gas emissions** to give us a better picture of the causes of global warming and **promote accountability**. In her first speech devoted to space, US Vice-President Kalama Harris said: “I truly believe **space activity is climate action**.” In a recent report, the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Space laid out the many ways satellite data is being used to address climate change and suggests feeding data from space-based assets into an “Earth Operations Centre” to provide a real-time picture of activities and phenomena that contribute to warming.

Less well known are the many other technologies developed on our way to space but used in our daily lives. The **CMOS sensor** was first invented at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in the 1990s. No one could have predicted that this technology would eventually be part of all our phones, enabling high-quality digital images and affecting everything from how we document **human rights abuses** to how we present ourselves to potential mates on dating apps.

**Link — AT: Ukraine**

**NATO assistance to Ukraine is anti-imperialist.**

**Achcar 22** [Gilbert Achcar; Professor of Development Studies and International Relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies, member of Anti\*Capitalist Resistance; 3-21-2022; "Six FAQs on **Anti-Imperialism** Today and the War in **Ukraine**"; International Viewpoint; https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article7571; KL]

Question 2: Wouldn’t Ukraine’s standing up against the Russian invasion benefit NATO?

The first thing to say is “**so what?**” Our support to peoples fighting imperialism shouldn’t depend on which imperialist side is backing them. Otherwise, by the **same logic**, **justice** should be **sacrificed** to the **supreme battle** against the “Western bloc,” as some argue in neo-campist pseudo-left circles. For my part, I wrote that a **Russian success** — an outcome that unfortunately still remains a real possibility — “would **embolden** US imperialism itself and its allies to continue their own **aggressive** behavior.” Indeed, the United States and its Western allies have already benefited enormously from Putin’s action. They should be warmly grateful to the Russian autocrat.

A successful Russian takeover of Ukraine would encourage the United States to return to the path of **conquering the world** by force in a context of exacerbation of the **new colonial division** of the world and worsening of **global antagonisms**, while a Russian failure — adding to the US failures in **Iraq** and **Afghanistan** — would reinforce what is called in Washington the “**Vietnam syndrome**.” Moreover, it seems quite obvious to me that a Russian victory would considerably strengthen **warmongering** and the push towards increased **military spending** in NATO countries, which has already gotten off to a flying start, while a Russian defeat would offer much better conditions for our battle for **general disarmament** and the dissolution of NATO.

If Ukraine were to succeed in rejecting the **Russian yoke**, it is more than likely that it would be vassalized to Western powers. But the point is that, if it fails to do so, it will be **enserfed** to Russia. And you don’t have to be a qualified medievalist to know that the condition of a vassal is **incomparably preferable** to that of a serf!

Question 3: How can we radical anti-imperialists support a resistance that is led by a rightwing bourgeois government?

Should we support a people that resists against an over-armed imperialist invasion only if its resistance is led by communists and not by a bourgeois government? This is a very old ultra-left position on the national question, which Lenin rightfully combatted in his time. A **just** struggle against **national oppression**, let alone foreign occupation, must be **supported** regardless of the **nature** of its **leadership**: if this fight is just, it implies that the population concerned **actively participates** in it and **deserves support**, regardless of the nature of its leadership.

It is **certainly not** the Ukrainian capitalists who are mobilizing en masse with the Ukrainian armed forces in the form of an improvised national guard and new-style “pétroleuses,” but the **working people** of Ukraine. And in their fight against **Great Russian imperialism**, led by an **autocratic** and **oligarchic ultra-reactionary** government in Moscow that presides over the destinies of one of the most **unequal countries** on the planet, the Ukrainian people deserve our **full support**. This certainly does not imply that we cannot criticize the Kyiv government.

Question 4: Isn’t the ongoing war an inter-imperialist war?

If any war where each side is supported by an imperialist rival were called an inter-imperialist war, then **all the wars** of our time would be inter-imperialist, since as a rule, it is enough for one of the rival imperialisms to support one side for the other to support the opposite side. An inter-imperialist war is **not that**. It is a direct war, and not one by proxy, between two powers, each of which seeks to invade the territorial and (neo)colonial domain of the other, as was very clearly the First World War. It is a “war of rapine” on both sides, as Lenin liked to call it.

To describe the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, in which the latter country has **no ambition**, let alone **intention**, of seizing Russian territory, and in which Russia has the **stated intention** of subjugating Ukraine and seizing much of its territory — to call this conflict **inter-imperialist**, rather than an **imperialist war of invasion**, is an **extreme distortion of reality**.

The **primary**, **most immediate**, function of the supply of arms to Ukraine is therefore that it helps it oppose its **enserfment**, even if, on the other hand, it wishes its vassalization in the belief that it is the only guarantee of its freedom. We must, of course, also oppose its vassalization, but for the time being, the **most urgent** need must be addressed.

Of course, the direct entry into war of the other imperialist camp would transform the current conflict into a true inter-imperialist war, in the correct sense of the concept, a type of war to which we are categorically hostile. For now, NATO members are declaring that they will not cross the red line of sending troops to fight the Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil, or shooting down Russian planes in Ukrainian airspace — despite Volodymyr Zelensky’s exhortations. This is because they **rightly fear** a **fatal spiral**, skeptical, as they have become, about the **rationality** of Putin who did not hesitate to brandish the **nuclear threat** from the outset.

Question 5: Can we support Western arms deliveries to Ukraine?

Since the Ukrainians’ fight against the Russian invasion is just, it is quite right to help them defend themselves against an enemy far superior in numbers and armament. That is why we are **without hesitation** in favor of the delivery of defensive weapons to the **Ukrainian resistance**. But what does this mean?

An example: we are certainly in favor of delivering anti-aircraft missiles, portable and otherwise, to the Ukrainian resistance. To oppose it would be to say that Ukrainians only have to choose between, on the one hand, **being massacred** and seeing their **cities destroyed** by the Russian air force, without having the means they need to defend themselves, or, on the other hand, fleeing their country. At the same time, however, we must not only oppose the irresponsible idea of imposing a no-fly zone over Ukraine or part of its territory; we must also oppose the delivery of air fighters to Ukraine that Zelensky has been demanding. Fighters are not strictly defensive weaponry, and their supply to Ukraine would actually risk significantly aggravating Russian bombing.

In short, we are in favor of the supply to Ukraine of anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons, as well as all the armaments indispensable for the defense of a territory. To deny Ukraine these deliveries is simply to be **guilty of failure** to assist a people in **danger**! We have called for the delivery of such defensive weapons to the **Syrian opposition** in the past. The United States **refused** and even prevented its local allies from handing them over to the Syrians, in part because of the Israeli veto. **We know** what the **consequences** were.

**Stop Westplaining Ukraine.**

**Zhong 22** [Sicheng Zhong; The Phoenix writer; 3-17-2022; “The Anti-War Left Should Stop Westplaining”; The Phoenix; <https://swarthmorephoenix.com/2022/03/17/the-anti-war-left-should-stop-westplaining/>; KL]

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine has lasted nearly a month, killing over 3000 civilians and wounding more than 10000 of them. The humanitarian crisis has attracted much attention on campus, with students organizing vigils and fundraisers for disaster relief. Some progressives on campus, however, have adopted the **Russian talking point**, holding the West and NATO responsible for triggering the invasion. Curiously, their arguments, in line with realist scholars they **usually despise** like John Mearshimer and Stephen Waltz, mainly concern the **security needs** of the Russian state and the **imperialist nature** of NATO. They contend that the “imperialist,” U.S.-led NATO expansion, in violation of its promise to the Soviet Union before the unification of Germany, triggered heightened anxiety in Eastern Europe and pushed Russia to defend its sphere of influence via war. What’s more, being in the same camp as isolationists like **Rand Paul**, **they** also call for dialing down sanctions against “ordinary Russians,” and argue against **any form** of **NATO intervention**.

The seemingly innocent anti-war and anti-imperialist position taken by some progressives is **harmful** for Ukrainians and other **oppressed peoples** fighting against autocratic brutality for two reasons: 1) on the surface level, blaming NATO/the West **denies any agency** of Ukrainians and their **legitimate wish** to join NATO and embrace the West, and 2) in promoting their version of anti-imperialism, the anti-war left in fact embrace a form of **U.S.-centrism** that **ignores atrocities** committed by adversaries of the U.S., such as **Russia**, **China**, Cuba, Venezuela, and **Iran**.

Let’s take on the “Ukraine is the West’s fault” argument first. The problem of this proposition is that it assumes that without NATO expansion, Russia would **behave differently**. Both **historical** and **contemporary empirical evidence** suggests otherwise. Long before the establishment of NATO and since the reign of Ivan the Terrible I in the 16th century, Russia sought eastward expansion to secure its relatively weak geopolitical position that lacks strategic depth. As noted by renowned historian Stephen Kotkin, Russian foreign policy “has been characterized by soaring ambitions that have exceeded the country’s capabilities” for centuries. In a present day scenario, the best way for Russia to prevent the eastward expansion of NATO would be to station troops alongside the Russian-Ukrainian border without an invasion to achieve maximum deterrence effect and bargaining power. In fact, it was **Russian aggression** against Ukraine throughout the 21st century that **accelerated** Ukraine’s embrace of the EU and NATO. Public opinion polls suggest that immediately after the Cold War, only 37% of Ukrainians supported joining NATO. It was not until after the Orange Revolution, when Russia poisoned Yushchenko with neural toxins, that more than 50% of the Ukrainian public embraced the idea of a national referendum on joining NATO. After the Russian invasion of Crimea, the Ukrainian support for NATO reached a **historical height**, with more than 60% of Ukrainians embracing the idea. Breaking down Putin’s psyche, his rationale to attack Ukraine, and the puzzling optimistic evaluation before the war is a tall order. Historians are likely to debate causes of the war for decades, but it is **clear** that NATO expansion is **not** a major factor in Putin’s calculation to launch the war — he **barely mentioned** NATO in his war-declaration speech right before the invasion and declared Ukraine to be an **imaginary state** gifted by Lenin. If there is anything that can be learned from the ongoing war, however, it is that allowing Ukraine to join NATO in 2008 would likely have prevented the Russian invasion: the **rock-solid peace** and security in **Poland** and the **Baltic states**, countries that were traditionally in the Russian sphere of influence, are the **best example** of how NATO manages to protect member states from Russian aggression.

Contending with the uncomfortable idea that the vast majority of Ukrainians support NATO and that NATO could have protected Ukraine, the anti-war left, as represented by Marjorie Cohn who gave a talk at Swarthmore on March 2, 2022, often resorts to **conspiracy theories** backed by the Kremlin, claiming that the current pro-West administration was the result of the “illegimate neo-Nazi coup” of 2014 backed by the U.S. It is essentially a claim that not only **contradicts with reality** but also **removes any agency** vested in the Ukrainian people.

What is **more disturbing** than the flawed argument that ignores internal political dynamics and **political agency** of Ukraine is its **moral implication**: by identifying the U.S. as the **only “bad guy**” in the world, leftists **ignore** and indirectly **whitewash** the evils committed by autocrats around the world. Indeed, U.S. progressives are facing an intellectual dilemma between criticizing U.S. imperialism and addressing oversea authoritarianism today. They believe that criticizing autocracies in the global south would undermine their project of dismantling U.S. imperialism — an **entirely false** proposition, of course.

For years, they have focused primarily on wrongdoings of the U.S., in part because of this **one-dimensional** anti-imperialist project, but also because of the **unconscious U.S.-centrism** that inevitably results from **solely focusing** on U.S. behaviors. The anti-war left has criticized the U.S./the CIA, without concrete evidence, for offering support to pro-democracy protesters in Syria, Hong Kong, and Venezuela, and has been **largely absent** on issues such as the **annexation of Crimea**, **Assad’s war crimes** against civilians, **Iran’s proxy wars** in the Middle East, and **China’s treatment** of ethnic minorities and Hong Kong. Instead, they focused mostly on where they deemed U.S. policy to be wrong, like in regards to dealings with Yemen, Israel/Palestine, and Cuba. Why was this the case? The current generation of the anti-war left, born at the end of the Cold War, have **never experienced** real threats firsthand from other great powers. Instead, they grew up in an **America-dominated** world in which the power of the U.S. was largely unchecked. As such, their worldviews were shaped by events such as the invasion of Iraq, where an omnipotent U.S. failed to sustain its moral claim of establishing a democracy to replace the Saddam regime. Thus, those born in this generation spent their formative years criticizing the U.S. regime with a deep sense of guilt. This introspective guilt, coupled with continued **unchallenged** U.S. dominance, resulted in the millennial anti-war left supporting the **very ideas** they attempted to criticize: U.S. dominance and imperialism.

In adopting this viewpoint, the anti-war left ended up where they **exactly** did not want to be: U.S.-centric. As mentioned before, many progressives have **ignored** human rights violations and **atrocities** caused by many foreign powers — Russia in **Syria**; Iran in **Yemen**, **Iraq**, and **Lebanon**; and China in **Hong Kong** and **Xinjiang** — because these countries are adversaries of the U.S. and can potentially undermine U.S. dominance. Moreover, instead of helping activists within these authoritarian countries, anti-war progressives view them as **agents** of the U.S.’s imperialist interests and advocate for U.S. isolationism, even when **real-life** human rights atrocities were being committed against civilians. This is another mistake caused by their belief that only the U.S. is capable of wielding real power in a unipolar world and that critical events happening in other countries have their roots in an American-centric system.

This “anti-war” worldview, in part due to the breakdown of the moral legacy of the U.S.- led, pro-democracy, and pro-openness post-Cold War order after the Iraq War, not only takes agency away from other **oppressed peoples** living under and being threatened by **autocrats** in Russia, China, Iran, and etc., but also indirectly promotes another form of **U.S.-centrism**, in which **only** the U.S. is deemed to have **any real power** over the global events. Progressive millennials now face the intellectual challenge of refraining from ‘westplaining’ Ukraine and aligning their worldview with moral claims about freedom and self-determination both home and abroad. Facing growing challenges posed by autocratic and inherently imperialist powers like Russia and China, leftists in the U.S. should **unequivocally stand** on the side of **democracy** rather than **apologize** for autocrats and their **expansionist aggression** in the **name** of “**anti-imperialism**.”

**Link — AT: Western IR**

**The assumption of Eurocentric IR as fundamentally incompatible with the alternative paradoxically re-asserts its power --- the perm is preferable because it denies an ontological division between the ‘West’ and ‘The Rest’**

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Ontologies of Otherness: Liberal–local relations, ‘hybridity’, ‘resistance’ and the ‘everyday’

Sensitive to the problem of such occlusion, a major strand of recent literature has emphasized the need to rethink the relations between the ‘liberal’ and the ‘local’ in intervention settings (Mac Ginty, 2011; Richmond, 2009, 2010, 2011), in what has been labelled a ‘fourth generation’ approach (Richmond, 2011). This writing has taken a much more proactive approach to research with and about the peoples targeted by intervention, aiming to correct the impression of smooth liberal transformation and the ‘romanticization’ of the local (Mac Ginty, 2011: 2–4). Yet, the paths it has taken have, quite unwillingly, reinforced a Eurocentric understanding of intervention, through the use of an ontology of ‘Otherness’ to frame the issues. Prominent among these accounts is Richmond’s (2009, 2010, 2011) recent work on ‘post-liberal peace’, which frames the key problems of intervention through an ontological distinction between the ‘liberal’ and the ‘local’. In earlier writing, the liberal peace is elaborated as genealogically endogenous to Western traditions of thought, reflecting Enlightenment, modern and post-Christian values (Richmond, 2005). In post-conflict settings, however, it is critiqued for exercising forms of hegemony that suppress pluralism, depoliticize peace, undermine the liberal social contract and exercise a colonial gaze in its treatment of local ‘recipients’ of the liberal peace. In view of these various aspects of failure, the liberal peace is characterized as ‘ethically bankrupt’ (Richmond, 2009: 558) and requiring re-evaluation. The ‘local’, on the other hand, is a space characterized by ‘context, custom, tradition and difference in its everyday setting’ (Richmond, 2010: 669), which is suppressed by liberal peace interventions. The very conception of the ‘post-liberal peace’ is thus about the ways in which two ontologically distinct elements – the ‘liberal’ and the ‘local’ – are ‘rescued and reunited’ via forms of hybridity and empathy, in which ‘everyday local agencies, rights, needs, custom and kinship are recognized as discursive “webs of meaning”’ (Richmond, 2010: 668). Mitchell (2011: 1628) has recently argued that Richmond’s conception of the ‘local’ is not ‘a reference to parochial, spatially, culturally or politically bounded places’ but ‘the potentialities of local agents to contest, reshape or resist within a local “space”’. Richmond (2011: 13–14) himself has also been concerned not to be understood as ‘essentializing’ the ‘local’, emphasizing that it contains a diversity of forms of political society. Indeed, in this more recent work, a more complex conception of the ‘everyday’ as a space of action, thought and potential resistance is elaborated. Despite these qualifications, however, there is much conflation, interchangeability and slippage between these conceptions of the ‘local’. Accordingly, the ontology of Otherness, understood as cultural distinctiveness and alterity, continuously surfaces throughout the narratives of liberal and post-liberal peace. Not only is the liberal peace closely linked to the intellectual trajectory of the ‘West’, but a conception of the ‘local’ as non-modern and non-Western often re-appears: This requires that local academies and policymakers beyond the already liberal international community are enabled to develop theoretical approaches to understanding their own predicaments and situations, without these being tainted by Western, liberal, and developed world orthodoxies and interests. In other words, to gain an understanding of the ‘indigenous’ and everyday factors for the overall project of building peace, liberal or otherwise, a via media needs to be developed between emergent local knowledge and the orthodoxy of international prescriptions and assumptions about peace. (Richmond, 2009: 571, emphasis added) There is a clear emphasis here on the need to engage with the ‘indigenous’ or ‘authentic’ traditions of non-Western life, which seems to reflect an **underlying assumption of cultural difference as the primary division** between these two parties. This reproduces the division between the liberal, rational, modern West and a culturally distinct space of the ‘local’. Indeed, the call for a post-liberal peace is often a call for peacebuilding to reflect a more ‘culturally appropriate form of politics’ (Richmond, 2011: 102) that is more empathetic and emancipatory. This emphasis on tradition and cultural norms as constitutive of the ‘local’ is carried through in recent research on interventions in Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands. These focus largely on the reinvigoration of ‘customary’ houses and institutions as a form of ‘critical agency’ in distinction to liberal institutions and the state (Richmond, 2011: 159–182). The point here is not simply that there is an account of alterity or cultural difference within the politics of intervention, but that the liberal/local distinction appears to be the central ontological fulcrum upon which the rest of the political and ethical problems sit (see also Chandler, 2010b: 153). Therefore, ‘local’ or ‘everyday’ ‘agency’ is seen to be best expressed to the extent that it reclaims ‘the customary’ and is not ‘co-opted’ by the internationals. It is understood as enhanced where codes of ‘customary law’ become part of the new constitutional settlement. A similar division can be seen in Mac Ginty’s (2011) framework, which sees the hybridities in peacebuilding as emerging at the intersection of the ‘international’ and ‘local’ agents and institutions. Again, this framework is built on an ontological distinction between the two that repeatedly splits the ‘Western’/‘international’ from the ‘non-Western’/‘local’. Even though this is well qualified, overall Mac Ginty (2011: 94) defends this distinction, arguing that if one were to abandon such potentially problematic labels then this would lead to an abandonment of research altogether. This can quite straightforwardly be read as a defence of the basic ontology of the project, which is an ontology of the distinction between the West and its Others, which meet through various forms of hybridization. While Mac Ginty does not pursue the ethics of the post-liberal peace in the same way as Richmond, the underlying intellectual framework also uses this distinction as the analytic pivot of the research. We earlier defined Eurocentrism as the **belief in Western distinctiveness**, and I have argued that this is **philosophically fundamental to this strand of the critical literature** that grapples with the relationship between the ‘liberal’ and the ‘local’. This strand has put substantial analytic weight on fundamental cultural differences between these two entities, even while disavowing any essentialism and making some substantive conceptual efforts to move away from this. Such difficulties are indicative of the **deep hold that this particular avatar of Eurocentrism has on the critical imaginary**. By contrast, the point made by a wide variety of other ‘postcolonial’ writers has precisely been against such an ontology of the international, pointing instead to the historically **blurred, intertwined and mutually constituted** character of global historical space and ‘culture’ (Bhabha, 2004; Bhambra, 2010).

**Non-western IR essentializes cultural tropes of non-US peoples---turns the K, reifies imperialism and undermines any intellectual gains in their framework**

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During the last decade, the field of International Relations (IR) has witnessed the emergence of ‘non-Western IR theory’. Acharya and Buzan’s seminal work titled Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia (2009) marked a watershed for the discipline. Acharya and Buzan’s book contributed to a disciplinary self-reflection, which resulted in a wide range of academic publications aimed at turning the field of IR into a more pluralistic discipline that respects the subaltern voices that have been silenced by the imperial origins of IR. For this reason, the celebration of ‘cultural diversity’ as an ontological source has become the central focus of new theoretical endeavours. Both the projects of ‘Global IR’ (Acharya, 2016; Yong-Soo, 2019) led by the prestigious scholar Amitav Acharya and the various ‘national schools of International Relations’ (Cho, 2013; Qin, 2018; Shahi, 2019; Shih et al., 2019; Yan, 2019; Zhao, 2019) are prime examples of this new phenomena. Despite the welcoming efforts of promoting ‘cultural diversity’ (Acharya, 2016; Reus-Smit, 2018; Tickner and Blaney, 2012) to produce theoretical projects that seek to transcend both the ‘Western’ and ‘imperial’ origins of the discipline, the field of IR has fallen into a dangerous dynamic that stems from the very imperial origins of discipline: the **reification of culture as an essentialist construction**. In this sense, essentialism is ‘the view that cultures have fundamental or “essential” properties, among them their values and beliefs’ (Goodhart 2003, p.940). In the late 19th century, Western imperialism had to imagine essentialist cultural forms beyond the domains of the ‘West’ to rationalise its ‘civilising mission’ (Said, 2014). In a historical and disciplinary twist, both the celebration of ‘cultural diversity’ and the promotion of pluralism have allowed and legitimised the arrival of ‘essentialist’ theoretical projects by a disciplinary ‘back door’. Put it differently, in an act of disciplinary redemption, the field of IR has accepted forms of theorising that would have been disqualified some years ago due to their essentialist tendency. For instance, the celebrated ‘Chinese school of IR’ solely reactivates Confucianism as an ontological source, dismissing thus other political traditions that exist or have existed in China such as 1930’s revolutionary Chinese thought, Mao Zedong’s thought, Buddhism or even a ‘sinicised’ Islam. In this way, only Confucianism is equated with Chineseness. Regarding the project of ‘Global IR’, Hurrel (2016, p.150), wisely warned us about the dangers of Global IR as it ‘can also lead to a cultural and regional inwardness that may **work to reproduce** the very ethnocentricities that are being challenged’. This is perhaps one of the main paradoxes that exist in IR given the massive and recent disciplinary efforts to evade such ‘essentialist’ constructions. This is what I call the ‘trap of diversity’ in IR. It is worth mentioning that the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’ has manifested several degrees of ‘essentialism’. Although, there are some great contributions (Hurrel, 2016) that seek to transcend these dynamics. Nonetheless, I contend that such essentialism that informs the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’ is a result of the impact of the ‘dual legacy’ (Chibber, 2018) of Edward Said’s Orientalism in the discipline of IR. As Chibber (2018, p.37) argues ‘[Said’s] legacy is therefore a dual one – propelling the critique of imperialism into the very heart of the mainstream on the one hand, but also giving strength to intellectual fashions that have undermined the possibility of that very critique’. Specifically, in the field of ‘non-Western IR theory’, these academic trends have been crystallised in (neo)-Weberian and postmodern approaches and a problematic scholarly tendency to understand the production of international theory as an independent intellectual process that is completely disjointed from a specific form of political economy or material reality. In this light, the main challenge that the IR discipline has to address is the legacy of ‘Western cultural imperialism’, in an idealist fashion, rather than the specific social and geo-economic structure that both enabled and shaped the form in which ‘Western IR’ has been materialised since 1919. As a result of this idealist critique, it is widely recognised that ‘cultural representation’ (Acharya, 2014) is indeed the deep structural problem of the IR discipline rather than the material historical pillars and infrastructure that enabled its emergence. The logical consequence of this has been the mainstream approach that understands ‘non-Western IR thought’ as the theory produced in non-western societies, which are in opposition to the conventional geography of an eternal ‘West’. Hence the apparent importance of Confucianism, Hinduism or political Islam as ‘non-Western’ ontological sources in the new theoretical formulations. The activation of such cultural imaginaries as ontological foundations from ‘non-Western’ societies in the context of the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’ is conceived as the logical step towards a more pluralistic and ‘cultural’ egalitarian discipline. It is worth clarifying that I am not arguing against cultural diversity. Cultural diversity is the very foundation of humanity. On the contrary, I argue that it is important to critically engage with the very enterprise of ‘non-Western IR theory’ in its current disciplinary form. Despite the respectable efforts to turn the IR discipline into a more pluralistic field, critical scholars have taken for granted the essentialist notion of ‘non-Western IR theory’, uncritically assuming that such theory is only produced in non-Western societies in a binary contrast to that of conventional IR. This not only reifies ‘the West’ as an eternal and fixed entity but also **orientalises the ‘non-West’**. For this reason, this article seeks to answer the following question: what constitutes ‘non-Western IR theory’.

To properly analyse the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’, we first need to sketch out what we mean by ‘the West’ and its relationship with the emergence of the IR discipline. In the next section, following the work of Kees van der Pijl, I will define the ‘West’ as what he describes as the ‘Lockean Heartland’. The ‘Lockean heartland’ and the origins of the IR discipline In his work titled The Discipline of Western Supremacy. Modes of Foreign Relations and political economy, volume III, the critical scholar Kees van der Pijl (2014) attributed the origins of the IR discipline to the imperial pulses of what he describes as the ‘Lockean heartland’ (1998, 2006, 2007, 2014). According to Van der Pijl (2006, p.13), ‘the heartland is therefore best understood not as some massive central island but as a networked social and geo-economic structure comprising a number of (originally English speaking) states and a regulatory infrastructure. Expansion occurs on two dimensions: one of capital, to global proportions; and the other of the West, which by definition has a more limited reach. In their combined advance across the globe, the two progress in tandem was a way of live, a culture, and a politics, with their means of coercion complementing discipline’. Its Lockean nature stemmed from the specific legal culture which was epitomised by Locke’s Two Treatises of Government that took a transnational form after the immigration from the British Isles to North America and the settle colonialism that followed thereafter. Such state/complex was sealed in the British Isles after the Glorious Revolution in 1688. According to Van der Pijl (2006, p.8), ‘the Lockean state, governed by a constitutional monarch controlled by a parliament, is the true bourgeois political formation; a state that ‘serves’ a largely self-regulating, ‘civil’ society by protecting private property at home and abroad’. This last point is crucial because it was the main ontological source of the idealist IR theory produced in the ‘Lockean heartland’ at the beginning of the 20th century. In parallel, during the 17th century, the expansion of the heartland and the Protestant Reformation mounted geopolitical pressures on other contender states such as catholic France. To not be dispossessed and ‘resist peripheralization by the Lockean heartland’ (Van der Pijl 1998, p.78) and catch-up with it, France was forced to develop a strong state. The specific form of the new French state was described by Van der Pijl (1998, p.79) as the ‘prototype of the Hobbesian contender state’. Such Hobbesian state/complex was characterised by ‘the paramountcy of the state as the institution driving forward the social formation and pre-emptively shaping, by action, sometimes revolution from above, the social institutions which have evolved ‘organically, if not necessarily autonomously, in the heartland’ (Van der Pijl 1998, p.80). In such state/complex, society is completely confiscated in favour of the social and economic development of the state. As I will demonstrate later on, this point is crucial to understand the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’. As Van der Pijl (1998, p.83; 2006, p.1) argues, the structure of the ‘Lockean heartland’ vis-a-vis contender states has been the main structural divide of world politics since the European Enlightenment until the present. The evolution of international affairs has been characterised by the expansion of the ‘Lockean heartland’ and the (semi or full) integration of several contender states such as France, Prussia, Japan, the Soviet Union, China to its expansionist network. Against this backdrop, the origins of the IR discipline in 1919 was marked by the willingness of the Anglo-American ruling elites of the heartland via education institutions to produce academic knowledge to legitimise and guide their imperial expansion. For this reason, as Schmidt argues in (Van der Pijl 2014, p. viii) ‘the academic discipline is marked by British, and especially, American parochialism’. As we have seen since its origins, the evolution of IR has gone hand in hand with the imperial project of the Liberal West after the First World War. Due to the historical evolution of the ‘Lockean heartland’ and its dialectical relation with other contender states, the production of international thought in its core was crystallised in an idealist form. As Walker (1993, p.42) points out, ‘if it is necessary to identify a tradition of international relations theory, then the most appropriate candidate is not ‘realism’ but ‘idealism’. As Van der Pijl argues (2014, p.ix), ‘English-speaking social thought, which today dominates academic life the world over, remains locked into the antinomy between (materialist) empiricism and (religious-idealist) moral judgement. Contender states and ‘non-Western IR theory’ With this in mind, I argue that, paradoxically, the current production of mainstream ‘non-Western IR theory’ (Cho, 2013; Qin, 2018; Shahi, 2019; Shih et al., 2019; Yan, 2019; Zhao, 2019) has been informed by the antinomy between (materialist) empiricism and (religious-idealist) moral judgement, which is the main characteristic of the ‘English-speaking social thought’ and not that of other external societies to the Lockean heartland. In this vein, despite the influences of Daoism and Confucianism in their theoretical propositions, both Qin’s constructivist relational theory (2018) and Yan’s moral realism (2019) are a case in point. The existence of such persistent antinomy explains why the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’ has been materialised in its current form and its unable to transcend the logics imbued by the imperial origins of the discipline. On the contrary, to overcome the ‘trap of diversity’ in the field of IR, I propose an alternative path to conceive the development of ‘non-Western IR theory’. Against culturalist approaches, I argue that ‘non-Western IR thought’ should be better understood as the knowledge informed by the legacy of the structural experience of several historical contender states since the 18th century. Put it differently, the production of ‘non-Western IR thought’, rather than being a product of a reified and sealed cultural background, is the logical consequence of the knowledge that emerges from a specific structural position of a given society within the wider historical structure of the ‘Lockean heartland’ vis-a-vis contender states. In this vein, the distinctiveness of the production of international knowledge in the ‘non-West’ is not solely manifested by a cultural divergence but a structural one. In this light, the primacy of the state over society, which is one of the main characteristics of the contender states experience, is perhaps one of the fundamental ontological foundations that has shaped the production of ‘non-Western IR Theory’ since the 18th century. For this reason, in addition to the ‘Global IR’ and the ‘national schools of IR’, the international thought produced in contender states such as 18th century France, Prussia, imperial Japan or the Soviet Union could also be described as being produced in a non-Western setting. For instance, following my argument, ontologically speaking, Prussian political realism which is always regarded as the quintessential IR theory of the ‘universal’ West, has more in common with the Qin’s Confucian relational IR project (Qin, 2018) than with Anglo-Saxon liberalism. Both theoretical projects are shaped by the same ontological premise of the primacy of the state over society. For this reason, in the context of the production of IR theory in China, the reactivation of Confucianism as an ontological source to build the ‘Chinese school of IR’ is not a solely consequence of its eternal existence within the Chinese civilization but also due its political meaning within the wider structural position of China. Put it differently, Confucianism is indeed a political tradition that gives primacy of the state over society and can rationalize best the structural contender posture of contemporary China. This crucial structural ontological foundation that shapes the production of ‘non-Western IR theory’ is one of the elements that has been obscured by the dominant essentialist approaches that exist within the discipline of IR. During the past decade, the field has tended to emphasise the ontological value of ‘cultural otherness’ rather than the existence of universal structural elements that are reproduced in different cultural settings due to the geopolitical pressures of the ‘Lockean heartland’. The obscuration of this crucial point not only has to do with the internal evolution of the IR discipline in the Anglo-American academia and its postmodern drift, but also with the neoliberal forces that has shaped the discipline since the 1980s. Davenport (2019, p.535) argues that these ‘debates [the Third Debate] should be understood, in both its timing and its substance, as a phenomenon of neoliberal globalization: it was the reflection into disciplinary IR of the enormous transformations through with so many of the structures and hierarchies that had characterized the modern age were disintegrated’. It is worth mentioning that I am not dismissing the importance of culture in the process of production of IR theory. Cultural multiplicity plays a fundamental role in shaping theoretical knowledge and the diverse cosmovisions that enable communities to make sense of the world. Nonetheless, with the alternative path that I have outlined above, I attempt to denaturalise the deep-seated interpretation of the problematic dichotomy between ‘Western IR theory’ vs ‘non-Western IR theory’ which is reproduced in most of the mainstream literature on ‘non-Western IR theory’.

Conclusion

This article has argued that the uncritical engagement with ‘cultural diversity’ in the discipline of IR, which has been epitomised by the development of ‘non-Western IR theory’, has not succeeded in transcending the ‘imperial’ or ‘Western’ origins of the discipline. On the contrary, the interpretation of the production of non-Western International thought as the knowledge produced by societies beyond the territories of the West has reinforced new forms of essentialism. This is what I have described as ‘the trap of diversity’ in IR. For this reason, the form in which ‘non-Western IR theory’ has materialised should be understood as a form of disciplinary ‘identity politics’, a struggle for the representation of abstract and reified cultural entities, rather than as a real theoretical challenge to question its imperial foundations and the material infrastructure that enabled that specific production of knowledge. In other words, I maintain that **these approaches are a disciplinary ‘dead-end’**.

**! — Extinction**

**Extinction outweighs.**

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There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general **moral view** we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an **enormous catastrophe**, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we — whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or **virtue ethicists** — should all agree that we should try to save the world.

According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an **impartial perspective**, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the **most important** thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future — there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions.

There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view — according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people — the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives.

You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that **determines rightness** than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging **rightness**. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an **impartial** point of view. They’d thus imply **very strong reasons** to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character.

What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize ~~her~~ [their] own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk — perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act).

To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility — suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk.

We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk — not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who **disagree** should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are **only 1% sure** that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the **most important** thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future — there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation).

**! — Nuclear War**

**Reject preventable nuclear war — the risk is underestimated and only survivors will be the agents of destruction.**

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RA: At the Buffalo conference on pain, you gave a paper that built on some of the insights of your then most recent book, Thermonuclear Monarchy. 1 In the book, you demonstrate the incompatibility of democracy and nuclear arms at least in part on the grounds that, by the nature of their deployment, nuclear arms make it impossible for the populace to consent to their use. In your talk, you made a different but related claim that focused on the relative silence of the population regarding nuclear arms in the post-Cold War era. You were concerned, in particular, with the difficulties of imagining the consequences of nuclear war. I wonder if you could expand on this second point: why it is so hard to think about **nuclear war**. ES: The two points are deeply related. The architecture of nuclear arms requires that the population **be eliminated from the decision about** going to **war**. It also requires that Congress be eliminated from the decision about going to war—just because the nature of the **tech**nology requires a tiny number of people to do the launch. The result of that architecture is that people eventually, over seven decades, have internalized the fact that they’re **worthless** when it comes to the need to defend the country and to carry out acts of mutual aid toward one another. We now simply abandon the right of self-defense and the right of mutual aid and give unlimited injuring power to the executive branch of government and fall silent. RA: How much responsibility, how much blame, does one give to the population for remaining silent? ES: That has always been a question. Gandhi said, ‘‘You can wake a man who’s asleep, but you can’t wake a man who’s pretending to be asleep.’’ His statement marks a fork in the road. If the population has been anesthetized and is genuinely asleep, then they are morally innocent (even if infantilized and terribly reduced as moral agents). If instead the population is pretending to be asleep, we are **morally culpable**: the population is **complicit with the genocide** that’s standing in the wings **waiting to happen**. During my lecture and in many years of working on disarmament, I stressed the first path and tried to outline why waking up is difficult. In recent months, I’ve moved closer to the position that your question identifies, the responsibility of the population. I feel the force of Martin Luther King’s statement, ‘‘**There comes a time when silence is betrayal**.’’ I’m almost at the point of believing that there is a wanton refusal to [recognize] ~~see~~ the **imminent peril**, a refusal to understand not just that we have a **responsibility to reverse it**, to dismantle it, but that **we have the ability to do so**, and that if we don’t, **it is going to happen**. I don’t know if it’s going to happen this year. Or whether it’s going to happen this century. But it’s almost inconceivable that it isn’t going to happen. RA: Why is it that people have such a hard time understanding this? If you allow that people might honestly and ardently be trying to understand, what is it that is getting in the way? ES: Four or five answers come to mind. First, people often lack key pieces of information. If you ask someone in this country which nations have nuclear weapons, they are likely to say Iraq (which has none), Iran (which has none), or North Korea (which has fewer than 60; leading experts say fewer than 20). The United States has 6,500. The United States and Russia together own 93 percent of the world arsenal: the other 7 percent is owned by the other seven nuclear states—in order of numerical possession, France, China, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, India, Israel, and North Korea (see fig. 1). An equally profound misconception held by US citizens is the belief that our nuclear architecture is for ‘‘defense’’ and ‘‘retaliation.’’ In fact we have had a ‘‘presidential first-use’’ policy for the whole nuclear age. The profound obscenity of that arrangement, which has only begun to be glimpsed with the current president, has been an equally grave moral wrong from day one. Second, even when American ~~citizens~~ [denizens] and residents have this information, the outcome is derealized by its **being future**—that is, the unreality something has by having not yet happened is conflated with the unreality something might have by being **merely imaginary**. People, it’s true, are uninformed. But once they become informed, even then the flash of insight fades from their eyes after about ten minutes. RA: Why do you think that is? ES: Because **they think ‘‘future’’ equals ‘‘unreal.’’** But we need to stop and understand what we mean by ‘‘future.’’ If it takes 10,000 steps to put a nuclear architecture **in**to place, 9,999 steps have already been completed: we know how to split the atom; we know how to provide enriched uranium; we know how to deliver the bomb; we’ve completed not only the theoretical steps but the materialization steps: we’ve made the bombs; we’ve completed the delivery systems—Ohio-class submarines, the land-based ICBMs, and airdelivery B-2s and B-52s. Unlike in China and India, the weapons in the United States are already ‘‘mated’’ to the delivery systems; they are on alert; specific weapons have been assigned to specific cities in the countries of present enemies and, yes, even potential enemies. One step remains: the order to launch. So 9,999 steps are present and accounted for; one remains undone. While the 9,999 steps took vast amounts of time and resources, the last one is designed to be carried out in minutes. The word ‘‘future’’ does not apply to the 9,999 steps, only to the last one. When people decline to address the nuclear peril on the grounds that it is an ‘‘unreal’’ worry because ‘‘following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki it hasn’t yet happened,’’ they are **unknowingly allying themselves with** the position that our own Department of State and **D**epartment **o**f **D**efense took in 1995. At that time, seventy-eight countries asked the International Court of Justice to declare the possession, threat of use, and use of nuclear weapons illegal on the basis of the humanitarian and environmental instruments such as the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Geneva Protocols, the Declaration of Saint Petersburg, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Poverty, and many others. Though the United States worked to invalidate the application of these protocols to our nuclear weapons one at a time, an argument they used over and over was that the firing of the weapons was ‘‘future,’’ hence ‘‘hypothetical,’’ hence ‘‘suppositional’’—this despite the billions of dollars that each year go into polishing and oiling the architecture of earth’s destruction to keep it in a present-tense state of constant readiness. RA: At the conference you also spoke about the problem of ‘‘statistical compassion.’’ ES: Let’s call that the third reason why the population is asleep. American indifference to our own genocidal nuclear architecture comes from the **constraints on compassion** when **large numbers** of people [become] ~~stand~~ to be injured. Public health physicians distinguish between narrative compassion (where one or two or three people are at risk) and **statistical compassion** (where thousands or millions are at risk).2 We’re fairly good at the first, and have many occasions to strengthen our capacity through daily acts of friendship and from reading literature. We’re terrible at the second, and have almost no training in strengthening our feeble abilities in this region. The nuclear peril of course entails the second: recent work on nuclear winter by Alan Robock and his colleagues shows that if even a small fraction of the current world arsenal is fired (one one-hundredth of one percent of the total available blast power), forty-four million people will be casualties on the first afternoon and one billion in the weeks following. The small shrug people make when the subject of nuclear weapons comes up—the little lift and fall of the shoulders—means they have just run a quick check on their interior brain-and-soul equipment and can report: nope, **nothing in there in the way of statistical compassion**. RA: Narrative compassion and statistical compassion seem to take place in widely separate spheres. How then do you see them coming into conflict with each other? ES: For me, a frightening example occurred in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, the wholly admirable body that sets the Doomsday Clock (now at two minutes to midnight) and that works round the clock to educate the people of the United States and the world about the hazards of nuclear weapons. Yet in commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Nagasaki bombing in August of 2015, they published a historically factual narrative about the pilots of the plane delivering the atom bomb to Nagasaki, how many things went wrong and had to be repaired midflight. The lead-in read, ‘‘A typhoon was coming, the fuel pump failed, they had to switch planes, things were wired incorrectly, they missed their rendezvous, they couldn’t see the primary target, they ran out of gas on the way home, and they had to crash-land.’’ But the worst part was when ‘‘the Fat Man atomic bomb started to arm itself, mid-flight.’’3 The story, narrated in edge-ofyour-seat suspense, is an example of narrative compassion utterly preempting the possibility of statistical compassion: the crew might die, but if they had in fact died over the Pacific, tens of thousands of persons would not have been burned into nonexistence that day. RA: Your emphasis at the conference was on the nature of physical pain itself. ES: Yes, that was my central subject. In terms of our conversation now, we can say that a fourth and fifth reason for indifference arise from the difficulty of **comprehending pain**, whether it takes place in one person’s body or in the bodies of millions, and whether it occurs in the past, present, or future. (But if I were listing the reasons in the order of importance, these two would be near the top.) Once we exhaust a small handful of adjectives for physical pain, two (and almost only two) metaphors arise: the metaphor of the weapon (one may say it feels as though a knife is sticking in my shoulder blade even if it isn’t); and that of body damage (one may say it feels as though my elbow has snapped in two, even if it hasn’t). The Body in Pain concentrates on problems arising from the first; a later essay (‘‘Among Schoolchildren’’) concentrates on the second.4 Both metaphors, if carefully controlled, can help us understand the felt experience of another person’s pain; but both are highly volatile and can lead us far away from understanding. An example of the benign or genuinely expressive potential is provided by findings in neuroscience that we have mirror neurons that help us recognize another person’s physical pain. When you look at the actual experiments that were done, however, you see that the test subject is asked not to listen to a sufferer’s report of pain but to observe, for example, a pin being stuck into someone’s hand or the administration of a small electric shock. The experiments show not our comprehension of another person’s pain but our recognition of the aversivenes of being subjected to a weapon—often closely related to but by no means identical with physical pain. The very fact that a weapon can be separated from the site of the injury means that the attributes of pain can be lifted away from the sufferer and conferred on the agents inflicting the harm, so now it is not the pain that is world destroying but the inflictor of the pain. There are many examples of this in the case of nuclear weapons. For example, the mushroom cloud is often regarded as ‘‘awesome,’’ some even say ‘‘sublime.’’ But the hibakasha, the survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, say, ‘‘We saw no mushroom cloud.’’ A mushroom cloud is what you see if you’re an observer far away, seated high in the sky in the airplane that dropped the weapon, or standing on the ground scores of miles beyond the radius of the harm. Like any sensible mortal, I admire J. Robert Oppenheimer, but his endlessly quoted statement following the Trinity test, ‘‘I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture ...I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds,’’ allows the scale of the injury to be transferred across the weapon and conferred on the agents, who now perceive themselves as magnificent, thrilling, almighty in their power. Oppenheimer even prefaces the quotation by saying that Vishnu here takes on a multi-armed form ‘‘to impress’’ the prince. The name he chose for the test, ‘‘Trinity,’’ shows this same fabrication of godlikeness. What if instead Oppenheimer had said, ‘‘I remembered the goddess Guanyin whose name means ‘The one who perceives the sounds of the world’ and the sounds I heard were excruciating cries, unbearable shrieks of tens of thousands scalded together in an instant of molten flesh.’’ The first statement is a fiction: Oppenheimer is neither a multi-armed god nor a three-personed god; the second statement (could we hear Guanyin) is accurate; if we could internalize and practice the second statement, we would disarm immediately. The image of the nuclear weapon, which might help make visible the pain and suffering it will bring about, instead captures the gigantic scale of the suffering, only to lift that ‘‘giganticism’’ away from the site of suffering altogether and confer it on the human agents—ordinary men, small in stature and in number, but who now appear gigantic. Insofar as any shred of ‘‘suffering’’ still remains visible, we believe it is the suffering of the nowgigantic human agent who is in mighty peril. Thus the nation spends billions of dollars on a presidential fallout shelter while convincing the public that fallout shelters for the population are ridiculous. In Thinking in an Emergency, and again in Thermonuclear Monarchy, I contrast the Swiss shelter system—Swiss law requires that every house have a fallout shelter;5 the law was reaffirmed in a 2003 referendum that had an 80 percent turnout at the polls—with the staggering constructions that have been made in the United States for... the people? no—for the president and those close to him, a shelter inside a mountain, with buildings and a lake that is, according to observers, large enough for waterskiing. One country, Switzerland, believes in what the Swiss call ‘‘equality of survival’’; the other country, the **U**nited **S**tates, **believes that only the agents of nuclear [disaster]** ~~holocaust~~ **deserve the chance for survival**. Much more detail on the multiple presidential fallout shelters is described by Garrett M. Graff in a recent book, Raven Rock: The Story of the U.S. Government’s Secret Plan to Save Itself—While the Rest of Us Die. The nuclear architecture requires that either the weapon be invisible (buried in a submarine or buried in a cornfield, like the 450 ICBMs) or, when it is visible, it must become the path across which the magnificent prowess of the human agent is seen—he’s so thrilling, so important, so vulnerable; here, please, take my tax money, use all of it to protect the man who will launch our nuclear missiles. What should bring us to our knees in sorrow and shame instead brings about a dutiful salute to the thermonuclear monarch. If one thinks fallout shelters for the population are ridiculous (ignoring the fact that the medically sophisticated Swiss have data showing otherwise), then it is informative to contrast the money lavished on our nuclear architecture with ordinary forms of safety structures for the population like bridges, dams, roads, levees. The American Society of Civil Engineers, in their 2017 report on infrastructure, gave our bridges a ‘‘Cþ’’ (56,000 are ‘‘structurally deficient’’), our dams a ‘‘D’’ (2000 have a ‘‘high-hazard potential’’), our levees a ‘‘D’’ ($80 billion is needed for structural repair), and our roads a ‘‘D’’ (one out of every five miles of highway pavement is ‘‘in poor condition’’).6 Might Americans be given a choice on whether they want their taxes spent on infrastructure or—as is currently the case—on nuclear weapons and presidential fallout shelters? Or has ‘‘no taxation without representation’’ disappeared along with all our other basic democratic principles?(112-118) RA: That all follows from the instability of the weapon; what about the second field of representation, body damage? ES: The phenomenon of body damage is like the image of the weapon but works in a much different way—almost the opposite. Whereas the problem of the weapon is its very separability from the body (and the way to make it benign is to retether it to its referent in the body), the problem of body damage is that it overlaps, overrides, and eclipses the personhood of the one underneath the damage. Either one looks away, or, if one looks, one recoils. Visual artists and writers—from Peter Paul Rubens and Andrea Mantegna in the Renaissance to fin de sie`cle artists Ka¨the Kollwitz, Aubrey Beardsley, Edvard Munch, Joris-Karl Huysmans, to twentieth-century Guatemalan writer Miguel Asturias—all solve this problem by finding a way to double the location, so that personhood remains intact in our perceptual field even if the human body is at that moment being obscenely shredded. 118 Representations If you visit the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, you will probably find yourself, as I did, surrounded by young schoolchildren, who look with courage on the visages of those who were incompletely incinerated in the bombing of that city (see figs. 2, 3, and 4). In the United States, few adults face up to the faces of those harmed there. In February of 2016, the Central Square Library in Cambridge agreed to let me—and Joseph Gerson, an American Friends Service colleague—do a monthlong program on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with weekly lectures and an exhibit of books, drawings, and photographs. The morning after we put up the exhibit, we found all the photographs of injuries had been removed. The effort to put on an exhibit about Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the Smithsonian Institution in 1994 led to such controversy that it had to be canceled—with one exception: the Enola Gay (the plane that delivered the bomb) was put on display. Here we circle back to the phenomenon of the weapon being perceptually severed from the site of the pain. It’s in part because of museums like those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki that so many people in the Japanese population are passionately in support of nuclear disarmament. In preparation for a disarmament demonstration in New York, Cambridge and Boston activists (I include myself) worked for months to bring supporters to the march: after endless work, approximately one hundred did so. But one thousand Japanese men and women arrived that morning in New York; they carried a petition signed by six million of their countrymen, who collectively paid for the travel costs of the thousand who came. RA: Can you provide any examples of authors who ‘‘double the location,’’ as you have just described, ‘‘so that personhood remains intact’’ while the ‘‘human body is being ...shredded’’? ES: Miguel A´ngel Asturias’s Men of Maize begins with a heroic Indian in Guatemala, who ordinarily protects his people no matter what; he is able to do so, in part, because he has a level of sensory acuity that approaches genius. He knows the scent of every flower; he can discern the whole recipe of scents present in the forest in any given moment. The European colonizers can commit a slaughter of his people only if they can divert this heroic leader; and the only way to divert him is to subject him to horrible, scalding, obscene pain. Asturias must convey to us the felt experience of pain, the turning of the body inside out, and he chooses to do this through the associated phenomenon of body damage; but in order to do so without eclipsing the personhood of Gaspar Il´om, he decouples the body damage from the hero. The book opens with a dog, which the invaders have used as a test case for their pain-inducing poison laced with glass. The dog, in excruciating pain, zooms hysterically through the village square, covered with open sores, his penis erect, howling in a way that is aversive to everyone who hears and sees. This horrible scene conveys the obscenity of pain, the obscenity of bodily damage. By obscenity, I mean interior substances in the body which come before us without our consent, come before us before we are mentally prepared to comprehend what we are seeing. But the story separates this bodily desecration from the person, for now, having seen the dog, we need only be told that Gaspar Il´om has drunk this glass-laced poison to understand why he abandons his post, submerges himself in the lake, drinks all its waters, and eventually comes out. He has survived. But during the moments when he disappeared below the surface of the water, his people have been slain. RA: I wonder how you think about the role of the visual in that context. Do you think of the visual as akin to a language? ES: In visual art one can see the same phenomenon taking place, as when Ka¨the Kollwitz refuses to let an injured victim be portrayed as what Shelley called ‘‘a monstrous lump of ruin.’’ In her 1900 etching and aquatint The Downtrodden, she pushes the wounds on the body just beyond the body’s edge onto a linen sheet on which the person is lying. These mouthlike, liplike structures of open wounds are there but are not permitted to compromise figure 4. Photographs of survivors of the atomic bomb in the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. An Interview with Elaine Scarry 121 our recognition of the sufferer’s personhood. Even somebody like Aubrey Beardsley, in one of his posters, puts the wound in a tree rather than on the body of the woman. And yet the woman has attributes that make the viewer see the analogy, just like Marty South and the trees in your account of Hardy’s The Woodlanders [Scarry is referring to Rachel Ablow’s account in Victorian Pain]. Her posture, for example, is exaggeratedly erect and treelike. She wears a high-waisted skirt that is made to be a visual analogy with the tree. But our perception of her personhood remains uninterrupted. RA: One issue you have raised recently is the particular difficulty of thinking about the specific kinds of injuries caused by nuclear war, namely burns. There was a striking moment in your talk when you discussed the protocols used in burn units to help doctors and nurses in looking at burn victims. It seems so intuitively right that caretakers would have difficulty looking at these patients. It seems to suggest something about the limits on the imagination in terms of suffering. I’m wondering what it is about burns that makes it so hard to imagine the suffering they entail. Is it about the skin as the site of humanity? Is it about the face? ES: It is the visage. Without preparation and help, when we see the complete mutilation of the body, especially the face, we mistakenly feel we are seeing the mutilation of personhood. The ‘‘rule of nines’’ is devised to enable rescue workers to look at a gravely burned person and (instead of having their own minds shut down in sorrow and confusion and revulsion) to assess instantly the gravity of the injury, start appropriate treatment, and report the scale of the injury to the hospital awaiting the person’s arrival. Each part of the body is assigned an easy-to-remember number that is a multiple of nine (see fig. 5). Counting forms a key part in many forms of emergency rescue, and this is one instance. The numbers, once totaled, tell the rescuer the next step, such as whether to insert an IV for fluid resuscitation. The need to train the perceptions of those who hope to help those who are burned is also illustrated by a procedure called ‘‘staying.’’ During the years when I was part of a research group on suffering at the Hastings Center for Ethics, I heard a lecture by a physician-nurse who worked in a burn unit. She mentioned that because of the difficulty oflooking at a severely burned person, nurses assigned to burn units may begin to avert their eyes when speaking with a patient, decline to touch the patient, or stand at a greater distance each day, or request a transfer after a few days. To counteract these problems, caretakers can participate in a class on ‘‘staying’’ where they recognize the temptation to withdraw from the patient and practice trying to overcome that withdrawal. While the ‘‘rule of nines’’ and ‘‘staying’’ are brilliant inventions, we should recognize that in nuclear war there will be few rescue workers and nurses. A study in the Netherlands of what would happen if a terrorist brought into Rotterdam a very small 12 kg weapon (the size used in World War II) found that of those who had not immediately evaporated, four thousand persons would require burn beds.7 They noted that in all of the Netherlands there are only a hundred burn beds. A leading hospital in Boston, Mass General, has seven burn beds. The burn beds themselves—what few there are—will disappear in a nuclear strike. On the floor of the UK Parliament, the possession of four Trident submarines has repeatedly been justified by the potential need to bomb Moscow. In response, a Scottish study by John Ainslie looked at the scale of damage that would actually take place if a nuclear missile were launched against the Ministry of Defense building in Moscow: along with the Ministry of Defense, four major hospitals would be destroyed and four others subjected to fire and radiation that would make them inoperable. Thirty-one schools would also be destroyed with at least 700,000 children slain.8 If the missile is larger, so, too, will the disappearance of hospitals be larger. An article by Steven Starr, Lynn Eden, and Theodore A. Postol in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists shows that if an 800-kiloton weapon were detonated above Manhattan, the center of the blast would be four times the temperature of the sun, and, within ‘‘tens of minutes,’’ a firestorm will cover 90 to 150 square miles. figure 5. Pocket card showing ‘‘Rule of Nines for Adult and Child,’’ Northwest Healthcare Response Network, https:// nwhrn.org/wp-content/ uploads/2018/08/BurnPocket-Card.pdf. An Interview with Elaine Scarry 123 RA: Was the artistic strategy that you just described of doubling the location so as to protect personhood apparent in the real-world examples you were citing, the Nagasaki children, the ‘‘rule of nines,’’ ‘‘staying’’? ES: I think so. It is not accidental that the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum is itself physically beautiful in its architecture, or that as you enter you pass lavish cascades of paper cranes, inspired by the child Sadako Sasaki, like cherry blossoms in spring, or that you see an inscription about Nagasaki’s exceptional generosity to outsiders—its many centuries of open trade with foreign companies, a level of cosmopolitan hospitality not at that time found to the same degree in other regions of Japan; you see engraved inscriptions from Dwight D. Eisenhower and from the ‘‘United States Strategic Bombing Survey, Summary Report (Pacific War), July 1946’’ saying unequivocally that the atom bomb was not needed to end the war. All these elements, and many others, keep the personhood of the city’s inhabitants in view, side-by-side with the excruciating vision of burnt faces. The ‘‘rule of nines’’ lets one reconstruct the body out of a beneficent invention, toylike in its simplicity. In ‘‘staying,’’ the very name of the procedure holds the injury within the frame of sympathetic personhood. RA: Let’s return to Ghandi’s forking path. You’ve sketched the reasons why the US population is innocently sleeping. But what if they’re feigning sleep? ES: I am sometimes floored by the discrepancy between the attention we give to injuries that have happened **when we can’t do anything** to change them and the attention we give to injuries that haven’t yet happened when by intervention we **absolutely can prevent them**. I don’t know how to explain this. I have always assumed that those acts of trying to talk about the pain of torture victims in the 1970s in my case, or the pain of people in World War II, the Holocaust, that those acts are meant to act as a warning to the future. What is our motive for thinking about the **unchangeable injuries** of the past if not to increase our ability to prevent such injuries in the future? Yet almost incomprehensible is the distance between the willingness to think about events from the past we can’t possibly change and the complete comfort with **feeling that future massacres need not concern us**. Or worse, that one is slightly superior to protesting a wrong: intellectually superior because the moral wrong is an obvious moral wrong, and we only like to address sophisticated, hard to discern moral wrongs. It might be embarrassing to have to stand on a street corner with a sign or attend a public meeting. Imagine, though, if we forgave the complicity with past acts of enslavement or genocide by saying, ‘‘People saw that it was wrong, but they considered it too intellectually obvious, too compromising of their dignity, to have to stand up and protest.’’ Or take the argument that the aspiration to dismantle nuclear weapons is now many decades old, and we must turn to fresh undertakings: imagine that someone tried to defend those who tolerated slavery in 1860 because they had been hearing antislavery sentiment since 1820 and now considered such sentiments ‘‘stale.’’ We would never give a ‘‘pass’’ to anyone in the past who **excused their inattention to slavery** or the ~~transfer of people to concentration camps~~ on either of those two grounds; yet we believe such **arguments release us from addressing weapons whose outcome is instant genocide**. There are historical periods in which people were dissuaded from protesting because dissidents were beaten (Charles Sumner on the floor of the Senate) or killed (Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Germany). No such beatings or death threats excuse our own silence today. RA: Staying with this point about the relative ease of imagining pain past as opposed to pain in the future, do you attribute that to sentimentality? It sounds so reprehensible put in those terms. I wonder how you account for it. ES: I think you are right to worry that **our attention to the past begins to look like sentimentality**. The argument is sometimes made by academics that sympathy is less about compassion or the desire to ameliorate pain than it is a kind of **cultural signaling** of our moral goodness. To me that thesis seems horrifying: it lets the many who ignore past pain excuse their own inattention on the grounds that the few who do attend to pain are only doing so to announce their own goodness. So I feel a strong aversion to that argument; it works to reduce still further the number of those who show any wish to help. However, if **it turns out that we only speak about irremediable injuries from the past while a huge architecture of massacre [is]** ~~stands~~ **waiting to be used**, then one has to ask oneself: why were we looking at injuries in the distant past? Is it just sentimentality? Is it just cultural signaling?9(124-5)

**! — Cap Good**

**Capitalism is good — any alternatives fail.**

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One reason to **trust markets** is that they are better at setting prices than people. If you set prices too high, many a socialist government has found, citizens will be **needlessly deprived** of goods. Set them too low, and there will be excessive demand and **ensuing shortages**. This is true for all goods, including health care and labor. And there is **little reason** to believe that the next batch of socialists in Washington or London would be **any better** at setting prices than their **predecessors**. In fact, government-run health care systems in Canada and European countries are plagued by long wait times. A 2018 Fraser Institute study cites a median wait time of 19.8 weeks to see a specialist physician in Canada. Socialists may argue that is a small price to pay for universal access, but a market-based approach can deliver both **coverage** and **responsive** service. A full government takeover isn’t the only option, nor is it the best one.

Beyond that, markets are also good at rationing risk. Fundamentally, socialists would like to reduce risk — protect workers from any personal or economywide shock. That is a noble goal, and some reduction through better functioning safety nets is desirable. But getting rid of all uncertainty — as state ownership of most industries would imply — is a bad idea. Risk is what fuels growth. People who take more chances tend to reap bigger rewards; that’s why the top nine names on the Forbes 400 list of the richest Americans are not heirs to family dynasties but are self-made entrepreneurs who took a leap to build new products and created many jobs in the process.

Some leftist economists like Mariana Mazzucato argue that governments might be able to step in and become **laboratories for innovation**. But that would be a **historical anomaly**; socialist-leaning governments have typically been less innovative than others. After all, bureaucrats and worker-corporate boards have **little incentive** to upset the status quo or compete to build a better widget. And even when government programs have spurred innovation — as in the case of the internet — it took the **private sector** to recognize the value and create a market.

And that brings us to a third reason to believe in markets: productivity. Some economists, such as Robert Gordon, have looked to today’s economic problems and suggested that productivity growth — the engine that fueled so much of the progress of the last several decades — is over. In this telling, the resources, products, and systems that underpin the world’s economy are all optimized, and little further progress is possible.

But that is hard to square with **reality**. Innovation helps economies do more with fewer resources — **increasingly critical** to addressing climate change, for example — which is a form of productivity growth. And likewise, many of the products and technologies people **rely on every day** did not exist a few years ago. These goods make inaccessible services more available and are changing the nature of work, often for the better. Such gains are made possible by **capitalist systems** that encourage invention and growing the pie, not by socialist systems that are more concerned with how the **existing pie is cut**. It is far too soon, in other words, to write off productivity.

**! — Cap Good — Regulated**

**Regulated capitalism solves war, environment, and quality of life---alternatives increase degradation and poverty. Prefer empirical and measurable indicators.**

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Discourse on food ethics often advocates the **anti-capitalist idea** that we need **less capitalism, less growth, and less globalization** if we want to make the world a better and more equitable place, with arguments focused on applications to food, globalization, and a just society. For example, arguments for this anti-capitalist view are at the core of some chapters in nearly every handbook and edited volume in the rapidly expanding subdiscipline of food ethics. None of these volumes (or any article published in this subdiscipline broadly construed) focuses on a defense of globalized capitalism.1

More generally, discourse on global ethics, environment, and political theory in much of academia—and in society—increasingly features this anti-capitalist idea as well.2 The idea is especially prominent in discourse surrounding the environment, climate, and global poverty, where we face a nexus of problems of which capitalism is a key driver, including climate change, air and water pollution, the challenge of feeding the world, ensuring sustainable development for the world's poorest, and other interrelated challenges.

It is therefore important to ask whether this anti-capitalist idea is justified by **reason and evidence** that is as strong as the degree of confidence placed in it by activists and many commentators on food ethics, global ethics, and political theory, more generally.

In fact, many **experts** argue that this anti-capitalist idea is **not supported by reason and argument and is actually wrong**. The main contribution of this essay is to explain the structure of the leading arguments against the anti-capitalist idea, and in favor of the opposite conclusion. I begin by focusing on the general argument in favor of **well-regulated globalized capitalism** as the key to a **just, flourishing, and environmentally healthy world**. This is the most important of all of the arguments in terms of its consequences for health, wellbeing, and justice, and it is endorsed by experts in the **empirically minded disciplines** best placed to analyze the issue, including experts in long-run global development, human health, wellbeing, economics, law, public policy, and other related disciplines. On the basis of the arguments outlined below, well-regulated capitalism has been endorsed by recent Democratic presidents of the United States such as Barack Obama, and by progressive Nobel laureates who have devoted their lives to human development and more equitable societies, as well as by a wide range of experts in government and leading **n**on**g**overnmental **o**rganization**s**.

The goal of this essay is to make the structure and importance of these arguments clear, and thereby highlight that discourse on global ethics and political theory should engage carefully with them. The goal is not to endorse them as necessarily sound and correct. The essay will begin by examining general arguments for and against capitalism, and then turn to implications for food, the environment, climate change, and beyond.

Arguments for and against Forms of Capitalism

The Argument against Capitalism

Capitalism is often argued to be a key driver of many of society's ills: inequalities, pollution, land use changes, and incentives that cause people to live differently than in their ideal dreams. Capitalism can sometimes deepen injustices. These negative consequences are easy to see—resting, as they do, at the center of many of society's greatest challenges.3

And at the same time, it is often difficult to see the positive consequences of capitalism.4 What are the positive consequences of allowing private interests to clear-cut forests and plant crops, especially if those private interests are rich multinational corporations and the forests are in poor, developing countries whose citizens do not receive the profits from deforestation? Why give private companies the right to exploit resources at all, since exploitation almost always has some negative consequences such as those listed above? These are the right questions to ask, and they highlight genuine challenges to capitalism. And in light of these challenges, it is reasonable to consider the possibility that perhaps a different economic system altogether would be more equitable and beneficial to the global population.

The Argument for Well-Regulated Capitalism

However, **things are more complicated than the arguments above would suggest**, and the benefits of capitalism, especially for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, are in fact myriad and **significant**. In addition, as we will see in this section, many experts argue that **capitalism is not the fundamental cause of the** previously described **problems** but rather an essential component of the **best solutions** to them and of the best methods for promoting our goals of health, well-being, and justice.

To see where the defenders of capitalism are coming from, consider an analogy involving a response to a pandemic: if a country administered a rushed and untested vaccine to its population that ended up killing people, we would not say that vaccines were the problem. Instead, the problem would be the flawed and sloppy policies of vaccine implementation. Vaccines might easily **remain** absolutely **essential** to the correct response to such a pandemic and could also be essential to promoting health and flourishing, more generally.

The argument is similar with capitalism according to the leading mainstream arguments in favor of it: Capitalism is an essential part of the best society we could have, just like vaccines are an essential part of the best response to a pandemic such as COVID-19. But of course both capitalism and vaccines can be implemented poorly, and can even do harm, especially when combined with other incorrect policy decisions. But **that does not mean that we should turn against them**—quite the opposite. Instead, we should **embrace them as essential** to the best and most just outcomes for society, and educate ourselves and others on their importance and on how they must be **properly designed and implemented** with other policies in order to best help us all. In fact, the argument in favor of capitalism is even more dramatic because it claims that much more is at stake than even what is at stake in response to a global pandemic—what is at stake with capitalism is nothing less than **whether the world's poorest and most vulnerable billion people will remain in conditions of poverty and oppression**, or if they will instead finally gain access to what is minimally necessary for basic health and wellbeing and become increasingly affluent and empowered. The argument in favor of capitalism proceeds as follows:

Premise 1. Development and the past. Over the course of recorded human history, the majority of historical increases in health, wellbeing, and justice have occurred in the last two centuries, largely as a result of societies adopting or moving toward **capitalism**. Capitalism is a relevant cause of these improvements, in the sense that they could not have happened to such a degree if it were not for capitalism and would **not have happened to the same degree under any alternative** noncapitalist approach to structuring society. The argument in support of this premise relies on observed relationships across societies and centuries between indicators of degree of capitalism, wealth, investments in public goods, and outcomes for health, wellbeing, and justice, together with econometric analysis in support of the conclusion that the best explanation of these correlations and the underlying mechanism is that large increases in health, wellbeing, and justice are largely driven by increasing investments in public goods. The scale of increased wealth necessary to maximize these investments requires **capitalism**. Thus, as capitalist societies have become dramatically wealthier over the past hundred years (and wealthier than societies with alternative systems), this has allowed **larger investments in public goods**, which simply has not been possible in a sustained way in societies without the greater wealth that capitalism makes possible. Important investments in public goods include investments in basic **medical knowledge**, in health and nutrition programs, and in the institutional capacity and know-how to **regulate** society and **capitalism** itself. As a result, capitalism is a **primary driver** of positive outcomes in **health and wellbeing** (such as increased **life expectancy**, **lowered child and maternal mortality**, adequate calories per day, **minimized infectious disease rates**, a lower percentage and number of people in **poverty**, and more reported **happiness**);5 and in **justice** (such as reduced deaths from **war** and homicide; higher rankings in **human rights** indices; the reduced prevalence of **racist, sexist, homophobic opinions** in surveys; and higher literacy rates).6 These **quantifiable positive consequences of global capitalism** dramatically **outweigh** the negative consequences (such as deaths from pollution in the course of development), with the result that the net benefits from capitalism in terms of health, wellbeing, and justice have been greater than they would have been under any known noncapitalist approach to structuring society.7

Premise 2. Economics, ethics, and policy. Although capitalism has often been ill-regulated and therefore failed to maximize net benefits for health, wellbeing, and justice, **it can become well-regulated** so that it maximizes these societal goals, by including mechanisms identified by economists and other policy experts that do the following:

* optimally8 **regulate negative effects** such as pollution and monopoly power, and invest in public goods such as education, basic healthcare, and fundamental research including biomedical knowledge (more generally, policies that correct the failures of free markets that economists have long recognized will arise from “externalities” in the absence of regulation);9
* ensure equity and distributive justice (for example, via wealth redistribution);10
* ensure basic rights, justice, and the rule of law independent of the market (for example, by an independent judiciary, bill of rights, property rights, and redistribution and other legislation to correct historical injustices due to colonialism, racism, and correct current and historical distortions that have prevented markets from being fair);11 and
* ensure that there is no alternative way of structuring society that is more efficient or better promotes the equity, justice, and fairness goals outlined above (by allowing free exchange given the regulations mentioned).12

To summarize the implication of the first two premises, **well-regulated capitalism** is **essential** to best achieving our ethical goals—which is true even though capitalism has certainly not always been well regulated historically. Society can still do much better and **remove the large deficits** in terms of health, wellbeing, and justice **that exist under** the current inferior and **imperfect** versions of **capitalism**.

Premise 3. Development and the future. If the global spread of capitalism is allowed to continue, desperate **poverty can be** essentially **eliminated** in our lifetimes. Furthermore, this can be accomplished **faster** and in a more just way via **well-regulated** global **capitalism** than by **any alternatives**. If we instead opt for **less capitalism**, less growth, and less globalization, then desperate **poverty will continue** to exist for a significant portion of the world's population into the further future, and the world will be a **worse and less equitable** place than it would have been with more capitalism. For example, in a world with less capitalism, there would be more **overpopulation, food insecurity**, air **pollution**, ill health, injustice, and other problems. In part, this is because of the factors identified by premise 1, which connect a turn away from capitalism with a turn away from continuing improvements in health, wellbeing, and justice, especially for the developing world. In addition, fertility declines are also a consequence of increased wealth, and the size of the population is a primary determinant of **food demand and other environmental stressors**.13 Finally, as discussed at length in the next section of the essay, capitalism can be naturally combined with optimal **environmental regulations**.14 Even bracketing anything like optimal regulation, it remains true that sufficiently **wealthy nations reduce environmental degradation** as they become wealthier, whereas developing nations that are nearing peak degradation will remain **stuck at the worst levels of degradation if we stall growth**, rather than allowing them to transition to less and less degradation in the future via capitalism and economic growth.15 In contrast, well-regulated capitalism is a key part of the best way of coping with these problems, as well as a key part of **dealing with climate change**, global **food production**, and other specific challenges, as argued at length in the next section. Here it is important to stress that we should favor well-regulated capitalism that includes correct investments in public goods over other capitalist systems such as the neoliberalism of the recent past that promoted inadequately regulated capitalism with inadequate concern for externalities, equity, and background distortions and injustices.16

Conclusion. Therefore, we should be in favor of capitalism over noncapitalism, and we should especially favor well-regulated capitalism, which is the ethically optimal economic system and is essential to any just basic structure for society.

This argument is impressive because, as stated earlier in the essay, it is based on **evidence** that is so striking that it leads a bipartisan range of open-minded thinkers and activists to endorse well-regulated capitalism, including many of those who were not initially attracted to the view because of a reasonable concern for the societal ills with which we began. To better understand why such a range of thinkers could agree that well-regulated capitalism is best, it may help to clarify some things that are not assumed or implied by the argument for it, which could be invoked by other bad arguments for capitalism.

One thing the argument above does not assume is that health, wellbeing, or justice are the same thing as wealth, because, in fact, they are not. Instead, the argument above relies on well-accepted, **measurable indicators** of health and wellbeing, such as increased lifespan; decreased early childhood mortality; adequate nutrition; and other empirically measurable leading indicators of health, wellbeing, and justice.17 Similarly, the argument that capitalism promotes justice, **peace**, freedom, human rights, and tolerance relies on empirical metrics for each of these.18

Furthermore, the argument does not assume that because these indicators of health, wellbeing, and justice are highly correlated with high degrees of capitalism, that therefore capitalism is the direct cause of these good outcomes. Rather, the analyses suggest instead that something other than capitalism is the direct cause of societal improvements (such as improvements in knowledge and technology, public infrastructure, and good governance), and that capitalism is simply a **necessary condition** for these improvements to happen.19 In other words, the richer a society is, the more it is able to invest in all of these and other things that are the direct causes of health, wellbeing, and justice. But, to maximize investment in these things societies need well-regulated capitalism.

As part of these analyses, it is often stressed that current forms of capitalism around the world are highly defective and must be reformed in the direction of well-regulated capitalism because they lack investments in public goods, such as basic knowledge, healthcare, nutrition, other safety nets, and good governance.20 In this way, an argument for a particular kind of **progressive reformism** is an essential part of the analyses that lead many to endorse the more general argument for well-regulated capitalism.

Although these analyses are nuanced, and appropriately so, it remains the case that the things that directly lead to health, wellbeing, and justice require resources, and the best path toward generating those resources is well-regulated capitalism. And on the flip side, according to the analyses behind premise 1 described above, an anti-capitalist system would not produce the resources that are needed, and would thus be a **disaster**, especially for the **poorest billion** people who are most desperately in need of the resources that capitalism can create and direct, to escape from extreme poverty.21

**! — Cap Good — Space**

**Commercial space solves extinction**

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We find ourselves **still at the dawn** of a **new space** century, **mindful of the** victories and **setbacks** of our past, eager to pass the torch to the next generation of space visionaries, scientists, engineers, and enthusiasts. We look to the future not just to see how much bigger, faster, or higher we can reach, but also how the **United States**, and specifically the U.S. space community, can again **inspire the nations of the world to align with us**, as it **did in the 20th century**.

The SmallSat Alliance is an alliance of companies developing, producing, and operating in **all segments** of the ‘next generation’ space economy; championing **renewed U.S. leadership** in the **burgeoning commercial space economy**, and advocating for the transformation of government-led space capabilities. We are experienced space professionals who have chosen to join with others leveraging our decades of hard-won experience, to develop smarter ways to explore space in the 21st century.

A wonderful outgrowth of the legacy space program is the commercial, **entrepreneurial**, and job-creating commercial space business that it bequeathed. These **next-generation enterprises** range from multi-million-dollar startups providing rideshare opportunities or components for small satellites to multi-billion-dollar **space data-analytic platforms** **reinventing urban car service** and **agricultural production**. The early returns of this economic revolution are already on our doorstep: space data capabilities are **exponential**ly growing elements of the **21st century world economy**.

Beginning with the dreams and funding by successful tech entrepreneurs, enormous venture investments are already delivering wondrous benefits to the world.

Commercial Space – Profit and Non-Profit

There are really two major categories in the commercial sector, the profit driven and the non-profit. The classic for-profit companies include not only those designing, building, launching, and operating satellites but also the tech sector that is **turning** that **raw space data into gold** through machine-learning analytics. Since for-profit companies are no longer dependent upon the revenues generated by the Cold War space race culture of a bygone era, this new generation of space companies is able to more efficiently capitalize on Moore’s Law, the nonstop exponential growth in chip density, and the associated networking technology co-evolving with it. This new generation is building profitable businesses helping to **clean up our oceans of garbage** and debris with satellite surveillance, reconnoitering to assist in **enforc**ing **laws that protect our oceans from illegal**, unregulated, unlicensed **fishing**, something that is **rapidly depleting** the **world’s most valuable and essential lifeforms**. It’s leading in the innovative use of low-cost satellite constellations to produce **ubiquitous remote-sensing data**, enabling **small business** owners to be more **profitable** and less wasteful. For example, precise timing signals from space are already optimizing transportation of people, goods, and services, with even further gains anticipated with the introduction of artificial intelligence to assist drivers, perhaps even someday replacing them entirely.

The non-profit sector is the other side of commercial space, concerned more for the general welfare of society, but every bit as integral to this new space enterprise. Much **like every century** before it in human history, ours is not without its **unique challenges**, some of which have been a consequence of the last, and **all of which the space data domain can be leveraged to** help **solve**. Examples are **endless**, but one challenge that this new space community is uniquely well-adapted for is to further inform **worldwide resource allocation** for the **21st century and beyond**. These two primary resources are **sustainable water** and the materials needed for **adequate housing** for an **ever-increasing human population**. As cities and urbanization continue to expand, **governmental planning** challenges such as transportation design optimization for goods and services are **only** the **beginning**. Additionally, through using inexpensive remote sensing technologies, some members are designing space data analytics to **mitigate** human suffering from **plagues**, **contain outbreaks**, and combating **illegal poaching**. Some are connecting with other non-profits to curtail **human trafficking** for the sex trade or forced labor for migrant debt repayment. Still others are helping non-governmental organizations in their work to expose the use of **child**ren as **soldiers**. Addressing these challenges has little to do with resuscitating dreams conceived by long deceased science-fiction writers and much more to do with **turning “swords back into plowshares**” to **solve real threats to humanity**.

Other non-profit initiatives include pursuing an even more foundational understanding of who we are and how to be the best custodians of our environment. Much as exploring and monitoring the world’s oceans has advanced civilization through a better understanding of human life and the planet, so too does exploring and monitoring from space. Low Earth orbit (LEO) provides a unique vantage point to look back on the planet and understand what is happening, anticipate what might happen and prepare for the future. In addition to better understanding Earth, responsible and rapid exploitation of the low Earth orbit domain will enhance the understanding of the solar system and the rest of the universe. Small satellites already offer low-cost platforms to study and explore what lies beyond the Earth. Other members are pioneering the use of zero-carbon, hydrogen-based reusable propulsion systems to ensure we don’t worsen our atmosphere using kerosene-fueled rockets for the coming tsunami of satellite launches. Finally, a mission **ensuring** the general welfare and **planet survival** for the **next thousand years** is **finally confronting** the **existential threat** that **asteroids and comets pose** to humanity. These extra-terrestrial, deep-space threats **are passing dangerously close** to our planet, and **today we have no solar map of them** and **no defense**.

**Space resource extraction solves sustainability.**

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The Biden approach to NASA seemed to be expressed best by Lori Garver, who served as NASA’s deputy administrator during the Obama administration. According to the Space Review, she said, “If we don’t put some really significant resources into allowing humanity to be sustained on this planet, we’re not going to have the time to leave it. You can’t really do one without the other.”

That last sentence is truer than, perhaps, Garver realizes. An article in Astronomy Magazine suggests that the ultimate solution to climate change will be to move **resource extraction** and **heavy industry off the planet**. The notion seems like science fiction, but some very serious people are looking at the idea of **a space-based industrial revolution**. Jeff Bezos, who made his billions from Amazon.com and now runs a space launch company called Blue Origin, suggests “zoning” Earth for residential areas and “light industries.” Mining and manufacturing, two of the **biggest sources** of environmental pollution, **would move** **off** the **planet**.

The moon and asteroids are the sources of untold mineral wealth. A single asteroid, 16 Psyche, is said to contain 10,000 quadrillion dollars’ worth of metals. The quoted figure is somewhat misleading. If one were to bring all the gold on 16 Psyche to Earth, its price would collapse, making it into a cheap, industrial metal.

The point, however, is that only by turning humankind into a **space-faring civilization** can we **avoid environmental catastrophe while maintaining technological progress.** The fact further suggests that the Artemis program has an environmental dimension that Team Biden would do well to recognize and to consider when formulating space policy for the incoming administration.

American law already recognizes the right of companies to extract resources from the moon and other celestial bodies, thanks to Title IV of the U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act. The act was passed in 2015 on a bipartisan basis and signed into law by Obama.

Currently, NASA has been attempting to gain international recognition of Earth humans’ right to extract and own space resources as part of the Artemis Accords. The accords have been signed by nine nations, besides the United States, with more to follow.

The point of all of this, going back to what Garver said, is that climate change and space exploration are inseparably linked. She likely meant that Earth needs to be sustained so that humankind can expand into space. However, the opposite is also true. **Humankind must expand into space so that the Earth**, the pale blue dot that the late-Carl Sagan once celebrated, can be preserved.

**Modeling with the most accurate biological and cosmological data and realistic probability distributions strongly disproves aliens**

Stephen **Johnson 18**, St. Louis-based Writer Whose Work Has Appeared in U.S. News & World Report, The Huffington Post, Eleven Magazine, Cheapism, Vox Magazine, The Missourian and Other Publications, “Are We Alone In The Universe? New Drake Equation Suggests Yes”, Big Think, 6-25, https://bigthink.com/stephen-johnson/are-we-the-only-intelligent-life-in-the-universe-updated-drake-equation-suggests-yes [language modified]

At the Los Alamos National Laboratory in 1950, physicist Enrico Fermi famously posed to his colleagues a simple question borne of complex math: **‘Where are they?’** He was asking about aliens—intelligent ones, specifically. The Italian-American scientist was puzzled as to why [hu]mankind **hasn’t detected any signs** of intelligent life beyond our planet. He reasoned that even if life is extremely rare, you’d still expect there to be many alien civilizations given the sheer size of the universe. After all, some estimates indicate that there is one septillion, or 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, stars in the universe, some of which are surrounded by planets that could probably support life. So, where are they, and why aren’t they talking to us? This is known as the **Fermi paradox**. It’s based on mathematical ideas like the Drake equation, which was devised to estimate the number of detectable civilizations in the Milky Way. Scientists use the equation by multiplying seven variables, as Elizabeth Howell outlined for Space: N = R\* • fp • ne • fl • fi • fc • L N = The number of civilizations in the Milky Way Galaxy whose electromagnetic emissions are detectable. R\* = The rate of formation of stars suitable for the development of intelligent life. fp = The fraction of those stars with planetary systems. ne = The number of planets, per solar system, with an environment suitable for life. fl = The fraction of suitable planets on which life actually appears. fi = The fraction of life bearing planets on which intelligent life emerges. fc = The fraction of civilizations that develop a technology that releases detectable signs of their existence into space. L = The length of time such civilizations release detectable signals into space. The Drake equation is incredibly speculative, or, as astronomer Jill Tarter once said, it’s “a wonderful way to organize our ignorance.” It remains a puzzling problem. However, a new paper from scientists at the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University provides an **updated** Drake equation, one that incorporates **“realistic distributions of uncertainty”** and **“models of chemical and genetic transitions on paths to the origin of life.”** By doing so, the researchers say they dissolve the Fermi paradox and provide even more reason to think **we’re alone in the universe**. The updated equation effectively takes each variable and combines many **historical estimates** that scientists have used to create an uncertainty range, one that highlights just how much scientists still don’t know, as study author Anders Sandberg told Universe Today: “Many parameters are very uncertain given current knowledge. While we have learned a lot more about the astrophysical ones since Drake and Sagan in the 1960s, we are still very uncertain about the probability of life and intelligence. When people discuss the equation it is not uncommon to hear them say something like: 'this parameter is uncertain, but let’s make a guess and remember that it is a guess', finally reaching a result that they admit is based on guesses. "But this result will be stated as single number, and that anchors us to an \*apparently\* exact estimate—when it should have a proper uncertainty range. This often leads to overconfidence, and worse, the Drake equation is very sensitive to bias: if you are hopeful a small nudge upwards in several uncertain estimates will give a hopeful result, and if you are a pessimist you can easily get a low result.” After Sandberg and his colleagues combined these uncertainties, the results showed a distribution pattern of the likelihood that humanity is alone in space. “We found that even using the guesstimates in the literature (we took them and randomly combined the parameter estimates) one can have a situation where the mean number of civilizations in the galaxy might be fairly high—say, a hundred—and yet the probability that we are alone in the galaxy is 30%! The reason is that there is a very skew distribution of likelihood. “If we instead try to review the **scientific knowledge**, things get **even more extreme**. This is because the probability of getting life and intelligence on a planet has an \*extreme\* uncertainty given what we know—we cannot rule out that it happens nearly everywhere there is the right conditions, but we cannot rule out that it is **astronomically rare**. This leads to an even stronger uncertainty about the number of civilizations, drawing us to conclude that **there is a fairly high likelihood that we are alone**. However, we \*also\* conclude that we shouldn’t be too surprised if we find intelligence!”

**! — Cap Good — AT: Alt**

**Alt has zero chance of success---prefer quantitative studies that analyze one-thousand years of data---gradual reforms**

**Calnitsky ’21** [David; August 8; Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Western University; *Critical Sociology,* “The Policy Road to Socialism,” Sage Online]

David Calnitsky, Published August 8, 2021

I do not, however, think that **the revolutionary road is** implausible. Rather, it is **impossible**, at least inside the rich capitalist democracies. And between the implausible and the impossible the choice is clear.

Again, this can be framed as an empirical hypothesis: **You do not see revolutions in developed capitalist democracies**. As Przeworski and Limongi (1997) have written, there has **never** been a revolution in a moderately middle-class democracy (see also Przeworski, 2019). Drawing on a **thousand years of data**, cumulatively collected across 37 democratic countries, they show that **not one had collapsed** with a per-capita GDP higher than that of Argentina in 1976. Among countries with half that figure, collapse was exceedingly rare. Even a modest GDP brings with it an enormous amount of regime stability. These data in fact include **any kind of regime collapse**; narrowing the data to socialist revolution makes the empirical case against it even more impressive. Any case for revolution must begin by acknowledging rather than ignoring this evidence.

To look at this question in a different way, I draw on the Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive, which contains information on revolutions (rather than government collapse) for over 200 countries since 1919. Their definition of revolution is very broad (see footnote 7) and includes “attempts” to overthrow government as well as “unsuccessful” rebellions. The data were compiled from newspaper sources and warrants caution, but nonetheless constitutes the most systematic evidence available for these questions. In Figure 9, I present the GNP per capita distribution of revolutions, from 1919, where GNP is first available, to the present. By considering only those country-years with revolutions I reduce the observation count from 17,520 to 184. Unlike Przeworski, I do not further restrict the data to democracies. The graph displays an extreme skew: The vast, overwhelming majority of cases of revolutionary threat occur in countries with a per capita GNP below $5,000 USD. For reference, the figure for the US in the data is about $65,850 in 2019. The hypothesis above—that we do not see revolutions in developed democracies—seems borne out by the evidence.

figure

Figure 9. Histogram of country-years with revolutions.

Source: Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive. Data drawn from 200 plus countries between 1919 and 2018 are then restricted to country-years (N = 184) in which there were “revolutions,” as well as a “major government crisis” and “anti-government protests.”

Why exactly is this true and what are the mechanisms to explain it? Why is the revolutionary strategy impossible for a country like the US? There are, at bottom, three reasons, each of which stands alone as a sufficient condition to snap the last threads of one’s revolutionary faith.23 The first two suggest that revolution is unachievable, and the last suggests that even if it is achievable, socialism by revolutionary means is unachievable. The revolutionary road is closed on the following grounds:

(1) **Workers do not want it**

(2) **Capitalists would sooner grant reforms**

(3) **A smashed state is more likely to result in tyranny** than deep democracy

Not only has there never been a successful revolution in a developed democracy, **there has never been a working class that has wanted one** (e.g. Erikson and Tedin, 2015; Sassoon, 1996).24 There are no clear cases where the dominant inclination of the working class in a developed democracy was revolutionary. Recall that the above graph also includes attempts and unsuccessful cases. It is self-evident that workers have not joined revolutionary groups en masse at any point in the context of a rich democracy. Nor were their aspirations to join such groups thwarted by violence or ideology. When gains inside a capitalist democracy are available—either individual or collective ones, and this has been true even through the neoliberal period, where median living standards have continued to (slowly) go up and not down—it is not worth risking everything for an uncertain future (Thewissen et al., 2015).25 More important than the dynamic point is the static one: When standards of living are moderately high, as shown in Figure 9, the modal worker has more to lose than her chains. This is not an argument against socialism; but to revise Werner Sombart, the life raft of revolution really was shipwrecked on shoals of roast beef and apple pie.

Therefore, the reasons workers are not revolutionary are materialist in character. Explaining their reformist politics does not require appeal to venal trade union leaders or false consciousness. Most people wish to **minimize risk** in their lives, and **revolution involves taking on colossal risks**. For example, home-ownership in the developed world hovers around 70%; this means that **a lot of people have a lot to lose.**

By contrast, the materialist case for revolution proposes that people favor it when their expected post-revolutionary standards of living are greater than their current standard (Roemer, 1985). But when we add moderate risk- and loss-aversion the calculation changes (Kahneman and Tversky, 1991). Say you have a low income, but own a few assets, maybe a house, a car, and perhaps you also have a child; what risk profile would you require to gamble your modest holdings for an uncertain future which might be better but might be worse? Even if you are certain that the probability of better is greater than the probability of worse, you have to envision workers as a class of inveterate gamblers to take the bet. Moderately cautious people who prefer a bird in the hand will still view the downside risk as too great. Equal gains and losses are not experienced equally. This is the loss aversion phenomenon. But the assumption of a population confident about improved standards of living—and a willingness to take risky strategies to achieve them—is itself unwarranted. This is the risk aversion phenomenon. The modal worker is of course correct to suspect that her post-revolutionary welfare is uncertain; socialists after all do not have satisfactory answers to the problems of coordination, motivation, and innovation under socialism (for attempted answers that are provocative and oftentimes brilliant, see Albert, 2004; Cottrell and Cockshott, 1992; Corneo, 2017; Roemer, 1994; and Wright and Hahnel, 2016). When one compares the status quo to a future where both heaven and hell are seemingly plausible, it is perfectly rational that people everywhere would abandon the barricades. And abandon them they did.

Now perhaps the revolutionaries have persuaded us that negative outcomes are far-fetched, that we are very confident that revolution will usher in, eventually, the land of milk and honey. It is still the case that in this model the promised land will only be reached after a social breakdown of unknown duration: A complete overhaul in the organization of production will lead to some middle period of deteriorating material welfare as capitalists rapidly exit the economy. This means chaos and uncertainty, but it could also mean war. The interregnum could last a year, but it might last two decades, and however optimistic we are about the end point, we cannot in advance know how long this interim phase will persist. In the meantime, revolutionary enthusiasm will wane, erstwhile supporters will decamp, a “stay-the-course” electoral strategy will be outflanked by competitor parties promising a return to normalcy, and the desire to consolidate gains will make the authoritarian impulse greater. From a materialist perspective, the uncertain passage through what Przeworski (1986) calls the “transition trough” makes the journey less appealing.26

To my mind, these factors explain why **all working classes in all developed democracies have been decidedly reformist in orientation**. The reason why revolutionary socialism has always been marginal in rich capitalist economies—and will always be outflanked by reform-oriented socialism—is that only the latter consistently deliver high (and usually increasing) standards of living and low (and usually decreasing) levels of risk. As long as the Mad Max world of catastrophic collapse can be avoided, reform-oriented parties will always better capture the enthusiasm of poor and working people.

Thus, when we try to explain the non-revolutionary attitudes of our working-class friends and family, we do not need to lean on the false consciousness account, for there is a more parsimonious materialist explanation. As such, any case for revolution must be non-materialist in character: You can be a materialist or a revolutionary, but not both.

This is the dilemma the revolutionaries must consider: Revolution is only possible when the forces of production are underdeveloped, but it can only be successful when they are sufficiently developed to make socialism (or communism) objectively viable.27 As Elster (1986) has argued, the circumstances under which revolutions **spark and succeed never coincide**.

What about the **capitalists**? Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to expect that they will fight **far harder** against a revolution than they would against reformist drives. Indeed, ignoring the response from capitalists violates Elster’s first law of political rationality: Never assume your opponent is less rational than you. If revolution were the alternative, employers would grant every imaginable **reform**, from far higher taxes to the rejiggering of power relations in the workplace. In a mugging, most people will surrender their wallet before their life.

Actors in the state ought to respond in more or less the same way—that is, as long as you admit your adversary the competence to read the situation as well as you. If our theory of the state suggests that it acts on behalf of the capitalist class, its apparatchiks would anticipate and preempt any revolutionary crusade with a cocktail of concession and repression. And while it will certainly contest reforms, it will devote all of its resources to break the revolution. Nonetheless, this means that revolutionaries can play a crucial role, even if it is not to foment revolution. Militancy is a powerful strategy to foment reform (for an argument about the history of social democracy along these lines, see Piketty, 2014).

Thus far, the main reason revolution is off the table is because no one wants it—not workers, nor employers, nor the state.

The third point above asks us to imagine the prospects for revolutionary success even if we ignore the wrinkle that workers have neither an interest nor capacity to make it. But let us pretend they did: **Why** then would we imagine that total social breakdown would prompt a deepening of democracy rather than **authoritarian entrenchment**? This happy outcome has never before emerged in the wake of social collapse, and there is little reason why the final showdown with the American military ought to produce fertile ground for deepening democracy in all spheres of life. In fact, evidence from the General Social Survey suggests that in response to recession and economic downturn people tend to become less altruistic and less concerned with questions of fairness.28 After situations of economic crisis, voters tend to shift to the right (Lindvall, 2014). The old union song cries out that “we can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old,” but life is not birthed on ash. None of the historical case studies track this narrative, and indeed everything we know about human psychology suggests that social devastation makes people more, not less, prone to demagoguery. This means that even if a revolution were achievable, it is probably undesirable.

The argument I have thus far laid out against revolution contends only that it is off the table in middle-class democracies. I have in mind social dynamics within developed capitalist democracies, countries “like the US,” but the premise no longer holds true if we imagine a society that has already suffered some sort of catastrophic societal disintegration—at that point all bets are off. We are of course now talking about a world we are not living in, but it is worth considering the thought experiment nonetheless.

It is possible that America, after some world-historic environmental or economic collapse, begins to look something more like Russian feudalism than contemporary developed capitalism. Revolution then might again be on the table, but the context of desperation and scarcity in this scenario gives little reason to expect it would incubate an egalitarian democratic society. The historical evidence is unambiguous: None of the communist revolutions of the 20th century ushered in deeply democratic egalitarian social structures. Not only are there no examples, but there are also no clear mechanisms on offer.

The fact that this scenario generates an interest in bringing about an egalitarian society by means of revolution does not mean there will be a capacity to do so. The theory is little more than “where there is a will there is a way.” But, as Elster (1980: 124) argues, the general interests of society do not secrete the conditions for their fulfillment. Interests and capacities need not overlap.

There is a final reason to be skeptical of non-evolutionary strategies: The highly dubious premise that the system we erect the morning after will actually work. A socialist economy, if plopped down tomorrow, would be so rife with **unintended consequences** and pathologies that it is easy to imagine a democracy voting its way back into capitalism. This is true even if we believe (mistakenly, in my view) that the socialist calculation debate is solvable in the age of big data (Morozov, 2019). Interlocutors in the calculation debate have had very little to say about the politics of transition. Indeed, it is hard to **imagine success** of any kind without a **slow and incremental transformation**, experimenting with bits and pieces along the way—as we have been doing for the past century. An experimental approach is likely the only way to avoid **devastating blunders** that **undermine the whole project**. Moments of institutional upheaval and big change may at times be necessary, but to be successful they will have to rest on a foundation of smaller changes that have been tested.

**Sudden transition kills two-thirds of the world within two weeks---ONLY gradual transition via reformism is possible in the modern world---prefer ev from the world’s most famous living Marxist**

**Harvey ’20** [David; 2020; Distinguished Professor of Anthropology & Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; *The Anti-Capitalist Chronicles*, Pluto Press: London]

Global Unrest

There are many contradictions in the capitalist system, and some are more salient than others. The incredible class and social inequalities and collapsing environmental conditions are obvious priorities. But then comes the “too big to fail, too monstrous to survive” contradiction. Neither the social inequality nor environmental degradation issues can be addressed without taking on this underlying contradiction. A socialist and anti-capitalist program will have to negotiate a knife-edge path between preserving that which services the world’s population and which appears too big and foundational to fail while confronting the fact that it is becoming **too monstrous** to survive without sparking geopolitical conflicts that will likely turn the innumerable small wars and internal struggles already raging across the planet into a **globaconflagration**.

This is the core of the problem. **In Marx’s time**, if there was a **sudden collapse of capitalism**, most people in the world would still have been able to feed themselves and reproduce. They were reasonably self-sufficient in their local area procuring the kinds of things they needed to live and reproduce. People could put some sort of breakfast on their table irrespective of what was going on in the **global economy** and in **global markets**. Right now, that’s no longer the case in many parts of the world. Most people in the **U**nited **S**tates, in much of Europe, in Japan, and now increasingly in China, India, Indonesia, and in Latin America are depending more and more on the delivery of food through the circulation of capital. In Marx’s time, perhaps 10 percent of the global population was vulnerable to disruptions in the circulation of capital, as opposed to many more who were subject to famines, droughts, epidemics, and other environmental disruptions. The crisis of European capitalism in 1848 was part a product of harvest failures and part produced by a speculative crash focused on railroad finance. Since then, capital operating in the world market has largely eliminated the prospect of starvation due to supposedly natural causes. If there is famine the underlying causes (as opposed to the immediate triggers) can invariably be traced to failures in the social and political system of capitalist governance and distribution. Much of the world’s population is now dependent upon the circulation of capital to procure and ensure its food supply, access the fuels and the energy required to support daily life, and to maintain the elaborate structures and equipment of communication that facilitate the coordination of basic production requirements.

Capital, right now, may be too deeply implicated in the **reproduction of daily life** to fail. The economic consequences and social impacts and costs of a massive and prolonged failure in the continuity of capital circulation will be catastrophic and potentially **lethal** for a significant portion of the world’s population. To be sure, indigenous and peasant populations in the Andean highlands may survive quite well, but if the flow of capital shuts down for any prolonged period, then **maybe two-thirds of the world’s population would within a few weeks be threatened with starvation,** deprived of fuel and light, while being rendered immobile and deprived of almost all capacity to reproduce their conditions of existence effectively. **We cannot now afford** any kind of sustained and prolonged attack upon or disruption of capital circulation even if the more **egregious forms of accumulation are strictly curbed**. The kind of fantasy that revolutionaries might once have had – which was that capitalism could be destroyed and burned down overnight and that something different could immediately be built upon the ashes – **is impossible today** even supposing there ever was a time when such a revolutionary overthrow might have happened. Some form of the circulation of commodities and therefore of money capital has to be kept in motion for some considerable time lest most of us starve. It is in this sense that we might say that capital appears to be now **too big to fail.** We may aspire to make our own history, Marx observed, but this can never be done under conditions of our own choosing. These conditions dictate a politics that is about sustaining many existing commodity chains and flows while socializing and perhaps gradually modifying them to accommodate to human needs. As Marx noted in his commentary on the Paris Commune,

in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it the higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they [the working classes] will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realize, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society is pregnant.

The task is to identify that which **lays latent in our existing society to find a peaceful transition to a more socialist alternative**. **Revolution is a long process not an event**.

**! — Cap Good — AT: Disease**

**No disease impact.**

**Adalja ’16** — Amesh; an infectious-disease physician at the University of Pittsburgh. He writes regularly at Tracking Zebra. June 17, 2016; “Why Hasn't Disease Wiped out the Human Race?”; *The Atlantic*; <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2016/06/infectious-diseases-extinction/487514/>; //CYang

But when people ask me if I’m worried about infectious diseases, they’re often not asking about the threat to human lives; they’re asking about the threat to human life. With each outbreak of a **headline-grabbing** emerging infectious disease comes a **fear of extinction** itself. The fear envisions a large proportion of humans succumbing to infection, leaving no survivors or so few that the species can’t be sustained. I’m not afraid of this **apocalyptic scenario**, but I do understand the impulse. Worry about the end is a **quintessentially human** trait. Thankfully, so is our resilience.

For most of mankind’s history, infectious diseases were the existential threat to humanity—and for good reason. They were quite successful at killing people: The 6th century’s Plague of Justinian knocked out an estimated 17 percent of the world’s population; the 14th century Black Death decimated a third of Europe; the 1918 influenza pandemic killed 5 percent of the world; malaria is estimated to have killed half of all humans who have ever lived.

Any yet, of course, humanity continued to flourish. Our species’ recent explosion in lifespan is almost exclusively the result of the control of infectious diseases through **sanitation**, **vaccination**, and **antimicrobial therapies**. Only in the modern era, in which many infectious diseases have been tamed in the industrial world, do people have the luxury of death from cancer, heart disease, or stroke in the 8th decade of life. Childhoods are free from watching siblings and friends die from outbreaks of typhoid, scarlet fever, smallpox, measles, and the like.

So what would it take for a disease to wipe out humanity now?

In Michael Crichton’s The Andromeda Strain, the canonical book in the disease-outbreak genre, an alien microbe threatens the human race with extinction, and humanity’s best minds are marshaled to combat the enemy organism. Fortunately, outside of fiction, there’s no reason to expect **alien pathogens** to wage war on the human race any time soon, and my analysis suggests that any real-life domestic microbe reaching an **extinction level** of threat probably is just as unlikely.

When humans began to focus their minds on the problems posed by infectious disease, human life ceased being nasty, brutish, and short.

Any apocalyptic pathogen would need to possess a **very special combination** of two attributes. First, it would have to be **so unfamiliar** that no existing therapy or vaccine could be applied to it. Second, it would need to have a high and surreptitious transmissibility **before symptoms occur**. The first is essential because any microbe from a known class of pathogens would, by definition, have family members that could serve as models for containment and countermeasures. The second would allow the hypothetical disease to spread without being detected by even the most astute clinicians.

The three infectious diseases most likely to be considered **extinction-level threats** in the world today — influenza, HIV, and Ebola — don’t meet these two requirements. Influenza, for instance, despite its well-established ability to kill on a large scale, its contagiousness, and its unrivaled ability to shift and drift away from our vaccines, is still what I would call a “known unknown.” While there are many mysteries about how new flu strains emerge, from at least the time of Hippocrates, humans have been attuned to its risk. And in the modern era, a full-fledged industry of influenza preparedness exists, with effective **vaccine strategies** and **antiviral therapies**.

HIV, which has killed 39 million people over several decades, is similarly limited due to several factors. Most importantly, HIV’s dependency on blood and body fluid for transmission (similar to Ebola) requires intimate human-to-human contact, which limits contagion. **Highly potent** antiviral therapy allows most people to live normally with the disease, and a substantial group of the population has **genetic mutations** that render them impervious to infection in the first place. Lastly, simple prevention strategies such as needle exchange for injection drug users and barrier contraceptives — when available — can curtail transmission risk.

Ebola, for many of the same reasons as HIV as well as several others, also falls short of the mark. This is especially due to the fact that it spreads almost exclusively through people with **easily recognizable symptoms**, plus the taming of its once unfathomable 90 percent mortality rate by simple supportive care.

Beyond those three, every other known disease falls short of what seems required to wipe out humans — which is, of course, why we’re still here. And it’s not that diseases are ineffective. On the contrary, diseases’ failure to knock us out is a testament to just how resilient humans are. Part of our **evolutionary heritage** is our immune system, one of the most complex on the planet, even without the benefit of vaccines or the helping hand of antimicrobial drugs. This system, when viewed at a species level, can adapt to almost any enemy imaginable. Coupled to **genetic variations** amongst humans—which open up the possibility for a range of advantages, from **imperviousness** to infection to a tendency for mild symptoms — this **adaptability** ensures that almost any infectious disease onslaught will leave a **large proportion** of the population alive to rebuild, in contrast to the fictional Hollywood versions.

While the immune system’s role can never be understated, an **even more powerful** protector is the faculty of consciousness. Humans are not the most prolific, quickly evolving, or strongest organisms on the planet, but as Aristotle identified, humans are the rational animals—and it is this fundamental distinguishing characteristic that allows humans to form abstractions, think in principles, and plan long-range. These capacities, in turn, allow humans to modify, alter, and improve themselves and their environments. Consciousness equips us, at an individual and a species level, to make nature safe for the species through such **technological marvels** as antibiotics, antivirals, vaccines, and sanitation. When humans began to focus their minds on the problems posed by infectious disease, human life ceased being nasty, brutish, and short. In many ways, human consciousness became infectious diseases’ **worthiest adversary**.

**! — Cap Good — AT: Environment**

**Capitalism solves the environment — prefer the Yale EPI and statistical indicators.**

**Zitelmann ’20** — Rainer; holds doctorates in history and sociology. He initially worked at the Central Institute for Social Science Research at the Free University of Berlin before taking up the position of editor-in-chief of Ullstein-Propyläen. July 13, 2020; "‘System Change Not Climate Change’: Capitalism And Environmental Destruction"; *Forbes*; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rainerzitelmann/2020/07/13/system-change-not-climate-change-capitalism-and-environmental-destruction/?sh=7c423bcb6d72>; //CYang

The Price Of Growth — Destruction Of The Environment?

But isn’t there a price for this growth: environment devastation? Of course, nobody would deny that industrialization causes environmental problems. But the assertion that growth **automatically leads** to ever accelerating environmental degradation is **simply false**. Yale University’s **E**nvironmental **P**erformance **I**ndex (EPI) uses **16 indicators** to rank countries on environmental health, air quality, water, biodiversity, natural resources and pollution. These indicators have been selected to reflect both the current baseline and the dynamics of **national ecosystems**. One of the Index’s **most striking findings** is that there is a **strong correlation** between a state’s wealth and its environmental performance. Most **developed capitalist countries** achieve **high environmental standards**. Those countries with the worst EPI scores, such as Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Chad and Niger, are all poor. They have both low investment capacity for infrastructure, including water and sanitation, and tend to have weak environmental regulatory authorities.

Contrary to prevailing perceptions, industrial development and **technological advances** have contributed significantly to relieving the burden on the environment. Both Indur Goklany in his book The Improving State of the World and Steven Pinker in chapter ten (“The Environment”) of his book Enlightenment Now demonstrate that we are not only living longer, healthier lives in unprecedented prosperity, but we are also doing so on a **comparatively clean** planet.

Researchers have confirmed that economic freedom — in other words, more capitalism — leads to higher, not lower, environmental quality.

Every year, the Heritage Foundation compiles its Index of Economic Freedom, which analyzes individual levels of economic freedom, and thus capitalism, in countries around the world. The Heritage Foundation’s researchers also measure the correlation between each country’s environmental performance and its economic freedom. The results **couldn’t be clearer**: the world’s most **economically free** countries achieve the highest environmental performance rankings with an average score of 76.1, followed by the countries that are “mostly free,” which score an average of 69.5. In **stark contrast**, the economically “repressed” and “mostly unfree” countries **all score** less than 50 for environmental performance.

Is Government The Best Solution To Environmental Problems?

Anti-capitalists frequently claim that central government is the best solution to environmental problems. And there is no doubt that state regulations to safeguard the environment are important. But state regulations, cited by anti-capitalists as a panacea for environmental issues, often achieve the opposite of what they were intended to do. Hardly any other country in the world touts its green credentials as much as Germany. According to even the most conservative estimates, Germany’s so-called “energy transition” is set to cost a total of almost €500 billion by 2025.

But the results of this massive investment is sobering, as an analysis by McKinsey reveals, “Germany is set to miss several key energy transition targets for the year 2020, and the country’s high power supply security is at risk unless new generation capacity and grid infrastructure are built in time for the coal and nuclear exit and electrification of transportation networks is accelerated.”

For decades, environmentalists in Germany focused on shutting down nuclear power plants. However, the phasing out of nuclear power has left Germany in a poor position in terms of CO2 emissions compared to other countries. It is not without good reason that Germany’s energy policy has been described as the dumbest in the world.

The latest generation of nuclear power plants are much safer than their predecessors. Despite what environmentalists might claim, impartial calculations have confirmed that it is impossible to meet the world’s energy needs from solar and wind power alone. Enlightened environmentalists are therefore now calling for nuclear power to be rightfully included in the fight against climate change. And yet, this is precisely what is being prevented in Germany by politicians — not capitalism. This example, just one of many, shows that government environmental policy is often ineffective. In some instances, it even achieves the opposite of what it was originally intended to, i.e. it exacerbates existing environmental problems.

It is also wrong to think that capitalism **necessarily leads** to ever greater waste of **limited natural resources**. Just take the smartphone for example, one of the most environmentally friendly of capitalism’s many achievements. With just one small device, a **whole plethora of devices** that used to consume resources in the past, such as the telephone, camera, calculator, navigation system, dictation machine, alarm clock, flashlight and many others, have been replaced. Smartphones also help to reduce the consumption of paper as many people choose not to take notes on paper and, for example, use their iPhone instead of a calendar to enter appointments.

Those who call for “system change” instead of “climate change” do not usually say which system they would prefer. All they are really sure of is that any new system should not be based on free market economics and that the state should play the decisive role. The **simple fact** is that socialism has failed in **every country every time** it has been tried — and socialism has damaged the environment more than any capitalist system. Murray Feshbach documents examples of the environmental destruction wrought by socialism in his book Ecological Disaster. Cleaning Up the Hidden Legacy of the Soviet Regime. As the book progresses through chapters such as “A Nuclear Plague,” “Dying Lakes, Rivers, and Inland Seas” and “Pollution of the Air and Land,” it becomes clear that this non-capitalist system was responsible for the **greatest environmental destruction** in history. Anti-capitalists may well reply that they do not want a system like the Soviet Union. And yet, they cannot name a **single real-world system** — at any time in the history of [humankind] ~~mankind~~ — that provides better **environmental solutions** than capitalism.

**Climate doesn’t cause extinction.**

Dr. Amber **Kerr et al. 19**, Energy and Resources PhD at the University of California-Berkeley, known agroecologist, former coordinator of the USDA California Climate Hub; Dr. Daniel Swain, Climate Science PhD at UCLA, climate scientist, a research fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research; Dr. Andrew King, Earth Sciences PhD, Climate Extremes Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne; Dr. Peter Kalmus, Physics PhD at the University of Colombia, climate scientist at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Lab; Professor Richard Betts, Chair in Climate Impacts at the University of Exeter, a lead author on the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Working Group 1; Dr. William Huiskamp, Paleoclimatology PhD at the Climate Change Research Center, climate scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; 6/4/2019, “Claim that human civilization could end in 30 years is speculative, not supported with evidence,” <https://climatefeedback.org/evaluation/iflscience-story-on-speculative-report-provides-little-scientific-context-james-felton/>, Stras

There is **no scientific basis** to suggest that **climate breakdown** will “annihilate **intelligent life**” (by which I assume the report authors mean **human extinction**) by 2050.

However, climate breakdown does pose a grave threat to civilization as we know it, and the potential for mass suffering on a scale perhaps never before encountered by humankind. This should be enough reason for action without any need for exaggeration or misrepresentation!

A “Hothouse Earth” scenario plays out that sees Earth’s temperatures doomed to rise by a further 1°C (1.8°F) even if we stopped emissions immediately.

Peter Kalmus, Data Scientist, Jet Propulsion Laboratory:

This word choice perhaps reveals a bias on the part of the author of the article. A temperature can’t be doomed. And while I certainly do not encourage false optimism, assuming that humanity is doomed is lazy and counterproductive.

Fifty-five percent of the global population are subject to more than 20 days a year of lethal heat conditions beyond that which humans can survive

Richard Betts, Professor, Met Office Hadley Centre & University of Exeter:

This is clearly from Mora et al (2017) although the report does not include a citation of the paper as the source of that statement. The way it is written here (and in the report) is misleading because it gives the impression that everyone dies in those conditions. That is not actually how Mora et al define “deadly heat” — they merely looked for heatwaves when somebody died (not everybody) and then used that as the definition of a “deadly” heatwave.

North America suffers extreme weather events including wildfires, drought, and heatwaves. Monsoons in China fail, the great rivers of Asia virtually dry up, and rainfall in central America falls by half.

Andrew King, Research fellow, University of Melbourne:

Projections of **extreme events** such as these are **very difficult** to make and **vary greatly** between **different climate models**.

Deadly heat conditions across West Africa persist for over 100 days a year

Peter Kalmus, Data Scientist, Jet Propulsion Laboratory:

The deadly heat projections (this, and the one from the previous paragraph) come from Mora et al (2017)1.

It should be clarified that “deadly heat” here means heat and humidity beyond a two-dimension threshold where at least one person in the region subject to that heat and humidity dies (i.e., not everyone instantly dies). That said, in my opinion, the projections in Mora et al are conservative and the methods of Mora et al are sound. I did not check the claims in this report against Mora et al but I have no reason to think they are in error.

1- Mora et al (2017) Global risk of deadly heat, Nature Climate Change

The knock-on consequences affect national security, as the scale of the challenges involved, such as pandemic disease outbreaks, are overwhelming. Armed conflicts over resources may become a reality, and have the potential to escalate into nuclear war. In the worst case scenario, a scale of destruction the authors say is beyond their capacity to model, there is a ‘high likelihood of human civilization coming to an end’.

Willem Huiskamp, Postdoctoral research fellow, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research:

This is a highly questionable conclusion. The reference provided in the report is for the “Global Catastrophic Risks 2018” report from the “Global Challenges Foundation” and not peer-reviewed literature. (It is worth noting that this latter report also provides no peer-reviewed evidence to support this claim).

Furthermore, if it is apparently beyond our capability to model these impacts, how can they assign a ‘high likelihood’ to this outcome?

While it is true that warming of this magnitude would be catastrophic, making claims such as this without evidence serves only to undermine the trust the public will have in the science.

Daniel Swain, Researcher, UCLA, and Research Fellow, National Center for Atmospheric Research:

It seems that **the eye-catching headline-level claims** in the report **stem almost entirely** from these **knock-on effects**, which the authors themselves admit are “beyond their capacity to model.” Thus, from **a scientific perspective**, the purported “high likelihood of civilization coming to an end by 2050” is **essentially personal speculation** on the part of the report’s authors, rather than **a clear conclusion** drawn from **rigorous assessment** of **the available evidence**.

**It’s a tail-end scenario in the far future.**

Dr. Amber **Kerr et al. 19**, Energy and Resources PhD at the University of California-Berkeley, known agroecologist, former coordinator of the USDA California Climate Hub; Dr. Daniel Swain, Climate Science PhD at UCLA, climate scientist, a research fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research; Dr. Andrew King, Earth Sciences PhD, Climate Extremes Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne; Dr. Peter Kalmus, Physics PhD at the University of Colombia, climate scientist at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Lab; Professor Richard Betts, Chair in Climate Impacts at the University of Exeter, a lead author on the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in Working Group 1; Dr. William Huiskamp, Paleoclimatology PhD at the Climate Change Research Center, climate scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; 6/4/2019, “Claim that human civilization could end in 30 years is speculative, not supported with evidence,” <https://climatefeedback.org/evaluation/iflscience-story-on-speculative-report-provides-little-scientific-context-james-felton/>, Stras

The content of the IFLScience article is mostly an accurate representation of the contents of the Breakthrough report, but the article tends to gloss over **important caveats and probabilities** that are given in the report. The least accurate part of the IFLScience article is the headline, which is an outright misrepresentation of the report. The article title states that there is, overall, **a “high probability”** of human civilization coming to an end in 30 years. This is **extremely misleading**. What the Breakthrough report actually says is that, in **the most unlikely, “long-tail” biophysical scenario** where **climate feedbacks** are **much more severe than we expect**, **THEN** there is a high likelihood of human civilization coming to an end. But the report authors **explicitly state** that **this “high-end scenario”** is **beyond** their capacity to model or to **quantitatively estimate**.

Daniel Swain, Researcher, UCLA, and Research Fellow, National Center for Atmospheric Research:

The article uncritically reproduces claims from a recent report released by an Australian thinktank regarding the purported “end of human civilization” due to climate change over the next 30 years. While there is plenty of scientific evidence that climate change will pose increasingly **existential threats** to **the most vulnerable individuals in society** and to key global ecosystems, **even these dire outcomes** aren’t **equivalent** to the “**annihilation of intelligent life**,” as is claimed in the report.

Andrew King, Research fellow, University of Melbourne:

The report this article is based on describes a scenario which is unlikely, but several aspects of what is included in the report are likely to worsen in coming decades, such as the occurrence of deadly heatwaves. **The conclusion** of **a high likelihood** that **human civilisation** will end is **false**, although there is **a great deal** of evidence that there will be many **damaging consequences** to continued global warming over the coming decades.

Peter Kalmus, Data Scientist, Jet Propulsion Laboratory:

I don’t think it’s so easy to discount the essential warning of this report. However, it would have been stronger if the authors were more careful not to mention the unsupported concept of near-term human extinction, and the unsupported probabilistic claim that there is a “high likelihood” of their 2050 scenario which includes the collapse of civilization. I do not understand why **non-scientist writers** (neither report author is a scientist) feel a need to **exaggerate** sound scientific findings, when those findings are already quite alarming enough. I feel that humanity should undertake urgent climate action just as the report authors do, but I feel that misrepresenting the science is **unhelpful** and **unnecessary**.

Richard Betts, Professor, Met Office Hadley Centre & University of Exeter:

This is a classic case of a media article over-stating the conclusions and significance of a non-peer reviewed report that itself had already overstated (and indeed misrepresented) peer-reviewed science — some of which was already somewhat controversial. It appears that there was not a thorough independent check of the credibility of the message.

Notes:

[1] See the rating guidelines used for article evaluations.

[2] Each evaluation is independent. Scientists’ comments are all published at the same time.

ANNOTATIONS

The statements quoted below are from the article; comments are from the reviewers (and are lightly edited for clarity).

New Report Warns “High Likelihood Of Human Civilization Coming To An End” Within 30 Years

Richard Betts, Professor, Met Office Hadley Centre & University of Exeter:

The headline overstates the conclusions of the report (which is already overdoing things). The reports says it presents a scenario, and under that scenario and all the assumptions within it, the report claims that there is a “high likelihood of human civilization coming to and end” — but even then, the report itself does not give the end of civilisation within 30 years. The process supposedly leading ultimately to collapse **begins** around **2050** but takes **a long time to take effect**. Also the processes themselves are **not well-grounded in science**, as they **over-interpret** published work.

**! — Cap Good — AT: Mineral Scarcity**

**No mineral scarcity.**

**Worstall ’17** — Adam; Fellow at the Adam Smith Institute in London. November 10, 2017; “No, We're Not Running Out of Minerals”; *FEE*; https://fee.org/articles/no-were-not-running-out-of-minerals/; //CYang

As I point out in that linked (and free!) book: we’re nowhere near **any limit** that need bother us. We’ve some 800,000 years of **nickel** left (assuming no recycling) and 34 million of **cobalt** — enough to be getting along with, given the average lifespan of a species is three million years.

So why the worrying that we are? Mainly, it’s because people **misunderstand** the **technical jargon** used in the industry. They talk about mineral reserves and mineral resources without realizing that these are not a **fair indication** of usable resource. No, not even a guide, not an estimation, there **simply is no link** at all.

A mineral reserve is something that we have drilled, tested, dug up a bit and processed, and we have now proven that we can extract this at current prices, using current technology, and make a profit doing so. This is an economic definition: roughly speaking, the stock at **already existing** mines.

A mineral resource is where we’re pretty sure all of that is true – we’ve just not proved it yet. And then there’s the stuff we’ve not got around to looking at – which is true of the bulk of the planet and the bulk of all minerals. This is like complaining that the food in the fridge is **about to run out** without referring to the supermarkets which exist to fill up our fridges again.

**Their ev only accounts for current reserves.**

**Worstall ’17** — Adam; Fellow at the Adam Smith Institute in London. November 10, 2017; “No, We're Not Running Out of Minerals”; *FEE*; https://fee.org/articles/no-were-not-running-out-of-minerals/; //CYang

Just look at that famed Club of Rome report, Limits to Growth. They, entirely correctly, note that mineral reserves are going to last 30 – 50 years. They then, again **entirely correctly**, note that mineral resources can and will be converted into reserves by the application of time and money. Their prediction comes from their **incorrect assumption** that current reserves are an indication of the **total amount available** to us.

But they then simply assume that resources out there are only 10 times current reserves. Hmm, 10 x 30 – 50 years is 300 to 500, isn’t it? So it’s not all that much of a surprise that they tell us that society is doomed, doomed, in only a couple of centuries when they add a bit of exponential growth in usage. Their prediction comes from their assumption, that wholly incorrect one, that current reserves are an indication of the total amount available to us.

All too many predictions of this sort are based on **entirely** and **totally wrong** assumptions. The truth is we simply do not have a shortage of **any mineral**, over any human timescale, that we might want to use. Any policy based upon the assumption that we do is provably wrong. So we’d better revisit those policies based upon this incorrect assumption pretty sharpish, shouldn’t we?

**! — Cap Good — AT: Red Innovation**

**‘Red innovation’ causes global backlash and fails.**

**Tudoreanu ‘20** [Mihnea; 9/23/20; doctoral candidate in economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; David M. Kotz; professor emeritus of economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; "Stable Jobs or iPhones? The Dilemma of Innovation in Socialism," Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. 52, Vol. 4, p. 642-649]

**Note: DPS = Democratically Planned Socialism**

One of the advantages for innovation in DPS is that it can effectively take into account social and environmental costs, including the jobs lost or disrupted by the introduction of a new technology.8 But this can also be **problematic**, in that it is likely to make **innovation slower** in **socialism** than in **capitalism**. Democratic majorities are **not immune** to some of the **same factors** that caused **Soviet managers** to be technologically conservative.

On the one hand, DPS should not suffer from taut planning, unrealistic plan targets imposed from the top down, or an incentive structure that discourages risk-taking by trying out new technologies. But on the other hand, innovation is **always disruptive** in any kind of **economic system**. As old technologies are **superseded**, product lines become **obsolete** and production processes are changed, and as a result certain kinds of jobs are **no longer needed**. Even with an employment guarantee, the loss of one’s job may have to involve **retraining**, **changing careers**, or **moving** across the country. So, it is reasonable to expect that workers will **resist new technologies**.9 Yet at the same time, in their capacity as consumers, they will demand new and better products.

This is the “Stable jobs or iPhones?” dilemma. We can prioritize cutting-edge consumer products, or we can prioritize stable employment, but perhaps **not both**.10 In DPS, the people will be able to decide between one and the other, on a case-by-case basis, so that some innovations will be pursued, others will be scrapped because of their **disruptive effects**, and some will be introduced at a **deliberately slow pace**. Meanwhile, capitalism always comes down in favor of the iPhones despite the conflict with stable jobs. Since socialism will not always do this, it is likely that socialism will have more job security but fewer **cutting-edge** consumer products than capitalism.

If there is an **international rivalry** between **socialism** and **capitalism**, the citizens of the two kinds of societies will be able to compare their lifestyles with those in the other economic system. Workers living under capitalism may be attracted by the stable jobs, shorter working hours, democratic workplaces, and social benefits provided by socialism. However, those living under socialism will likely also be **attracted** by the **rapid introduction** of new consumer goods under capitalism. Moreover, as long as the **speed of innovation** in socialism is **lower** than that in capitalism, the “**consumer gap**” with capitalism would **grow** over time.

This may not be considered a problem for socialism if most of the population value stable jobs more than iPhones, but there would likely be a minority who do not. If the consumer gap is large enough, and/or that dissenting minority has an overriding preference for new consumer goods, then we have a category of people with a **material interest** in **supporting capitalism**, which values a **new technology** over job stability, even though they are part of the working class.

A common response to the flaws of Soviet socialism has been to propose **other models of socialism** that would not have those **flaws**. But the **trade-off** between **job security** and **innovation** is not one that can be **easily eliminated** within socialism. It is not due to the overly centralized or undemocratic nature of Soviet socialism.

Furthermore, there is a military aspect to the innovation problem. Innovations that aid the military are also likely to have a disruptive effect on employment, as in the case of consumer-oriented innovations. This is a problem because it might put DPS at a **military disadvantage** with respect to capitalism, which would **hurt** the **socialist side** in **international relations** even if no military conflict takes place. If one side knows it would **lose any war** that did take place, then that side will **act timidly** and avoid even nonviolent confrontation, so as to **avoid provoking** the other side into war. For both sides to stand a good chance of success in a peaceful rivalry, they must be more or less evenly matched militarily, so that neither feels that it can do whatever it wants with impunity or that it must tread lightly to avoid confrontation.

The Cold War was a multifaceted struggle between two different systems. Any future socialist economic order will most likely face capitalism in a somewhat similar struggle. Can such a struggle be won by socialism without matching capitalism’s rate of technological development? That is the question.

**! — Cap Good — AT: Soft Left**

**Statistics are all aff — massive increases in quality of life occurred under capitalism.**

**Zitelmann ’20** — Rainer; holds doctorates in history and sociology. He initially worked at the Central Institute for Social Science Research at the Free University of Berlin before taking up the position of editor-in-chief of Ullstein-Propyläen. July 27, 2020; "**Anyone Who Doesn’t Know The Following Facts About Capitalism Should Learn Them**"; *Forbes*; [https://www.forbes.com/sites/rainerzitelmann/2020/07/27/anyone-who-doesnt-know-the-following-facts-about-capitalism-should-learn-them/?sh=4712d1863dc1; //CYang](https://www.forbes.com/sites/rainerzitelmann/2020/07/27/anyone-who-doesnt-know-the-following-facts-about-capitalism-should-learn-them/?sh=4712d1863dc1;%20//CYang)

In 1820, 94% of the world’s population was living in **extreme poverty**. By 1910, this figure had fallen to 82%, and by 1950 the rate had dropped yet further, to 72%. However, the **largest** and **fastest** decline occurred between 1981 (44.3%) and 2015 (9.6%). Reading these figures, which were compiled by Johan Norberg for his book Progress, is enough to make anyone rub their eyes in disbelief. For according to leftist anti-capitalists, these were the very decades in which so much went so wrong in the world. In his book Capital in the 21st Century, the left-wing French economist Thomas Piketty writes that it is precisely this period that is allegedly so problematic. He bemoans a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor in terms of income and wealth in the period from 1990 to 2010. But what is **more important** to these hundreds of millions of people — that they are no longer starving, or that the wealth of multi-millionaires and billionaires may have increased to an even greater extent than their own standard of living?

According to Norberg, 200 years ago, at the birth of capitalism, there were only about 60 million people in the world who were not living in **extreme poverty**. Today there are **more than 6.5 billion** people who are not living in extreme poverty. Between 1990 and 2015 alone (in Thomas Piketty’s view the devastating years in which social inequality rose so sharply), 1.25 billion people **around the world** escaped extreme poverty — 50 million per year and 138,000 every day.

Glorifying The “Good Old Days”

Johan Norberg himself used to be a left-winger and an anti-capitalist. In his book, he admits that he **never thought** about how people lived before the industrial revolution, when there was no medicine, no antibiotics, no **clean water**, nowhere near enough food, no electricity and no clean water. He confesses that he pretty much imagined this epoch of humanity as a trip to the countryside. But the **reality of the past** was **quite different**. In the early 19th century, poverty rates were higher even in the richest countries then than they are today in the **world’s poorest countries**. In the United States, Great Britain and France, between 40% and 50% percent of the population lived in conditions that we now describe as extreme poverty. Today, the only countries with such high poverty levels are all in sub-Saharan Africa. Across Scandinavia, Austria-Hungary, Germany and Spain, roughly 60% to 70% of the population lived in extreme poverty. And between 10% and 20% of Europeans and Americans were officially described as beggars and vagabonds.

It is estimated that 200 years ago some 20% of the inhabitants of England and France were unable to work at all. At most they had enough strength to walk slowly for a few hours each day, which condemned them to begging for the rest of their lives. Karl Marx foresaw the impoverishment of the proletariat, but when he died in 1883, the average Englishman was three times richer than in 1818, the year in which he was born.

Life expectancy

Progress over recent decades is **particularly evident** in terms of life expectancy gains. Life expectancy at birth has increased **more than twice** as much in the last century as in the 200,000 years before. The probability that a child born today will reach retirement age is higher than the probability of previous generations ever celebrating their **fifth birthday**. In 1900, the average life expectancy worldwide was 31 years; today it stands at 71 years. Of the roughly 8,000 generations of Homo sapiens since our species emerged approximately 200,000 years ago, only the last four have experienced **massive declines** in mortality rates.

Hunger

In the last 140 years there have been 106 **major famines**, each of which has cost more than 100,000 lives. The death toll has been **particularly high** in socialist countries such as the Soviet Union, China, Cambodia, Ethiopia and North Korea, killing tens of millions of people through the forced transfer of private means of production to public economies and the use of hunger as a weapon. The book The Power of Capitalism describes in painful detail the biggest socialist experiment in history, Mao’s “Great Leap Forward” at the end of the 1950s. About 45 million Chinese died at that time.

Travel And Hospitality Sectors Need To Reimagine Their Business Models

The annual number of deaths due to major famines fell to 1.4 million in the 1990s — not least as a result of the collapse of socialist systems worldwide and China’s move toward capitalism. As late as 1947, the United Nations stated that around half of the world’s population was **chronically undernourished**. By 1971, this had fallen to 29%, ten years later it was only 19%. By 2016, the proportion of people suffering from malnutrition worldwide had fallen to 11%.

**! — Cap Good — AT: Sustainability**

**Err aff — their doomerism is empirically always wrong.**

**Zitelmann ’20** — Rainer; holds doctorates in history and sociology. He initially worked at the Central Institute for Social Science Research at the Free University of Berlin before taking up the position of editor-in-chief of Ullstein-Propyläen. July 27, 2020; "**Anyone Who Doesn’t Know The Following Facts About Capitalism Should Learn Them**"; *Forbes*; [https://www.forbes.com/sites/rainerzitelmann/2020/07/27/anyone-who-doesnt-know-the-following-facts-about-capitalism-should-learn-them/?sh=4712d1863dc1; //CYang](https://www.forbes.com/sites/rainerzitelmann/2020/07/27/anyone-who-doesnt-know-the-following-facts-about-capitalism-should-learn-them/?sh=4712d1863dc1;%20//CYang)

Prophets Of Doom Have Always Got It Wrong

If there is one thing we can learn from history, it is that **doom-mongers** have **always been wrong**. In 1968, a highly acclaimed book was published with the provocative title **The Population Bomb**. The book stated that the 1970s would see the world plagued by numerous famines, which would result in hundreds of millions of people starving to death. Another book, **Famine 1975**!, predicted that famine would reach catastrophic proportions within 15 years. While anti-capitalists frequently glorify the past, they always regard the future with a **strong sense** of **doom and gloom**. In 1972, for example, the highly influential Club of Rome warned that emissions of practically every pollutant now seemed to be rising exponentially. In fact, in the decades to come, pollution would not only stop growing, but **actually decrease**. And drastically so. **Total emissions** from the world’s six leading air polluters fell by more than two-thirds between 1980 and 2014.

The Environment

Norberg also confirms the extent to which environmental conditions have improved over the last few decades. While acknowledging the impact of climate change, he also points out that the amount of energy needed to produce one unit of prosperity in the Western world has decreased by 1% per year every year over the **past 150 years**. As he demonstrates, there are ways and means to cut CO2 emissions without reducing growth, trade and access to energy. These include **more efficient production** processes, less energy-intensive construction methods, new energy sources and fuels. As he also explains, scientists and companies are now working on fourth-generation nuclear power plants, all of which have passive safety systems, that can generate **hundreds of times** more energy from the same resources and do not have the same waste problems as their predecessors. Stephen Pinker, in his book Enlightenment Now!, also confirms that all manner of environmental problems have **declined sharply** in recent decades, despite the fact that most people believe they have actually increased. Pinker also sees nuclear energy as the most important means of combating climate change. In the past, according to Pinker, people’s innovative power to solve problems has **repeatedly been underestimated** — but a departure from progress and growth, he warns, will lead to the **opposite** of what environmental and climate protectors hope for.

Redistribution?

In his book, Norberg cites a seemingly **endless array** of facts that prove the benefits of economic progress. The weekly hours worked by the average American are now 25 hours less than they were in 1860. At the same time, people enter the world of work later in life, retire earlier and live longer after retirement. All of these positive developments are the result of **technical progress** and an **economic system** that made this progress possible in the first place. A study of **180 countries** over four decades shows that the increase in income for the poorest in a society is **primarily due** to growth rather than redistribution: 77% of income growth for the poorest 40% of a population are directly linked to the average growth of a country. Capitalism is not the problem, as anti-capitalists tell us. In fact, it is capitalism that has **very successfully solved** many of the world’s **most serious problems** over the last two centuries.

**! — Cap Good — Sustainability — T/L**

**Yes decoupling---best and most recent studies AND leakage is wrong.**

Zeke **Hausfather 21**, Director, Climate and Energy at The Breakthrough Institute, "Absolute Decoupling of Economic Growth and Emissions in 32 Countries," Breakthrough Institute, 04/06/2021, https://thebreakthrough.org/issues/energy/absolute-decoupling-of-economic-growth-and-emissions-in-32-countries.

The past 30 years have seen **immense progress** in improving the quality of life for much of humanity. Extreme poverty — the number of people living on less than $1.90 per day — has fallen by nearly **two-thirds**, from 1.9 billion to around **650 million**. Life expectancy has **risen** in most of the world, along with **literacy** and **access to education**, while **infant mortality** has fallen. Despite perceptions to the contrary, the average person born today is likely to have access to **more opportunities** and have a **better quality of life** than at any other point in human history. Much of this increase in human wellbeing has been propelled by **rapid** economic growth driven largely by state-led industrial policy, particularly in poor-to-middle income countries.

However, this growth has come at a cost: between 1990 and 2019, global emissions of CO2 increased by 56%. Historically, economic growth has been closely linked to increased energy consumption — and increased CO2 emissions in particular — leading some to argue that a more prosperous world is one that necessarily has more impacts on our natural environment and climate. There is a lively academic debate about our ability to “absolutely decouple” emissions and growth — that is, the extent to which the adoption of clean energy technology can allow emissions to decline while economic growth continues.

Over the past 15 years, however, something has **begun to change**. Rather than a 21st century dominated by **coal** that energy modelers foresaw, global coal use **peaked in 2013** and is now in **structural decline**. We have succeeded in making **clean energy cheap**, with **solar power** and **battery storage** costs falling **10-fold** since 2009. The world produced **more** electricity from clean energy — **solar**, **wind**, **hydro**, and **nuclear** — than from coal over the past two years. And, according to some major oil companies, peak oil is upon us — not because we have **run out of** cheap **oil** to produce, but because demand is **falling** and companies expect **further decline** as consumers increasingly shift to **e**lectric **v**ehicle**s**.

The world has long been experiencing a relative decoupling between economic growth and CO2 emissions, with the emissions per unit of GDP falling for the past 60 years. This is the case even in countries like India and China that have been undergoing rapid economic growth. But relative decoupling alone is inadequate in a world where global CO2 emissions need to peak and decline in the next decade to give us any chance at limiting warming to well below 2℃, in line with Paris Agreement targets.

Thankfully, there is **increasing evidence** that the world is on track to **absolutely decouple** CO2 **emissions** and economic **growth** — with global CO2 emissions **potentially** having peaked **in 2019** and unlikely to **increase substantially** in the coming decade. While an emissions peak is just the first and easiest step towards eventually reaching the net-zero emissions required to stop the world from continuing to warm, it demonstrates that linkages between emissions and economic activity are **not an immutable law**, but rather simply a result of our **current** means of energy production.

In recent years we have seen **more and more** examples of absolute decoupling — economic growth accompanied by **falling** CO2 emissions. Since 2005, 32 countries with a population of at least one million people have **absolutely** decoupled emissions from economic growth, both for **terrestrial** emissions (those within national borders) and **consumption** emissions (emissions embodied in the goods consumed in a country). This includes the **U**nited **S**tates, Japan, Mexico, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Belarus, Austria, Bulgaria, El Salvador, Singapore, Denmark, Finland, Slovakia, Norway, Ireland, New Zealand, Croatia, Jamaica, Lithuania, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, and Cyprus. Figure 1, below, shows the declines in territorial emissions (blue) and increases in GDP (red).

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated

To qualify as having experienced absolute decoupling, we require countries included in this analysis to pass four separate filters: a population of at least one million (to focus the analysis on more representative cases), declining territorial emissions over the 2005-2019 period (based on a linear regression), declining consumption emissions, and increasing real GDP (on a purchasing power parity basis, using constant 2017 international $USD). We chose not to include 2020 in this analysis because it is not particularly representative of longer-term trends, and consumption and territorial emissions estimates are not yet available for many countries.

There is a wide range of rates of economic growth between 2005-2019 among countries experiencing absolute decoupling. Somewhat counterintuitively, there is no significant relationship between the rate of economic growth and the magnitude of emissions reductions within the group. While it is unlikely that there is not at least some linkage between the two factors, there are **plenty** of examples of countries (e.g., Singapore, Romania, and Ireland) experiencing both **extremely rapid** economic growth and **large reductions** in CO2 emissions.

One of the primary criticisms of some prior analyses of absolute decoupling is that they ignore **leakage**. Specifically, the offshoring of manufacturing from high-income countries over the past three decades to countries like China has led to “illusory” drops in emissions, where the emissions associated with high-income country consumption are simply shipped overseas and no longer show up in territorial emissions accounting. There is some truth in this critique, as there was a large increase in emissions embodied in imports from developing countries between 1990 and 2005. After 2005, however, **structural changes** in China and a growing domestic market led to a reversal of these trends; the amount of emissions “**exported**” from **developed** countries to **developing** countries has **actually declined** over the past 15 years.

This means that, for many countries, both **territorial** emissions and **consumption** emissions (which include any emissions “exported” to other countries) have **jointly declined**. In fact, on average, consumption emissions have been **declining slightly faster** than territorial emissions since 2005 in the 32 countries we identify as experiencing absolute decoupling. Figure 2, below, shows the change in consumption emissions (teal) and GDP (red) between 2005 and 2019.

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated

There is a pretty wide variation in the extent to which these countries have reduced their territorial and consumption emissions since 2005. Some countries — such as the UK, Denmark, Finland, and Singapore – have seen territorial emissions fall faster than consumption emissions, while the US, Japan, Germany, and Spain (among others) have seen consumption emissions fall faster. Figure 3 shows reductions in consumption and territorial emissions for each country, with the size of the dot representing the size of the population in 2019.

[Chart omitted]

**! — Cap Good — Sustainability — AT: AI**

**Literally *1984*.**

Michael **Bennett** and Sean Welsh **22**, Bennett, PhD student in AI; Welsh, PhD in Philosophy, 1-16-2022, "Will AI Spell the End of Capitalism?," https://quillette.com/2022/01/16/ai-and-the-end-of-capitalism/, jy

In 2018, the Washington Post published an opinion piece by Feng Xiang entitled “AI Will Spell the End of Capitalism.” Professor Feng teaches law at Tsinghua University and is one of China’s most prominent legal scholars. The core of his argument is set forth in the opening paragraphs:

If AI remains under the control of market forces, it will inexorably result in a super-rich oligopoly of data billionaires who reap the wealth created by robots that displace human labor, leaving massive unemployment in their wake.

But China’s socialist market economy could provide a solution to this. If AI rationally allocates resources through big data analysis, and if robust feedback loops can supplant the imperfections of “the invisible hand” while fairly sharing the vast wealth it creates, a planned economy that actually works could at last be achievable.

There are a couple of things wrong with this. First, there is the obvious point that Marxists have been prophesying the end of capitalism **since 1848**. Second, Der Spiegel has run covers prophesying massive unemployment due to robots since 1964. These predictions are yet to eventuate.

Feng hopes that state-owned AI will revive the long-dead idea of socialist central planning. He is probably wrong about this because he **overestimates the capabilities of AI** and what it is good for. His reference to “big data analysis” indicates that he is referring to the particular class of data-hungry machine learning (ML) models popular today. These algorithms require a **lot of data** because they rely on mimicry rather than understanding and independent reasoning. ML does **not work like human learning**. Human children do not need ten thousand tagged images to tell the difference between cats and dogs, but contemporary ML does.

Given a particular task, if the purpose is known, a human can seek to serve that purpose **even if there are surprises**, i.e., unanticipated changes in circumstance. The **opposite is true** for a digital mimic that knows nothing of the purpose it serves. This is why anything **novel** or out of the ordinary tends to **break ML**. For example, the error rate of systems looking to distinguish feral trees from native trees can increase dramatically if the live aerial photos start to differ from the photos used to train the model. Shifts in satellite orbit, the time of day pictures are taken and even modest moves in geography and vegetation can degrade model accuracy. Contemporary ML-based AI is very much a case of highly trained horses for **very specific courses**.

As is commonly said, artificial intelligence is **brittle** (but fast) whereas human intelligence is **robust** (but slow). If the task is to land a drone, **provide song recommendations**, or even predict protein folding, then mimicry can work **well**, given a sufficiently varied quantity of training data. If, on the other hand, rationality or the ability to provide **nuanced reasoning for past decisions is required**, mimicry **flops**. The ability to deal with the unexpected is one of the great strengths of Homo sapiens.

Feng’s claim is simply that AI oligarchs are bad and the only credible fix is a “socialist market economy” governed by a Marxist one-party state. This is a false dichotomy; our choice is **not between** these **two extremes**. We agree that AI oligarchs are an unattractive prospect. However, there are existing remedies for cartels, monopolies, and harmful AI products in the pluralist West. **Targeted regulation** is a **better fix** for capitalism’s defects than a **revolution** led by an alliance of workers and peasants. As a result of Frances Haugen’s testimony, many in the US Congress are looking to **clip the wings of social media**. The EU has **led the world in regulating AI** products, introducing rights to explanations, rights to be forgotten, and rights to data privacy. The Australian government has released draft legislation to expose anonymous trolls to defamation actions by removing the “platform” shield of social media and making them “publishers” accountable for the views their users post just like traditional media. The “wild west” days of the information age are over.

But Feng offers a typically Marxist “**all or nothing**” argument. To fix the problems of competitive capitalism, his solution is a Marxist political monopoly based on the revolutionary expropriation of the expropriators. His argument is unconvincing because it is based on a hopelessly dated **caricature of capitalism**. “Laissez-faire capitalism as we have known it,” he says, “can lead nowhere but to a dictatorship of AI oligarchs who gather rents because the intellectual property they own rules over the means of production.”

The obvious problem with this argument is that laissez-faire capitalism is **extinct**, long since abandoned in favour of **regulation**, **anti-trust legislation**, and **redistribution through the welfare state**. Feng overstates the **market power** of the AI oligarchs, most of whom make their money selling ads in a competitive market. He says nothing about the **coercive power** of a **political monopoly**, that can silence policy competition by throwing it into the **gulag**.

The **most sinister aspect** of current AI is **what a one-party state can do with it**. Silicon Valley has given China the technical tools to set up the world of 1984. Now the **party telescreen** can monitor the likes of **Winston Smith** 24/7. Instead of a screen on the wall, it’s the mobile phone in your pocket connected to the Internet that can be used to track you and monitor what you click on, who and what you message, and keep you and all your fellow citizens under constant surveillance for “counter-revolutionary” views. In China, the Internet and social media have evolved to be a **tyrant’s dream**. Comrade political officers in technology firms monitor online posts for “objectionable” material and have **unlimited powers of “moderation.”**

The Achilles heel of this political strategy is that it creates a culture in which people are afraid to think and speak freely. When you have to filter every word you say in case it offends the powers that be, you are strongly motivated to avoid risky creative thinking. In a society where the state can control everything and purge celebrity and wealth, talented people vote with their **feet** and migrate to places where they can **get rich** and famous and say what they think. Those that remain settle for the safety of government-approved groupthink. As a result of this systemic dampening of creativity, the economy **stagnates** in the long run.

Aspects of contemporary AI theory align with the intuitions of Karl Popper as expressed in The Open Society and Its Enemies. Driven mostly by reaction to the totalitarian horrors of fascism and communism in World War II, Popper intuited that social truth is best served by policy competition and piecemeal social engineering **not policy monopoly**. Contemporary AI, in the form of discussion of the exploration/exploitation tradeoff in reinforcement learning (a variant of ML), explains why.

Exploitation is a strategy whereby the AI takes a decision assumed to be optimal based on data observed to date. In essence, it is about trusting past data to be a reliable guide to the future, or at least today. Exploration, by contrast, is a strategy that consists of not taking the decision that seems to be optimal based on existing past data. The AI agent bets on the fact that observed data are not yet sufficient to correctly identify the best option. Obviously, exploitation works better in closed and well-understood systems, but exploration is a better bet in those that are open and poorly understood.

Even if decisions are made by the most generally intelligent AI possible, the optimal strategy for that AI is to **subdivide tasks**, **duplicate itself**, and **specialize for local conditions**. In other words, a swarm of individuals each making their own choices can learn from the best of what its population tries. If all individuals are constrained, then the ability of the swarm to learn and change is [destroyed] crippled. There are exceptions, particularly where the cost of an individual failing is so high it is comparable to the whole population failing (for instance, letting more people have access to a button that ends the world is worse than letting fewer people have access to this button). But, generally speaking, more **distributed control** consistently beats more **centralised control**. By employing many different, often contradictory policies at once, we constantly explore as we exploit. Applying this recent technical insight retrospectively to history, it explains the **sustained stagnation of Marxist economies**.

Presently, no functioning state has either completely central or distributed control. We are all somewhere in between. In the mid-19th century, when The Communist Manifesto was published, there was hardly any spending on social services. Income tax was three percent in the UK, there was no such thing as company tax, and the welfare state did not exist. What existed was the parish and the poorhouse. In the days of Gladstone and Disraeli, with property-based suffrage and a budget than went mostly on the Army, the Navy, and servicing debt incurred during the Crimean War, one could plausibly claim, as Marx and Engels did, that “the executive of the modern state was nothing but a committee for managing the common affairs of the bourgeoisie.” In the 19th century, spending by the UK government was less than a 10th of GDP. Today it is a third. Half the UK budget, one-sixth of GDP, goes on health, education, and welfare.

A degree of central planning is desirable to provide infrastructure, to support basic research, and to ensure that everyone has access to education and health services. Regulation is required to enforce contracts, to facilitate cooperation, to provide minimum standards for products and services, and to enforce rules on safety, pollution, and so on. **However**, as an overall policy, maximising **individual autonomy** within reason, erring towards **computational efficiency** and distributed control, will yield dramatically **better outcomes than central control by the AI of a one-party state.**

Central planning ignores what is arguably the greatest advantage of distributed control and local adaptation: **error correction**. It also ignores the fact that **“fairness” is notoriously hard to define** in AI terms, assuming resources are to be fairly allocated. A central planner might select what is best for an average human, but what is best is often far from obvious. Humans are **quite dissimilar** from one another. We share goals only in the most **general sense** (for example, we seek to avoid pain, find food, take shelter, and so forth). We **rarely agree** on what we want to do today or any other day, and our beliefs about how to achieve things are often inconsistent.

The best possible central planner, mathematically, is a pareto-optimal super-intelligence. This is a software agent that learns faster to predict more accurately than any other agent, on average across all possible tasks. This is the theoretical upper limit of intelligence (allowing for debate over the exact definition of intelligence itself). However, even this theoretical perfection will always be out-performed by those with a more specifically relevant inductive bias toward a given task (those who are less intelligent in general, but more suited to the task at hand). In other words, even the most intelligent being possible would make mistakes when compared with the possibilities presented by distributed control, localised adaptation, and selective evolution. The same goes not just for correcting mistakes, but for improving our lot in life. Every beneficial innovation in history was an instance of an individual breaking ranks to correct a perceived flaw in the norm, to adapt to the specific situation at hand. Innovation requires disobedience. To centralise control is to encourage stagnation.

The problem with state-run monopolies is that they are **inherently inefficient** because they lack the error correction provided by competition. Markets provide **error correction** in the form of people **deciding products suck** and **buying elsewhere**. In the realm of ideas, error correction occurs when people say a party’s policy does not work, but this option is removed when free speech is curtailed. In China, those who criticise government policy (or government officials) **disappear** and get silenced. Only a lucky few like Peng Shuai have global profiles high enough to get noticed. Notwithstanding their claims about “participatory” democracy, in the one-party state, dissidents and innovators are purged in darkness.

The history of the communist world is **replete with economic disaster**. **Millions** died as a result of famines caused by Stalin and Mao. Marxist doctrine underlies the economic underperformance of **China compared to Taiwan**. AI **cannot save Marxism**, but it can be used by Marxists to **serve their agendas of surveillance** and **social control**. AI can be used to bring about the death of democracy and enable the rule of a digital Big Brother.

Forced to choose between AI oligarchs who make fortunes selling ads, regulated by elected governments that the people can replace, or a society ruled by AI platforms staffed with political officers who repress all criticism of the party line, the **former is preferable**.

**! — Cap Good — Sustainability — AT: Physics**

**Newton goes aff.**

Oliver **Waters 18**, degrees in Science, Law, and Philosophy, 11-13-2018, "The Strange Necessity of Infinite Economic Growth," https://medium.com/@oliverwaters\_76079/the-strange-necessity-of-infinite-economic-growth-ebc2e505cdf1, jy

Since the Earth consists only of a finite amount of matter and energy, we clearly cannot indefinitely consume its contents without eventually drowning in waste or starving to death. But even this obvious insight contains a misconception. We **never** actually ‘consume’ matter and energy in the first place. We are forever bound by the **first law** of thermodynamics, which dictates that matter and energy are **never created** or **destroyed**, only **transformed**.

This brings us back to economic growth. Fundamentally, it is the process of human beings transforming matter and energy into **more valuable forms** via the development of **theoretical and practical knowledge**. It is ‘economic value’ which increases **exponentially**, measured (very)roughly by GDP. The crucial point is that while the extraction of finite physical resources **cannot increase indefinitely on a finite planet**, economic growth **actually can**.

Steven Pinker describes the infinite potential of economic growth eloquently in his book Enlightenment Now:

‘…it’s a **fallacy** to think that people “**need resources**” in the first place. They need ways of growing food, moving around, lighting their homes, displaying information, and other sources of well-being. They satisfy these needs with **ideas**: with recipes, formulas, techniques, blueprints, and algorithms for manipulating the physical world to give them what they want. The human mind, with its recursive combinatorial power, can explore an **infinite space of ideas**, and is not limited by the **quantity of any particular kind of stuff** in the ground.’

Of course, it’s abundantly clear from history that most civilisations have failed miserably to generate and implement the requisite knowledge to provide for the needs and desires of their citizens. This brings us to Hickel’s empirical claim: that our own current trajectory is leading us to disaster.

2. Prediction or prophesy?

One might reasonably suspect that the promise of infinite economic growth would only be plausible for a sufficiently advanced civilisation — particularly one that has managed to wean itself off fossil fuels. We should therefore ask if decoupling economic growth from resource use is likely to be feasible given our relatively primitive level of technological development.

On Hickel’s account, things are not looking good. He cites several studies which suggest there is no way to avoid running out of resources if we continue with our current rate of economic growth.

The main problem with these studies is that they tend to presume a **certain fixed ‘biocapacity’** of the Earth. This concept and the corresponding notion of humanity’s ‘ecological footprint’ have **many problems**, the most fundamental of which is that they depend **arbitrarily** on our **current level of scientific and technological development**. This is because the maximum level of human consumption that our planet can support is **not fixed** by some natural law — it depends entirely on the **sophistication of our technology** to convert raw materials efficiently into life-supporting forms.

The very same lump of matter and energy has **vastly different properties** to us humans depending on the level of and quality of our knowledge. Major scientific breakthroughs therefore allow us to **do dramatically more with less**. One kilogram of **uranium** contains two to three million times more energy than the same amount of coal or oil, but this fact went **completely unnoticed** by everyone up until fundamental breakthroughs in physics in the 20th century.

Similarly, the invention of **desalination** techniques unlocked the effectively **boundless supply of seawater**. While the rest of the Middle East suffers water shortages, Israel has a **surplus** — thanks to advances that have reduced the costs of desalination by two-thirds since 1990.

One study mentioned by Hickel calculated that we’ll be using 95 billion metric tons of resources globally in 2050. But this figure is meaningless without a corresponding estimate of what fraction that is of the Earth’s total resources. And we **can’t know what Earth’s total resources are** because we cannot predict future fundamental technological advances.

At one point Hickel declares that the sustainable level of global resource use is about 50 billion metric tons a year, without citing any source or justification. The authors of the 2012 study he references cited this same figure as a possible upper limit on global resource extraction, being roughly the level of extraction there was in 1992. But why choose this year? Because that was the year of the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. In other words, it was picked out of a hat.

Even where these studies make allowances for future improvements in how efficiently we use resources, they only allow for greater efficiency in the use of resources **we currently know about**. If the future is anything like the past, we will discover **whole new ways to build and power things**, and replace whole classes of raw materials we currently depend upon.

Then there’s the fact that these studies’ predicted improvements in resource efficiency are themselves woefully pessimistic. The most optimistic prediction in the studies Hickel mentions is that resource efficiency will double by 2050. But almost any consumer product we use today requires **far fewer resources** to build and run than their equivalent 32 years ago. While it’s a somewhat trite example, take the iPhone. This one product has replaced landline push-button phones, pagers, cameras and camcorders, calendars, alarm clocks, audio-recorders, flashlights, maps, GPS, credit cards, and more. We should only expect this kind of dematerialization to accelerate over the next 32 years, given the rapid advances being made in nanotechnology and materials science.

This fundamental fallacy driving the pessimism of these studies was eloquently captured by David Deutsh in his book The Beginning of Infinity. In the chapter ‘Unsustainable’, Deutsch reflects on Paul Erlich warning his high school class in 1971 of the impending global ecological collapse, a tragedy which never came to pass:

‘Ehrlich thought that he was investigating a planet’s physical resources and predicting their rate of decline. In fact he was prophesying the **content of future knowledge**. And, by envisaging a future in which only the best knowledge of 1971 was deployed, he was implicitly **assuming** that only a small and rapidly dwindling set of problems **would ever be solved again**.’

It’s perfectly acceptable and prudent to make predictions about future resource scarcity, so long as you remember that such predictions are based on our current level of scientific knowledge. Such analyses play a crucial role in motivating us to invest more in advancing our knowledge, but Hickel mistakenly interprets their findings as **fatalistic** signs that we must cease economic growth altogether. And this, as I’ll show below, is simply **not an option**.

**Never give socialists a math textbook.**

David **Schwartzman 8**, former Professor Emiritus at the New School for Social Research, 2008, "The Limits to Entropy: the Continuing Misuse of Thermodynamics in Environmental and Marxist theory," http://www.redandgreen.org/Documents/Limits%20to%20entropy%20final.htm, jy

As discussed earlier, a common if not predominant use of Georgescu-Roegen’s theory of entropy since Rifkin’s popularization in the 1980s has been to create the **illusionary appearance of a robust physical basis** for neo-Malthusian and anti-development ideologies, not to support a **Marxist critique of neo-classical economics**. Hence Burkett’s embrace of Georgescu-Roegen’s theory is curious given Burkett’s own valuable critique of neo-Malthusian views (Burkett, 1998).

In Rifkin’s work, the entropy concept is extended to its **apocryphal limits**. Entropy appears as a pollutant, as an indicator of cosmic disorder, the inexorable outcome of all economic activity, the mother of **ecocatastrophe**. (Georgescu-Roegen enthusiastically endorses Rifkin’s treatment of the subject (Georgescu-Roegen, 1980). Rifkin, as noted, favors a pre-industrial global population of less than one billion people, and rejects the use of computers since they generate entropy (1989 edition, 190-191)! Should we wonder whether Rifkin’s more recent books were composed on a word processor rather than a less entropic typewriter?

Entropy is **too abstract and coarse** a concept to illuminate most issues in the environmental discourse unless the full context of its use is thought through—the “ascent from the abstract to the concrete” in Marxist epistemology (Ilyenkov, 1982). Its invocation in the environmental discourse commonly serves **little purpose** other than **to avoid clarity** while creating the **illusion of rigor** because a concept from theoretical physics is used. Is entropy a useful measure of unsustainability? A consideration of the physical entropic flux (roughly equivalent to the radiant energy flux) from the Earth’s surface should demonstrate that appealing to anthropogenic (man-made) entropy production as a measure of negative environmental impacts fails to recognize their real qualitative aspects.

This entropic flux is dominated by the natural heat production from both solar radiation interacting with the Earth’s surface and incoming radiation from the greenhouse effect. Any plausible anthropogenic contribution is **trivial**. The greatest potential anthropogenic contribution arises from global **warming**. Since to a good first approximation the entropic flux is equal to the incoming solar flux divided by the absolute temperature (Schwartzman, 1999, 2002, 162-163), a 5 deg C global rise in surface temperature will lower this flux by **about 2%,** which is derived from the ratio of absolute temperatures (288/293), the global incoming solar energy flux being the same (recall that the denominator of the entropy flux expression is always the absolute temperature). Whatever the change in entropic flux arising from changes in the Earth’s surface temperature, the entropic flux in itself will tell us **nothing about actual impacts** of global warming, which are both the linear and **nonlinear** outcomes of fossil fuel consumption and other sources of anthropogenic greenhouse gases. The concrete linkage of cause and effect must be worked out from application of the sciences of biogeochemistry, climatology, oceanography, ecology etc. Likewise, while the entropy of mixing gives some insight into general aspects of pollution it fails to capture the relevant qualitative aspects so critical to the health of humans and nature (Schwartzman, 1996).

On a cosmological scale, the increase in entropy in the universe is inevitable as expressed in the Second Law, but this very increase is the necessary requirement for the **emergence** and **maintenance of self-organized systems**. The debt of self-organizing systems to “chaos” is the environmental increase in entropy. As we shall see sustainable societal self-organization on the planet Earth is **only limited** by the **low-entropy solar flux**, a limit with **no practical consequences** far into the future, with the entropic debt paid as the **heat flux to space**, the **ultimate heat sink**. This future, I argue, is only achievable by the contingent outcome of global red-green struggle.

Given the mineral and fossil fuels reserves of the Earth’s crust, the "economic system is... doomed to "run down" as the low entropy material resources on earth are dissipated and become unavailable" (Burkett, 2005, 135, quoting Georgescu-Roegen). We do **not** need a **fallacious fourth law to tell us this**, the first and second laws provide sufficient explanation. Without the use of incoming solar radiation, this system will ultimately run out of available energy to do work. It is important to point out that even without the use of incoming solar radiation as a prime source of energy (aside from the low efficiency collection by photosynthesis, the basis of agriculture), this system is **not isolated** since waste heat is dissipated, ultimately **radiated into space**. Nuclear energy, even fusion power will only postpone this ultimate fate in a real economy limited to the terrestrial environment since this energy source utilizes the finite reserves of fissionable (or, in the future, fusionable) raw material. **The solar fusion reactor 93 million miles away** is the **true sustainable alternative**.

Thus the inescapable flaw of the fourth law is its neglect of the possible flow of energy into/out of the system which is defined as closed but not isolated. By converting low entropy, high temperature energy (solar radiation) to high entropy, low temperature heat, work can be produced to **recycle indefinitely** (footnote 2). A caveat: indefinitely does not mean "eternally" (even protons may have a finite half-life). To get concrete about this issue, the relevant time scale is hundreds, even millions of years, not eternity. Moreover, we should be considering the urgent prospect of solarizing and demilitarizing human society in the 21st century, not in the distant future, when humanity will plausibly expand outward in our solar system and even further into the galaxy if it survives the present epoch of destructive capital reproduction and future challenges.

Interestingly, in one text Georgescu-Roegen (1976, 8) incorrectly defines “closed” as entailing no exchange of matter or energy with [the] environment (recall that in thermodynamics this is defined as an **“isolated” system**, not a **“closed” system**); he still maintained that according to the second law matter along with energy is subject to irrevocable dissipation. This confusion may be linked to his pessimistic view on harnessing solar energy since the latter is the relevant energy flux to consider for the closed but not isolated system containing economic activity on the earth’s surface. Thus, immediately following his formulation of the fourth law in his 1980 text we find his argument that there is no immediate prospect of solar energy (high efficiency) going from feasible to viable, i.e., escaping from its perpetual status as a parasite on fossil fuels, the dominant contemporary energy source. Parenthetically, I found no evidence that Georgescu-Roegen ever explicitly corrected himself by acknowledging his definition of closed systems in this paper (Georgescu-Roegen 1976) was wrong.

But Burkett claims that the concept of unavailable matter, “the inevitability of friction, corrosion and decomposition” transcending energy reductionism is critical to Georgescu-Roegen’s insight. Therefore, Burkett argues that since the “earth is open to massive solar energy inflows but basically closed materially, it is not surprising that low-entropy matter, not energy, emerges most clearly as the ultimate constraint on human production” (Burkett, 2005, 119-120). I welcome Burkett’s implied rejection of Georgescu-Roegen’s views on solar viability. But his argument regarding the implications of “unavailable matter” is highly problematic, recognizing that it is a partial retreat from the strong version of the fourth law. On what time scale? What are the real and potential fluxes of low entropy solar energy that can reclaim this dissipated matter? Just what determines the “unavailability” of high entropy matter? Does this alleged constraint imply that near future migration to the moon or asteroid Belt is necessary? Is waste heat a critical concern with respect to the utilization of solar energy? And finally is this spectre of “unavailable matter” really relevant to a future solarized physical economy? My short answer to each of the previous three questions is: no.

What is the ultimate limit to global energy consumption? Presently the global anthropogenic (human-created) energy flux is equal to 0.03% of solar flux to land. Or, to put it another way, humanity currently uses an amount of energy, mostly from fossil fuels, equivalent to **0.03%** of the solar energy reaching the land surface of earth. Hence tapping this solar flux has a huge potential as the energy basis of a solar utopia, with much smaller impacts on global ecology than the present unsustainable reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear power (Schwartzman, 1996). Thus, for a solar energy source, the waste heat flux back into space is to a very good first approximation not incremental to the natural infrared flux from the Earth’s surface, at least until such time as human energy demand increases many hundreds of times. This is precisely the same argument made by Kaberger and Mansson (2001) referenced but unfortunately not addressed in Burkett’s paper. Of course, I am not claiming that the first basis for human civilization, low efficiency biomass energy, can be the basis of this solarized economy. Only high-efficiency solar energy can do this. The conflation of the two is common in Neo-Malthusian treatment (e.g., Huesemann, 2001, 2003).

Recycling

Now, more specifically on the possibility of "complete" recycling in an open system, Burkett’s discussion of this issue (Burkett, 2005, 132) lacks sufficient concreteness with respect to a real physical economy on the earth’s surface, consistent with Georgescu-Roegen and Daly’s abstract treatment. In practical terms, 100% recycling efficiency is **not required** (see Kaberger and Mansson's (2001) illuminating discussion). Given the possibilities of a future dematerialized solar economy, with a lower throughput than now, and of course recognizing that current information technology is not really dematerialized under current capital reproduction, as Burkett rightfully argues, (2005,135), the huge solar flux is again the basis of any ultimate limit to practical recycling on the earth's surface, and not the entropic flux of waste heat. The latter would be dissipated anyway by the absorption of solar energy on a land surface (with an albedo, i.e., reflectivity, of about 0.3-0.4, with 0 being perfectly absorbing and 1 being perfectly reflecting (like an ideal white surface). Under these conditions, the "tremendous increase in the entropy of the environment' or the “adverse material effects of waste heat on eco-systems” resulting from recycling (Burkett, 2005,132-133) is an **illusion** for a solarized economy as Kaberger and Mansson (2001) show. Unfortunately, Burkett’s discussion of the case made for the plausibility of total recycling in an industrial society (citing Ayres, 1999) does not **confront the qualitative difference** between a solarized and a depletable-energy-based economy.

**! — NATO Good**

**NATO is anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. The critique’s ideology is reductionist.**

**Hudson 22** [Sam Hudson; undergraduate studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge; 3-29-2022; "The **Progressive Case** for NATO"; Areo; https://areomagazine.com/2022/03/29/the-progressive-case-for-nato/; KL]

Many will see the Young Labour Twitter account saga as yet another battle in the perpetual civil war between the left and the right of Labour, and as Young Labour—one of the last bastions of Corbynite socialist supremacy—attempting to undermine Keir Starmer’s leadership, which they see as a betrayal of Labour values. While Starmer’s moderation on economic policy, as seen in his attempts to reposition the Labour Party as business-friendly and his equivocations over tax policy, may be misplaced overreactions to Corbyn’s devastating loss in 2019, his return to foreign policy more in line with international norms certainly is not. Corbyn’s anti-American, “anti-imperialist” politics not only alienated much of the electorate (according to a 2020 poll, 65% of people in the UK support NATO), but were only dubiously progressive. The left was correct to call out America’s foreign policy blunders in Iraq and elsewhere—however, constructive criticism of American overreach has now been replaced by an **overarching**, **hyper-reductive** ideology that places America and neoliberalism at the **centre** of the world’s ills. Corbyn’s sympathy for Nicolás Maduro’s authoritarian regime in Venezuela and his flirtations with Hamas and Hezbollah are symptomatic of this outlook. And there is **no clearer example** of the manifestation of this ideology than in the supposedly left-wing **criticisms of NATO**, which Corbyn himself espouses.

Young Labour’s preposterous idea that it was “NATO aggression” that precipitated the Russian invasion betrays a **fundamental misunderstanding** of NATO’s function. NATO troops were deployed in Poland and the Baltic states in a **defensive response** to the **largest military build-up** since **World War II**. This was **not escalatory brinkmanship** by the US trying to impose its will on the world. Unlike the Russians in Belarus and in Russian-occupied Crimea, the US offered **no shows of force** and undertook no “military exercises,” as they are euphemistically called. This was NATO operating at its most **fundamental level**: as an alliance for **mutual defence**. Countries that still bear **deep scars** from **centuries** of **Russian imperialism** were **understandably concerned** at the potential of spillover from any conflict in Ukraine and so—**quite reasonably**—requested additional support from their larger NATO allies. It is rather **ironic** that the “anti-imperialist” contingent of the left would have quite **happily abandoned** the very defensive commitments that have prevented these sovereign nations from being **preyed on** by a **revanchist**, **imperialist** Russia.

Some of NATO’s left-wing critics argue that it is the organisation’s expansion into Eastern Europe that has forced Russia onto a paranoid warpath, but this argument does not hold water either. Countries join NATO by **democratic consent**—a fact that only the **most absurd** CIA conspiracy theories can explain away. Had Russia been a **good neighbour** to its Eastern European former client and satellite states, perhaps NATO would not have expanded beyond Germany. Instead, Russian leaders since Boris Yeltsin have viewed Russia’s **former sphere** as the country’s **birth right**, crushing nascent separatist movements within Russia’s own borders with **horrific brutality**, while supporting pro-Russian separatist movements in **Moldova** and **Georgia**. This cynical policy would have collapsed under the weight of its own contradictions had it not devolved into the blood-and-soil imperialism that we see playing out in the invasion of Ukraine. Yeltsin may be remembered through rose-tinted glasses as a cheery drunkard, but his desperation to maintain Russia’s status as a superpower set Russian foreign policy on course to where it is today. Putin has now simply taken that foreign policy to its logical conclusion. No wonder much of Eastern Europe wished to join NATO, the one alliance that could give these nations credible anti-imperialist protection.

NATO is too often **viewed reductively**, as an American sphere of influence, in much the same way as the **Warsaw Pact** countries comprised a Soviet sphere of influence. It is true that a **degree of alignment** with some American foreign policy goals and values is implicit in NATO membership, but this is in **no way** equivalent to the influence the Soviets exerted over their client states during the Cold War. NATO members are **sovereign states** and have **acted against** US interests in the past. For instance, Turkey recently (wrongly) invaded America’s Kurdish allies in Syria. Likewise, NATO (**rightly**) **refused** US requests for assistance during the invasion of **Iraq**. As these **concrete actions** demonstrate, NATO is **far more** than an American-led sphere and has remained **grounded** in the **democratic principles** upon which it was founded, even though the US is able to leverage more power than it did at NATO’s founding in 1949. The characterisation of NATO as a tool of American imperialism, then, is **demonstrably false**.

Criticism of NATO is not limited to the realm of geopolitical machinations. Many on the left see it as a vessel for American business interests and neoliberal capitalism. History has **shown otherwise**. It was Clement Attlee’s British Labour government that signed the North Atlantic Treaty in 1947, founding NATO. And while Article 2 of the treaty stipulates that signatories should “eliminate conflict in their international economic policies” and “encourage economic collaboration,” this did not prevent Attlee’s government from being one of the most transformative in British history: it established the modern welfare state and continues to be widely celebrated by the Labour left today. **Norway** and **Denmark**, both **founding members** of NATO, are **flourishing** social democracies where social democrats and **democratic socialists** have spent **more time** in power than in opposition since 1949.

Clearly, NATO **has not impeded** progressive political movements within its member states. In fact, the existence of NATO has had **positive repercussions** for the European left. The unification of Western Europe under a single military alliance forced member states to **abandon** the **nationalist** and **revanchist grudges** that had dogged European politics for **centuries**. The political moderation this encouraged has meant that—even in those European countries where social democrats have not had much political success—the right-wing opposition generally takes the form of Christian Democrats, who are far more moderate than the reactionary, nationalist conservative parties that were prominent prior to World War II. At the same time, the strength of NATO’s collective opposition to the Soviet Union prevented that brand of highly authoritarian and reactionary socialism from gaining traction in Europe. Instead, leftist movements have been largely characterised by a more liberal tradition, which opposes state-sponsored violence and emphasises human rights.

Far from propping up the military-industrial complex—as NATO is often accused of doing—mutual defence and the guarantee of peace have allowed **defence spending** to be **dramatically decreased** throughout Europe. Part of this decrease may be attributed to the end of the Cold War—but defence spending has been on the decline since the 1960s and this is at least partly due to the peace between Western European neighbours that NATO has assured. In fact, defence spending has arguably declined too much. Most nations in the alliance have still not met NATO’s defence spending target of 2% of GDP, leaving America to foot the remaining bill. While this has meant that many European nations have been able to develop their welfare states, this has been at the expense of Americans, who still face a particularly vicious brand of capitalism with limited safety nets.

As Germany’s overnight policy shift following the invasion of Ukraine has shown, committing to the 2% target is not a tall order. It would enable us to maintain our collective defence while allowing America a much-needed financial reprieve. It would also diminish America’s influence upon the alliance, allowing European nations more of a say on collective defence policy and procurement. Hopefully, this would encourage a shift away from the American military-industrial complex and toward a more competitive, less monopolised defence industry, which holds less sway over governments.

History is often viewed as an inexorable march of progress and development from the barbarism of war to enlightened peace. This seems to be the underlying thinking of NATO’s left-wing detractors. But just as Rome fell, peace and progress are never inevitable, nor should they ever be **taken for granted**. Francis Fukuyama’s argument that we have reached the end of history has been widely derided by many on the left who find the idea that humanity will not progress past neoliberal democracy absurd. I agree with them—but in looking only forward, they have **failed** to **look back**. The fact that they see capitalist liberal democracy as the **archenemy** of peace and progress is not only **extraordinarily privileged** but **terrifyingly dangerous**. The west’s terrible interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have confirmed this narrative for many. This thinking explains Young Labour’s tweets: NATO is to blame for Putin’s invasion, since neoliberalism is the sole force of evil in the world. However, as the tanks rolled into Ukraine, history returned once more to remind us that there are **far darker**, **more dangerous** enemies of progress. It is these enemies that NATO continues to **forestall** and, in doing so, allow for the **peace** and **progress** of which we Europeans are beneficiaries today. While it is a tragedy that it has taken the whiplash of war for us to look back at history, I hope these events may foster newfound gratitude for NATO and the peace and progress that it has helped achieve. I look forward to the day when the progressive left—of which I am proud to be a part—will view NATO, alongside the NHS and the welfare state, as one of Labour’s greatest achievements.

**NATO is good. Avoiding complex discussions in favor of monolithic criticisms of NATO *is* Western imperialism. It’s important to understand regional perspectives. Defending Russia aggression and ignoring authoritarian threats make NATO worse.**

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In the wake of Russia’s war against Ukraine, demand for NATO membership has spiked once again, even in the historically neutral countries of Finland and Sweden. Further south, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are also desperately seeking a fast track to NATO membership.

Many in the West see NATO as a tool of U.S. imperialism and empire, and in important ways it is. NATO has afforded the United States the legitimacy to militaristically intervene abroad, most notably in the case of Libya in 2011. NATO is both a cause and effect of the United States’ global hegemony via its grand strategy of primacy, despite the end of Cold War rivalries.

In the post-Cold War era, **however**, NATO **did not grow** simply because the United States dictated it. On the contrary, **foreign demands** for security assurances have **consistently spurred** NATO’s enlargement long before Russia’s war in Ukraine.

NATO’s eastward enlargement is member-driven. Yet, both pro-NATO and **anti-NATO** Western commentators and analysts often **ignore** Eastern European **regional voices**. They reduce Eastern Europeans to **objects without agency** that the West may choose to act upon.

Unless scholars and **policymakers** delve into the **regional complexities** and the **demand-side** of NATO membership in **earnest**, they will miss **important dynamics** at play and make it harder to **steer** or **predict** future U.S. foreign policy trends. They will continue to understand world politics only through the **preferences** and **choices** of **Western leaders**.

A **more complete** picture of NATO’s trajectory in the twenty-first century emerges only when **allowing room** for the **agency** of other countries and citizens. Even a more restrained U.S. foreign policy requires an assessment of why there remains so much **local demand** for NATO, which is partially driven by the West’s complicity in spurring authoritarian regimes in Europe.

NATO Membership Was Popular in Eastern Europe

It is now clear to even casual observers why countries bordering Russia have sought NATO membership, often with high public support at every step of the way. These countries have been ringing the alarm on escalating Russian aggression for decades.

And still, prominent Western voices, from **conservative libertarians** and European leftists to **American neorealists** and Fox News’ **Tucker Carlson**, blame NATO’s eastward expansion for Russia’s aggression. They claim that Ukraine’s nonalignment is a **core national interest** for Russia. The Democratic Socialists of America even released a statement blaming Western imperialist expansion for stoking Russia’s legitimate fears. Of course, Russian foreign policy perpetuates this **same narrative**.

But as neo-realist John Mearsheimer has himself admitted, Ukraine presents a vital national interest to Russia because “Putin is a **19th Century** man.” In other words, Ukraine’s NATO aspirations are **only threats** to Russian core interests when seen through the lens of its **imperial past** and renewed imperialistic **ambitions**. Also telling is Putin’s recent statement on **Sweden and Finland**’s pending NATO membership applications. He proclaimed that Russia “has **no problem** … these countries do not pose a **direct threat** to Russia.” Only Ukraine poses a problem. Yet, **neither Ukraine nor NATO** directly threatens Russia’s **borders**, **sovereignty**, or **physical survival** in **any clear way**. Moreover, **until now**, Ukraine had **little chance** of joining NATO in the coming years. Therefore, it is **imperialism**, **not** core interests or **NATO enlargement**, that drives Russian aggression in Ukraine.

These prominent voices do not consider that **Russian aggression** has been the **primary reason** Baltic and Eastern European countries have **sought** NATO’s protection. At its most basic iteration, Russia aims to halt NATO expansion to preserve a **privileged sphere of influence** and **domination** in Eastern Europe. In contrast, Eastern European countries seek NATO membership to ensure their **survival** as **sovereign** nation-states against a regional imperial power. NATO, **with all its flaws**, has been a **guarantor of sovereignty** for its European members.

It is not surprising that new members have shown **strong public support** for NATO prior to accession. As shown in the table below, ten out of eleven countries that joined NATO in the 2000s did so with public support over 50 percent, often even over 70 percent, prior to membership. The only country that bucked this trend was Montenegro, which at the time of polling in 2017 was divided between pro-Western and pro-Russian factions.

Public opinion data taken from the Pew Research Center in 2021 continues to show strong, consistent support for NATO among Eastern European and Balkan countries.

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Note: Publicly-available poll sources hyperlinked within the table. Most recently available data prior to the accession of the country listed.

Therefore, it is **misleading** to use the language of NATO “expanding into” the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in 1999, the Baltic countries in 2004, and then the Balkan states in 2009 and onward. Furthermore, NATO is **not a monolith**. Member states **disagree ardently** at times, even against **key U.S. demands** as in the case of the 2003 intervention in **Iraq**, where NATO had **no involvement** given member objections.

In trying to condemn Western imperialism, such passive language **perpetuates imperialist notions** and **withholds agency** from non-Western citizens.

Eastern and Southern European countries **actively sought** membership in the alliance, **prioritizing** NATO accession in their foreign and domestic policies for **decades**. When these countries finally joined the alliance, many citizens **cheered in relief**.

Even countries that do not directly border Russia are enthusiastic about NATO membership, particularly in the Western Balkans. This is because the United States is not the only imperialist power afoot.

The Case for NATO in the Western Balkans

While Western imperialism should be condemned, so should the non-Western variety. In Eastern Europe, it was the Soviet Union that embodied the **worst of imperialism**. Today it is Russia, with its numerous **military invasions** and **occupations** in the region since 1999.

In the Western Balkans, the United States and NATO have not posed an existential threat to the citizens of **Albania**, **Croatia**, **Bosnia** and **Herzegovina**, **Greece**, and **Kosovo**. Instead, these citizens worry about threats to their homelands stemming from regional hegemons and revisionist powers, including Russia, Serbia, and Turkey.

For instance, in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, citizens and leaders fear the rise of a revisionist Serbia echoing the aspirations of a Serbian-led Yugoslavia, now called Serb World. The **genocides** and **gruesome wars** of the 1990s remain fresh and terrifying reminders of such **existential fears**, as **mass graves** of **civilian victims**, continue to be uncovered. For others, it is the rise of a revisionist Turkey, renewed land grabs, the suppression of minority rights in Greece, or fears of a Russian-backed coup in Montenegro that spark dread. The youngest state in the region, Kosovo, fears for its very survival as it vies for United Nations (UN) recognition against Serbia’s derecognition campaigns and hyper-nationalist mobilizations, as well as Russia’s opposition.

Balkan and Eastern European support for NATO membership **originates** from a **history of oppression** by regional powers, prompting **strong demands** for **external protection**. Any scholar or policymaker who does not acknowledge this **local reality** will **reproduce incomplete perspectives** or worse, promote accounts that **hollow out local agency**.

Even Anti-Imperialists Cite Imperialist Solutions

Discussing NATO enlargement within Eastern Europe and the Balkans without delving into the **complexities** of **regional history** and **politics** is an **imperialist project**. When Western actors explain NATO membership through the lens of **Western machinations** and **blame** European states for their NATO aspirations, they are **really saying** that Eastern European and Balkan countries should be content to serve as **buffer states** between empires and accept their lot as **second-class** nations.

Ironically, even when famous scholars such as Mearsheimer **critique** U.S. imperialism and militarism, they still manage to **promote a world** in which **only the United States** has **agency** and **only** the United States’ **great power rivals matter**.

The West can engage in self-criticism of its foreign policy without blaming the victims of other imperialist powers. In fact, the West can begin its **moral reckoning** by understanding and accepting how its **accommodation of Russia** and other local aggressors has **inflamed regional fears** and **magnified demands** for NATO enlargement.

For instance, by buying Russian energy on Russia’s terms and remaining ~~mute~~ or even **legitimizing** Russia’s invasions of its weaker neighbors, the United States and European Union have perpetuated **corruption** and **authoritarianism** in Russia and Europe. By propping up authoritarian “ethnocrat” leaders in the Western Balkans in the name of regional stability, the West has inflamed regional imperialists, encouraged separatist agendas, and exacerbated instability and tension. All of this only fuels regional demands for NATO protection.

Instead of blaming the victims of another imperialist power, the West should focus on its own complicity in enabling regional aggressors.

Other countries have agency in international relations; NATO membership proves it. **Any account** that portrays NATO’s eastward expansion only through the lens of **Western politics dismisses** Eastern European and Balkan countries as **powerless pawns** of empire.

**NATO is an instrument, not a theology. They must prove the policy not the tool is bad.**

**Sweeney 20** [Mike Sweeney; non-resident fellow at Defense Priorities; 1-6-2020; "What Is NATO Good For?"; Strategy Bridge; https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/1/6/what-is-nato-good-for; KL]

Of course, NATO’s obituary has been written many times before. In the opening to Why NATO Endures, quietly one of the best books on the alliance, Wallace J. Thies wryly notes that Henry Kissinger owns the unique distinction of having declared the alliance to be in serious peril in each of the first six decades of NATO’s existence.[5] For the time being, **better policies** on how NATO is used should be the **focus**, rather than scrapping it altogether or withdrawing U.S. support. Key to this will be working to enhance strategic stability between the alliance and Russia.

DE-MYSTIFYING THE PAST

To some extent, NATO is a victim of its own myth-making. Support for the alliance is often couched in somber testaments to the wisdom of the founders and odes to the selfless nobility of collective defense. The reality is quite different.

Interestingly, the main strategic rationale for NATO that emerges in the pages of Thies’ book is as a complement to the Marshall Plan: just as funds from that initiative would allow the Europeans to rebuild their economies, NATO would remove the burden from the European allies of having to devote scarce money to their militaries. It would also provide psychological reinforcement to nations still traumatized by the Second World War, living in Stalin’s long shadow. Once the West European economies had stabilized and rebounded, they could—in theory—take on a greater share of their defense and the United States could recede.[6]

Thus, in the late 1940s, many U.S. officials didn’t expect to base American troops in Europe indefinitely.[7] Nor did they necessarily expect them to have to fight. While the Soviets might attempt mischief within their own sphere of influence—as seen in the 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia and the blockade of West Berlin—their ability and willingness to go beyond that was considered limited by key thinkers such as George Kennan, who believed the Soviet military and people too spent from the Second World War to threaten Western Europe.[8] Moreover, Stalin was seen as distinct from Hitler in terms of his willingness to pursue risk. While the Soviet leader might try to capitalize on existing chaos and weakness, he wasn’t disposed to the outright aggression that characterized the Nazi regime.[9]

But in a prescient prelude to the defensibility issues surrounding the admission of the Baltic states, not a great deal of thought was given to how Western Europe would actually be defended when the alliance was formed—at least in terms of conventional forces. Of course, in April 1949, America still had a nuclear monopoly.

The Soviet detonation of its own atomic device in August 1949 changed the U.S. calculus somewhat, but it was events around the world a year later that truly focused America’s mind on what it had signed up for in NATO. The conventional defeats suffered by the U.S. military in the opening stage of the Korean War ,  as much as any development, led to a realistic discussion of what collective defense would really look like in Europe—almost eighteen months after the alliance’s inception.[10] It was only then that planners on both sides of the Atlantic began to take seriously the practical questions of defensibility and to set up integrated military structures—such as the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, or SHAPE—to coordinate those efforts.[11] Subsequently, NATO’s role as an institution and U.S. force deployments in Europe would both take on permanence.

The ad hoc nature of this process is the point worth underscoring. NATO was not formed by strategic gods implementing their divine wisdom; it was the result of hardworking government officials and political leaders doing their best to deal with the security challenges of the day using the means at their disposal. That is all the alliance has ever been, and we exalt its past at the risk of its future.

NATO AS AN **INSTRUMENT**, NOT A THEOLOGY

Understanding that NATO outlasted its original purpose—to allow the Europeans to focus on rebuilding their economies in tandem with the Marshall Plan—well before the end of the Cold War illustrates that the alliance has always been an adaptable instrument. It is true that some twentieth-century luminaries such as Kennan and Dwight Eisenhower didn’t foresee NATO evolving into a permanent fixture in European security at its inception.[12] But should that have stopped the alliance from becoming an effective military bulwark against the Soviets as the Cold War developed and demands on the alliance evolved?

Just as it adapted and changed throughout its early history, NATO’s purpose now can be **whatever is required**. This doesn’t mean that NATO should do everything—or be everywhere. The past thirty years have shown that there are some things the alliance does better than others and also that there are questionable benefits to unending expansion of its membership. President George W. Bush’s support for Georgian and Ukrainian membership at the 2008 Bucharest Summit is the most prominent example of this and likely contributed to both the August War in Georgia and Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea.[13]

But here, too, perspective is needed. Because the alliance should consider ending expansion doesn’t mean previous rounds were inherently mistakes. Enlargement permanently settled the **Polish Question**—which provided grist for a **century and a half** of European **wars**—and also has on balance contributed to **stability** between Russia and the Baltic states. Likewise, being realistic about the failure of the Libya intervention doesn’t mean the 1995 operation to stop **ethnic cleansing** in **Bosnia** was also a mistake. The 1999 Kosovo intervention probably falls somewhere in the middle.[14]

NATO frankly does its best work when no one hears about it. Its strength lies in the **day-to-day** military cooperation it fosters and the general sense of **deterrence** and **stability** it promotes. These contributions are neither as dramatic as facing off against the Red Army at the height of the Cold War, nor as controversial as the Libyan intervention, but they would be glaring in their absence.

Why arbitrarily remove the structure that provides that stability—both with **Russia** and also among NATO’s many **disparate members**? Withdrawing NATO protection from the Baltic states or the smaller Balkan members, for example, will not preclude the possibility of their becoming involved in a war with Russia or Serbia; just the opposite, it could make it more likely. Once such a conflict begins, is it certain the United States will not be entangled or affected even if it is no longer actively participating in NATO?

Again, it is worth reiterating that NATO is an instrument. Many of the alliance’s opponents may actually be opposed to the way the United States and its partners have employed force since the end of the Cold War—especially in the case of operations falling under the rubric of regime change. The argument, implicit in Posen’s OpEd, for example, is that NATO needs to be taken away from reckless U.S. policymakers to prevent them from future adventures.

This argument is **backwards**. Yes, the **consequences** of three decades of continuous military operations should be examined. But increasing national restraint and making **better strategic decisions** seems like a **smarter path** than summarily scrapping an **effective**, **tested tool** that could play an **essential role** in a wiser foreign policy.

**NATO brought peace to Europe. The critique misapprehends history.**

Strikethrough for ableist language

**Brands 22** [Hal Brands; Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies; 3-14-2022; "Why blaming NATO for Ukraine war is Vladimir Putin’s **biggest lie**"; ThePrint; https://theprint.in/opinion/why-blaming-nato-for-ukraine-war-is-vladimir-putins-biggest-lie/872350/; KL]

The great NATO enlargement debate never ends. In the 1990s, U.S. officials and academics argued about whether pushing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization into Eastern Europe was likely to sustain the post-Cold War peace or prematurely end it. More recently, critics have charged that Russia’s war in Ukraine is a natural response to the aggressive expansion of America’s most powerful alliance.

Now Russian officials, and even President Vladimir Putin himself, have echoed — and sometimes directly cited — American scholars such as political scientist John Mearsheimer, who argues that the current crisis “is the West’s fault.”

The “blame NATO” argument tells a story of hubris, arrogance and tragedy. It holds that there was a golden chance for lasting peace in Europe, but the U.S. threw it all away. Rather than conciliating a defeated rival, Washington repeatedly humiliated it by expanding a vast military alliance up to Russia’s borders and even into the former Soviet Union. This pursuit of American hegemony in a liberal-democratic guise eventually provoked a violent rebuke.

In this telling, Putin’s wars against Georgia and Ukraine are just the natural response of one great power whose vital interests are being heedlessly threatened by another.

The argument isn’t wholly wrong. Putin’s wars are indeed meant, in part, to push Western influence back from Russia’s frontiers. But the idea that NATO expansion is the root of today’s problems is morally and geopolitically bizarre.

Far from being a historic blunder, NATO expansion was one of the **great American successes** of the post-Cold War era. Far from being the act of a domineering superpower, it was part of a long tradition of **vulnerable states begging** to join America’s liberal empire. And far from posing a mortal threat to Moscow, NATO enlargement actually provided Russia with far **greater security** than it could have provided itself.

NATO’s big bang

NATO was founded in 1949 with 12 members in Western Europe and North America. It gradually added additional states — Turkey, Greece, West Germany, Spain — over the course of the Cold War. But the big bang of enlargement came once the superpower conflict ended. NATO incorporated the former East Germany into the alliance in 1990; it then added three Eastern European countries (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic) in 1999; then seven more, including the Baltic states, in 2004.

To understand why NATO grew so rapidly, we have to remember something that nearly everyone has now forgotten: There was **no guarantee** that Europe would be mostly **stable**, **peaceful** and **democratic** after the Cold War. In fact, many of the analysts who now view NATO expansion as a catastrophe once warned that a post-Cold War Europe could become a **violent hellscape**.

It wasn’t an outlandish scenario. A reunified Germany might once again try to **dominate** its neighbors; the old enmity between Moscow and Berlin could **reignite**. The collapse of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe could liberate those states to pursue long-suppressed **territorial claims** and **nationalist agendas**. **Ethnic tensions** and **nuclear proliferation** might **explode** as the Cold War order crumbled.

If the U.S. pulled back once the Soviet threat was gone, there would be no extra-European superpower to **put out fires** on a continent with lots of **geopolitical kindling**. “The prospect of major crises, even wars, in Europe is likely to **increase dramatically**,” Mearsheimer predicted in 1990.

NATO enlargement was the **logical answer** to these fears. Expansion was a way of binding a reunified Germany to the West and surrounding it with democratic allies. Joining NATO required new members to lay aside any **revanchist designs**, while allowing them to pursue economic and **political reforms** rather than investing heavily in military capabilities to defend their newly won autonomy.

NATO’s move to the east also ensured that Poland and other states that easily could have built **nuclear weapons** didn’t need to, because they had **American protection**. Most important, enlargement kept the U.S. firmly planted in Europe, by preventing the centerpiece of the transatlantic relationship from becoming obsolete.

**No other initiative** could have accomplished these objectives. Partnership for Peace — a series of loose security cooperation agreements with former Soviet-bloc states — didn’t offer the ironclad guarantees that came with NATO membership. (If you want to understand the difference between “security partner” and “**NATO ally**,” just look at what is happening today to **Ukraine**, one of the former.)

The idea of creating a pan-European security architecture (one that included Russia) had the same defect; plus, it would have given Moscow veto power over the security arrangements of the countries the Soviet Union had so recently dominated.

Only American power and promises could provide **stability** in Europe, and NATO was the continent’s **critical link** to the U.S. Since 1949, Washington had tamped down rivalries between old enemies such as France and Germany, while also protecting them from external threats. After 1991, NATO expansion took this zone of peace, prosperity and cooperation that had emerged in Western Europe and moved it into Eastern Europe as well.

The revolutionary nature of this achievement seemed obvious not so long ago. “Why has Europe been so peaceful since 1989?” Mearsheimer asked in 2010. The answer, he acknowledged, was because “America has continued to serve as Europe’s pacifier,” protecting the continent from dangers within and without.

Russia as the victim

Today, of course, the critics don’t buy this account. They argue that NATO expansion represented crude power politics, as the U.S. exploited the Soviet collapse to engorge its own empire. What resulted, pundits such as Thomas Friedman contend, was a sort of Weimar Russia — a country whose dignity was affronted, security imperiled and democracy undermined by a harsh, humiliating peace.

There is a kernel of truth here, too. Once Russian democracy began to wobble in 1993-94, officials in the Bill Clinton administration saw NATO expansion — in part — as a way of preventing a potentially resurgent, aggressive Russia from rebuilding the Soviet sphere of influence. Russian leaders of all stripes griped about NATO expansion from the early 1990s onward, warning that it could jeopardize the peace of the continent.

In hindsight, NATO expansion was one of several issues — including disputes over the Balkans and the collapse of the Russian economy in the late 1990s — that gradually soured Russia’s relationship with the West. Yet this story omits three vital facts.

First, all policies have costs. The price of NATO expansion was a certain alienation of Russian elites — although we often forget that Clinton softened the blow by continually courting Russian President Boris Yeltsin, bringing Russia into elite Western institutions such as the Group of Seven, and making Moscow a partner in the intervention in Bosnia in 1995-96. Yet the cost of not expanding NATO might have been **forfeiting** much of the stability that initiative provided. **Trade-offs** are **inevitable** in foreign policy: There was no magic middle path that would have provided all the benefits with none of the costs.

Second, if NATO expansion was a manifestation of American empire, it was a remarkably **benign** and **consensual** form of empire. When Clinton decided to pursue enlargement, he did so at the urging of the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians. The Baltic countries and others were soon **banging at the door**. The states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were **desperate** to **join America**’s sphere of influence, because they were desperate to **leave Moscow’s**.

This, too, was part of an **older pattern**: The U.S. has often extended its influence by “**invitation**” rather than imposition. The creation of NATO in 1949 was mostly a European idea: Countries that were terrified of Moscow sought protection from Washington. One reason Putin’s wars to keep countries from escaping Moscow’s empire are so abhorrent to Americans is that the U.S. empire has trouble keeping members out.

Putin may not see it that way. All that matters to him is that the mightiest peacetime alliance in history has crept closer to Russian soil. But here a third fact becomes relevant: Russia was one of the biggest beneficiaries of NATO’s move east.

Making Russia safer

Open terrain has often left Russia vulnerable to invasion and instability emanating from Europe. Napoleonic France, Imperial Germany and Nazi Germany all swept through Eastern Europe to wreak havoc on Russian or Soviet territory. This is one reason why the great strategist George Kennan opposed NATO expansion — because it would surely re-activate this fear of encroachment from the west.

Yet this was a red herring, because NATO posed no military threat. The alliance committed, in 1997, not to permanently station foreign troops in Eastern Europe. After the Cold War, America steadily withdrew most of its troops and all of its heavy armor from the continent. U.S. allies engaged in a veritable race to disarm.

The prospect that NATO could invade Russia, even had it wanted to, was laughable. What the alliance could do was tame the perils that might otherwise have menaced the Russian state.

Germany could hardly threaten Russia: It was nestled snugly into an alliance that also served as a strategic straitjacket. NATO, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev had candidly said in 1990, could “play a containing role” vis-à-vis Berlin. Moscow didn’t have to worry about a nuclear Poland — Warsaw didn’t need nukes because it had the protection of the United States. Aside from the Balkan wars of the 1990s, Eastern Europe was comparatively free of the geopolitical intrigues and military quarrels that might have made Russia jumpy.

NATO expansion hadn’t just alleviated Europe’s security problems; it had protected Russia’s vital interests as well. Moscow might have lost an empire, but it had gained remarkable safety from external attack.

Putin’s easy excuse

So what went wrong? Why couldn’t Putin make his peace with a larger NATO?

Part of the answer is that NATO expansion wasn’t really the problem, in the sense that Russia didn’t need that pretext to seek renewed hegemony in its near-abroad. The Soviet Union, and the Russian empire before it, had traditionally sought to **control countries** along their frontiers and used **brutal means** to do it. To say that NATO expansion caused Russian belligerence is thus to make an **extremely dubious assertion**: that absent NATO expansion, Moscow would have been a **satisfied**, **status quo** power.

And this is exactly why a bigger NATO has posed a real problem for Putin. After all, safety from external attack isn’t the only thing that states and rulers want. They want glory, greatness and the privileges of empire. For 20 years, Putin has been **publicly lusting** after the sphere of influence that the Soviet Union once enjoyed. NATO expansion stood athwart that ambition, by giving Moscow’s former vassals the ability to resist its pressure.

NATO also threatened a certain type of Russian government — an autocracy that was **never secure** in its own rule. A democratic Russia wouldn’t so much have minded being neighbors with Western-leaning democracies, because political liberty in those countries wouldn’t have threatened to set a subversive example for anti-Putin Russians.

Yet, as Russia became more autocratic in the early 2000s, and as Putin’s popularity declined with the Russian economy after 2008, the imperative of preventing ideological spillover from a U.S.-backed democratic community loomed large.

So Putin began pushing back against NATO’s eastward march. In 2008, he invaded Georgia, a country that was moving — too slowly for its own safety — toward the West. Since 2014, he has been waging war against Ukraine, in hopes of rebuilding the Russian empire and halting Kiev’s westward drift. America’s vision of Europe has now run into Putin’s program of violent coercion.

West missed the danger signs

To be sure, U.S. officials made mistakes along the way. Because Russia was prostrate, militarily and economically, during the 1990s, Washington acquired a bad habit of issuing security guarantees without really considering how it would fulfill them in a crisis. The Pentagon has thus been scrambling, since 2014, to devise a credible defense of NATO’s eastern flank.

As Russia regained its strength, U.S. officials also failed to grasp the danger of provoking Putin without adequately deterring him. When, in 2008, NATO declined to endorse membership for Georgia and Ukraine but issued a vague statement saying that they would someday join the alliance, it created the worst of all worlds — giving Putin both the pretext and the time to pre-empt future expansion by tearing those two countries apart.

Yet there is a curious morality in accounts that blame the West, which sought to protect **vulnerable** states in Eastern Europe, for the current carnage, rather than blaming Putin, who has worked to **dismember** and **intimidate** those countries. It is sloppy thinking to tally up the costs of NATO expansion without considering the historic achievements of a policy that served American, European and even certain Russian interests remarkably well.

And if nothing else, NATO expansion pushed the dividing line between Moscow and the democratic world to the east after one Cold War — a factor of great significance now that a second cold war is underway.

The legacy of NATO expansion isn’t simply a matter of historical interest. Americans’ understanding of the past has always influenced their view of what policies to pursue **in the future**. During the 1920s and 1930s, the widespread, if inaccurate, belief that America had entered World War I to serve the interests of **banks** and **arms manufacturers** had a [**crushing**] ~~paralyzing~~ effect on U.S. policy amid the **totalitarian aggression** that set off **World War II**.

Today, the U.S. faces a long, nasty struggle to contain Putin’s imperial project and protect an endangered world order. Introspection is an admirable quality, but the last thing America needs is another bout of **self-flagellation** rooted in another **misapprehension** of the past. – Bloomberg

**! — NATO Good — AT: Environment**

**Realists care about the environment. The DoD is prioritizing it now.**

**Sofer 15** [Ken Sofer, a Senior Policy Advisor with the National Security and International Policy team at the Center for American Progress; 11-30-2015; "The Realist Case for Climate Change Cooperation"; Center for American Progress; https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-realist-case-for-climate-change-cooperation/; KL]

Fighting climate change is often considered a valuable but secondary goal for many security-minded politicians who see it as a distraction from the real threats posed by terrorism in Syria, Russian aggression in Europe, and the potential of a nuclear Iran. But even a **hard-nosed realist** should support international cooperation on climate change. Due to climate change’s impact as a “**threat multiplier**,” the benefits of cooperation now **outweigh** the potential gap in relative gains between cooperating countries. When climate change is viewed as an **external threat** similar to a hostile state, **realist theory** concludes that the United States should ally with other threatened countries against it until the threat subsides.

Realism and the relative gains problem

Realism, one of the grand theories of international relations, is a worldview and set of assumptions about the way the world works that dates back to Thucydides of ancient Greece. Realism has long been the **dominant strand** of thinking in U.S. national security circles and **undergirds** much of U.S. foreign policy. Realist scholars, such as Kenneth Waltz, focus on the state as the primary actor in international politics; assume anarchy in the international system is the principal force shaping state action; and believe states are primarily concerned with their own power and security—often at the expense of mutually beneficial cooperation.

Realist scholars and practitioners have traditionally spent little time devoted to climate change compared with adherents of liberalism—the other grand theory of international relations. For realist theorists focused on hard power and interstate warfare, debates about peak carbon dioxide emissions and global temperature goals are ancillary at best to the primary challenges facing states. Furthermore, realists such as Joseph Grieco are skeptical of the potential for international cooperation on most issues, arguing that even when cooperation would be mutually beneficial to both parties, states often fail to cooperate because one state would gain more than the other.

This is known as the relative gains problem. Realists argue that states are not only concerned with maximizing their own absolute gains but they are also concerned with their gains relative to the gains of other states out of concern that they may end up relatively weaker even if they are stronger in absolute terms.

But the relative gains problem **does not prevent** all forms of cooperation, even when one state gains disproportionately. For realists, the main reason that a state would cooperate is if the gains of cooperation are so large that they **overcome** the relative gains problem—a threshold that is usually only met when states face an external security threat.

Climate change as an external security threat

For years, scientists have warned of the potential implications of the current wave of changes to the Earth’s climate. 2014 was the hottest year ever recorded and continued a trend of rising sea levels that threaten major coastal cities and even some island nations, as well as more intense and frequent severe weather events, increased desertification of vital arable land, and climate-driven migration, which has contributed to the European refugee crisis.

If the most pessimistic projections are realized without international action, the planet could warm by as much as 5 degrees Celsius by the end of this century. To put it another way, that is the same as the global temperature change that occurred during the last ice age but at 10 times the speed. Failure to **limit** climate change and better manage **global resources** will soon disrupt the **physical** and **economic** security of citizens across the planet.

Climate change does not fit the traditional realist image of a security threat, but as climate change **intensifies** existing conflicts and **exacerbates instability**, states are increasingly being forced to **grapple with** and **defend against** it, just as they would a hostile adversary. Whether through the extreme weather events that have killed 2.5 million people since 1980, the rising sea levels that threaten to swallow island nations such as the Maldives, or the droughts that doubled the price of wheat in the lead up to the 2011 Arab uprisings, climate change is threatening lives, destabilizing states, and disrupting economies in ways an adversarial state might using different means.

U.S. intelligence, military, and diplomatic agencies are already thinking through the **security implications** of a warming planet, an acidifying ocean, and an increase in extreme weather events. In 2008, the National Intelligence Council began a multiyear project analyzing the implications of climate change for U.S. national security interests between 2008 and 2030 and concluded that climate change would likely exacerbate political instability, migration crises, and intrastate warfare. The U.S. Department of Defense’s “2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report” identified climate change as one of the **key issues** that will shape the future security environment, affecting the U.S. military’s capabilities, missions, and operations. The U.S. Department of State’s 2015 “Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review” highlighted climate change as a “national and global security threat,” as well as one of the department’s four strategic priorities.

For U.S. security officials, climate change now meets the high threshold used by realists for international cooperation, regardless of a potential relative gains gap.

An alliance against climate change

Realists such as Stephen Walt argue that when faced with a hostile external threat, threatened states will **band together**, creating an alliance to counter the threat and to restore a balance of power in which no one actor can overpower the others. These alliances are usually narrow and short-lived, lasting until the threat—whether it be Napoleonic France or the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham—recedes. If the threat of climate change is now comparable to the threat of a hostile state, then the realist response would be to develop an **international alliance** against climate change.

President Barack Obama’s administration has largely adopted this approach, enlisting not only traditional European and Japanese allies in the effort but also nontraditional partners such as China, India, Brazil, and Indonesia. The direct and indirect threat posed by climate change has altered the calculus of countries such as China and India, which previously cited the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as a reason for not fully contributing to a global effort to fight climate change. This is in part a relative gains argument that says unified action to combat climate change would disproportionately hurt economically developing and newly industrialized states in light of differing national circumstances. The diverse range of countries participating in the alliance against climate change reflects the new geopolitics of the issue, in which both developing and developed countries are affected by, contribute to, and thus are responsible for fighting the problem.

As with alliances against hostile states, the alliance against climate change should not be expected to remake the global order or resolve disagreements with partner countries on other issues. As history has shown, however, the United States can **successfully work** with nontraditional partners or even competitor states to combat a common threat, whether improving relations with China to counter the Soviet Union in the 1970s or leading a diverse coalition of nations to fight piracy off the Horn of Africa more recently.

**! — NATO Good — AT: Entrapment/War**

**Models. Alliances deter, restrain, and bargain for peace.**

**Fang** et al. **14** [Songying Fang, Associate Professor of Political Science at Rice University; Jesse C. Johnson, Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Peace Studies at the University of Kentucky; Brett Ashley Leed, Professor of Political Science at Rice University; 8-22-2014; "To Concede or to Resist? The Restraining Effect of Military Alliances"; International Organization Journal; http://www.songyingfang.com/uploads/1/1/7/9/11792230/s0020818314000137a.pdf; KL]

Abstract Creating institutions that effectively manage interstate conflict is a priority for policy-makers. In this article we demonstrate that military allies are well positioned to influence the crisis-bargaining behavior of both challengers and targets in ways that often lead to peace. Through a three-player game-theoretic model, we demonstrate that a target’s alliances not only have an effect on the demand that the challenger makes, but also on the behavior of the target. When a target values an alliance highly, an ally’s recommendation for settlement can encourage the target to concede to demands without further escalation. Our **statistical analysis** provides evidence in support of the theoretical finding. Allies can both deter challengers and restrain partners, and as a result, can encourage peaceful behavior not only from adversaries, but from member states as well. Our **study** thus sheds **new light** on the role of military alliances as potential conflict management devices.

Interstate wars cost more than thirty million lives during the twentieth century, and nine new interstate wars have begun since the end of the Cold War.1 Finding ways to avoid interstate disputes and to manage those that arise short of war, therefore, is a major priority for policy-makers and for scholars of international relations. It is **well recognized** that military alliances play a role in conflict prevention by deterring attacks on their members, but less attention has been paid to the role of allies in conflict management. We argue that allies, as coercive actors with a **stake** in the dispute, are sometimes especially **well positioned** to help resolve disputes short of war.

We examine the influence of allies to a target state on crisis bargaining. Not only do allies have an interest in the outcome of crisis bargaining but they also may have the ability to make **credible threats** to both the challenger and the target that influence the bargaining stances of **both disputants**. A target’s ally can make it clear to the challenger that if the challenger demands too much, the ally will intervene in the war on behalf of the target. But a target’s ally may also be able to make a credible threat to the target—that if the target refuses to concede to a demand that the ally finds reasonable, the ally will not intervene in the war on the target’s behalf. The ally may therefore have a **moderating effect** not only on the challenger’s demand, but also on the **target’s response**, making peaceful settlement more likely. We refer to the former as the deterrence effect of alliances, and the latter as the restraining effect of alliances.

To study this process, we develop a three-player game-theoretic model. Most recent game-theoretic models of crisis bargaining assume that a challenger and a target bargain without influence from any outside states.2 Yet, allies who would be obligated to intervene in a war that develops between a challenger and target will often cast a shadow over crisis negotiations. Dyadic bargaining models that assume a challenger and a target bargain without influence from any outside states are inadequate for our understanding of conflict dynamics in such situations.

We derive a number of propositions about the relationships between such factors as the costs of war, the value of the stakes, and the value of an alliance and specific outcomes. The demands challengers make, the conditions under which targets concede demands without fighting, and the conditions under which targets resist demands militarily are all influenced by the presence of an ally. Given the **richness** of our **formal results**, we make no attempt to test all of the implications of the model. We do, however, discuss a few stylized cases that highlight different outcomes, and we provide a **large-N** empirical test of one proposition drawn from the model. We find support for the claim that when a target depends heavily on an alliance for security, that target is less likely to resist a challenge militarily.

Our **research** suggests that military alliances have an influence in international politics **well beyond** collaborative war fighting and deterrence. Alliances **deter conflicts**, which in itself is a **force for peace**, but even when challengers are not deterred from making demands, allies can facilitate **peaceful settlement**. Alliances can be important institutions for **conflict management**, not only among their members, but between their members and outside states as well. As such, alliances can be broad institutions for **peace** that play an **important role** in maintaining the **stability** of the international system.3

**! — NATO Good — AT: Interventions**

**NATO peacekeeping mitigates war intensity.**

PSO = peace support operations

PKO = peacekeeping operations

**Sällström 21** [Robin Sällström, Bachelor Thesis, Peace and Conflict Studies C, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Uppsala University; 1-2021; "Keeping the peace?: The effect of NATO and UN peace operations on war intensity"; Uppsala University; https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1518905/FULLTEXT01.pdf; KL]

The purpose of this paper was to conduct a comparative case **study** analysing the effect of NATO PSOs and UN PKOs on **war intensity**, to help fill the existing gap concerning disaggregated research on non-UN peacekeeping operations. To do so, this paper focused on comparing NATO peace support operations and UN peacekeeping operations abilities to mitigate war intensity through a structured focused comparison and aspects of theory-testing process tracing. However, results of the analysis did not confirm the proposed theory that UN PKOs would mitigate war intensity to a greater degree than NATO PSOs, but rather seem to imply that some NATO PSO might **reduce** war intensity to a **greater extent** than UN PKOs. Furthermore, the results also imply that NATOs **seemingly biased** behaviour **does not** necessarily **hamper** their abilities to provide security guarantees, nor does it necessarily hinder NATO from using persuasion effectively.

Thus, some possible policy implication of this study is that Peacekeeping organisations can **use force** against warring parties in an armed conflict **without hampering** potential peacekeeping efforts, and that strict peacekeeper impartiality might **hamper** conflict mitigation. Furthermore, this paper also indicates that NATO peacekeepers are suitable alternative to UN peacekeepers when the UN is either unable or unwilling to send peacekeepers themselves, and that NATO PSOs can **mitigate** war intensity to a similar or even **greater degree** than UN PKOs.

**Peacekeeping reduces violence. It’s the strongest empirical law in IR.**

**Walter** et al. **20** [Barbara F. Walter, University of California San Diego; Lise Morje Howard, Georgetown University; V. Page Fortna, Columbia University; 11-24-2020; "The Extraordinary Relationship between Peacekeeping and Peace"; Cambridge Core; https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-political-science/article/abs/extraordinary-relationship-between-peacekeeping-and-peace/D2D5D262B60315387B0B23D1D4F79CC9; KL]

Reality, however, tells a **different story**. Over the last twenty years, numerous **empirical studies** have examined the role of third-party peacekeeping in reducing violence around the world. The data **overwhelmingly** reveal that peacekeeping, especially UN peacekeeping, is surprisingly **effective**. Using **different datasets** and **statistical models**, leveraging different time periods and measuring peacekeeping in somewhat different ways, **dozens** of researchers at **different universities**, with **diverse funding** streams and **different preferences**, have all found that peacekeeping has a **large**, **positive** and **statistically significant** effect on reducing violence of **all sorts**. Despite the very real problems associated with UN peacekeeping, it is **remarkably effective** at bringing peace.

This review article has three goals. The first is to summarize the results of past empirical research to move the debate beyond the question of whether peacekeeping works to the more pressing questions of how, when and why it works. The second goal is to reveal the limitations of current quantitative studies in order to identify areas in which scholars can make big, new contributions to the field. The final goal is to propose a new research agenda that is heavily evaluative — one that informs policy makers about the specific practices, mission compositions, and mandates that work, and also identifies the local, regional, and international conditions that amplify or diminish peacekeeping’s success. This type of research could help reduce the costs of peacekeeping operations (PKOs), eliminate some of the negative consequences of interventions and potentially save even more lives.

What the Current Evidence Reveals

Numerous **large-n** statistical studies have explored the relationship between third-party peacekeeping and different forms of violence (Dorussen 2014; Gizelis, Dorussen and Petrova 2016); Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017; Sandler 2017). What is **most striking** about these studies is the **consistency** of their findings. Almost all of them find that peacekeeping is **highly effective** at preventing violence **before** it begins, reducing violence in the **midst** of war and preventing violence from **recurring** once it has **ended**. All else equal, countries and regions that receive peacekeeping missions experience **less armed conflict**, fewer **civilian** and combatant **deaths**, fewer **mass killings**, longer periods of post-conflict **peace** and fewer repeat wars than those that do not receive peacekeepers. This relationship — between peacekeeping and **lower levels** of violence — is **so consistent** across different large-n analyses that it has become one of the **strongest findings** in the **international relations** literature to date.

The power of peacekeeping is all the more striking given that the UN tends to intervene in the toughest cases. Multiple scholarly studies have found that the UN Security Council tends to send peacekeepers to countries with more violence, particularly bad governments and ongoing conflict (Beardsley and Schmidt 2012; Costalli 2013; de Jonge Oudraat 1996; Fortna 2004a; Fortna 2008a; Gilligan and Sergenti 2008; Gilligan and Stedman 2003; Hegre, Hultman and Nygard 2019 Ruggeri, Dorussen, and Gizelis 2017). The most recent study by Ruggeri, Dorussen and Gizelis (2018) found that UN peacekeepers are deployed to places experiencing active conflict. Using geographically and temporally disaggregated data on UN peacekeepers’ deployment in eight African countries between 1989 and 2006, they find that peacekeepers tend to be deployed to the **dangerous frontlines** of a conflict. Their research did reveal some problems with deployment. Peacekeepers tended to arrive late and be sent to conflict zones near urban areas, ignoring violence further afield. But the fact that peacekeepers often go to the **most demanding** places (even if late and disproportionately urban) suggests that academic studies have probably **underestimated** the effectiveness of peacekeeping at reducing violence.

These findings do not imply that peacekeeping works **all the time**, or as efficiently and successfully as it could. There are many well-known cases such as Bosnia and Rwanda where UN peacekeeping failed. There are also additional cases such as those in South Sudan and Malí where peacekeeping missions are not progressing well (Autesserre 2010; Autesserre 2014; Day 2019; Howard 2008; Van der Lijn 2019).1 Moreover, we understand that the data and analyses of even the best quantitative studies are imperfect. Analysis of peacekeeping and violence is constrained by the messy and sometimes unreliable nature of data on death rates, the potentially untenable assumptions made by scholars in employing statistical models in cross-national and cross-conflict analysis, and the hard constraints (both practical and ethical) on scholars’ ability to randomize treatments in ways that make airtight causal inferences possible. The findings in the quantitative literature can also appear mixed or contradictory on some topics, when in fact the disparity is due to **different** research designs and empirical strategies. This can be **confusing** and can also **distract** from the **bigger** and **more important** picture, which is that peacekeeping **works amazingly well** given its many challenges.

In what follows we present **overwhelming evidence** from more than **two dozen** studies that peacekeepers: (1) reduce civilian and military deaths, (2) prevent the spread of violence, (3) help belligerents achieve peace and (4) help countries maintain the post-conflict peace.2 We also provide an overview of the general problems related to peacekeeping that the qualitative literature explores.

**Zero public support.**

**Carden 18** [James Carden; contributing writer for foreign affairs at The Nation. He served as a policy adviser to the Special Representative for Intergovernmental Affairs and the Office of Russia Affairs at the US State Department; 1-9-2018; "A New Poll Shows the Public Is Overwhelmingly Opposed to Endless US Military Interventions"; Nation; https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/new-poll-shows-public-overwhelmingly-opposed-to-endless-us-military-interventions/; KL]

Last week, the bipartisan Committee for a Responsible Foreign Policy—a bipartisan advocacy group calling for congressional oversight of America’s lengthy list of military interventions abroad—released the results of a survey that show broad public support for Congress to reclaim its constitutional prerogatives in the exercise of foreign policy (see Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution) and for fewer US military interventions generally. Undertaken last November by J. Wallin Opinion Research, the new survey revealed “a national voter population that is **largely skeptical** of the practicality or benefits of **military intervention** overseas, including both the physical involvement of the US military and also extending to military aid in the form of funds or equipment as well.”

Bill Dolbow, the spokesman for the Committee for a Responsible Foreign Policy, said, “We started this initiative to give a voice to the people and the people have spoken—Congress needs to enact more oversight before intervening in conflict abroad.”

The headline findings show, among other things, that **86.4** percent of those surveyed feel the American military should be used only as a **last resort**, while **57** percent feel that US military aid to foreign countries is **counterproductive**. The latter sentiment “increases significantly” when involving countries like Saudi Arabia, with 63.9 percent saying military aid—including money and weapons—should not be provided to such countries.

**Interventions are at an all-time low.**

**Hirsh 21** [Michael Hirsh, senior correspondent at Foreign Policy; 7-1-2021; "Why U.S. Drone Strikes Are at an **All-Time Low**"; Foreign Policy; https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/01/us-drone-strikes-all-time-low-biden-forever-wars/; KL]

In August 2020, the man who is now U.S. President Joe Biden’s deputy national security advisor, Jonathan Finer, co-wrote a privately circulated **memo** titled “**Ending the ‘Forever Wars**.’” Written with two others who have since joined the Biden administration, Christine Abizaid and Brett Rosenberg, the memo laid out a detailed program for extricating the United States from the two-decade-long campaign dubbed the “war on terror” that began on 9/11.

Six months into Biden’s presidency, the administration has said little about its longer-term plans in dealing with Islamist terrorist groups around the world, apart from announcing the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. And yet airstrikes by **drones** and other U.S. **kinetic operations** in trouble spots around the world, outside conventional battlefields, have **dramatically dropped** since Biden took office. The president imposed a **partial moratorium** as his team conducts an **intensive review** of **every aspect** of America’s global counterterrorism efforts, which have spread over two decades from Afghanistan post-9/11 to “Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Somalia, and parts of the Maghreb, Southeast Asia and West and Central Africa,” as the Finer memo notes.

This limited stand-down is happening in spite of rare exceptions like this week’s airstrikes by U.S. F-15s and F-16s on storage facilities used by Iran-backed militias in Iraq.

And while Finer’s 13-page memo has hardly become official administration policy, it’s notable that Biden’s senior team seems to be **acting** on some of its recommendations—and that Finer himself is one of the top officials working on a broad review of counterterrorism policy led by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

One of the recommendations enacted from the memo is **to** “[**r]aise the threshold** for use of force.” This includes eliminating “strikes against individuals whose specific identities are not known and who are not identified as tied to immediate [U.S.] force protection concerns or otherwise posing an **imminent threat**” to the United States, as the memo puts it.

According to the Finer memo, “Operations requiring force should be considered **extraordinary**, require **approval** at the highest levels, and pursued only when **absolutely necessary**, for instance, to avert a clear and **present danger** to **U.S. persons**.”

The Biden administration has since **restricted** field commanders from making **independent decisions** on strikes outside of conventional battlefield zones. Under the new rules the “military and the C.I.A. must now obtain **White House permission** to attack terrorism suspects in poorly governed places where there are scant American ground troops, like Somalia and Yemen,” the New York Times reported on March 3. A forthcoming directive is also being prepared by the Department of Defense laying out stricter guidelines for limiting civilian casualties in overseas attacks and setting new and higher thresholds for future U.S. attacks.

Already there has been a **dramatic reduction** of drone attacks and other types of airstrikes, which once reached thousands a year. “The [United States] appears to be in a holding pattern in most conflict theaters that it still has a presence in—with **no** reported strikes in Yemen, Libya, Pakistan, or Somalia since Biden took office. U.S. strikes are continuing in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria—though at **historically low** rates,” said Chris Woods of the London-based **Airwars** monitoring organization, considered perhaps the **most reliable** tracker of U.S. airstrikes around the world. “What the strategic plan here is, other than for Afghanistan, we don’t yet know.”

Until Biden took office, the U.S. military had often followed a pattern of secretly striking alleged terrorists from the air without any accountability or announcement: no casualty lists, no public after-action reports, and few follow-up investigations about collateral damage. “Cumulatively we’re talking tens of thousands of civilians conservatively who have died in America’s wars since 9/11”—almost all without acknowledgement, Woods said.

No truly reliable figures exist, especially for drones, since for most of its existence the drone program has been shrouded in secrecy. In his final year in office, President Barack Obama briefly opened the window, revealing that during his term drone strikes, conventional airstrikes, or cruise missiles used outside conventional war zones like Afghanistan had killed as many as 116 civilians. But other independent monitors put the figures much higher. Obama’s successor, Donald Trump, made the numbers classified again.

The cutback in drone strikes is **one element** of a **much bigger rethink**. One Biden administration official who has been involved in discussions said that while a policy isn’t yet set and it’s not clear when it will be, the upcoming 20th anniversary of 9/11 is an important target date in what is amounting to an exhaustive evaluation of the overseas terrorist threat. The Biden administration, he said, is now focused on **demoting** the Islamist terrorist threat on the priority list of U.S. strategic interests.

“Biden **wants** one of his major foreign policy accomplishments to be to **end the forever wars**,” said this official, who would speak about internal deliberations only on condition of anonymity. The president is expected to deliver a speech that will sketch out the broad outlines, including possibly setting new restrictive and transparent drone rules, announcing the shutdown of **Guantánamo Bay** (where only about **40** prisoners remain out of a total of nearly **800**), and upgrading the focus on **domestic** violent extremists, away from al Qaeda and its affiliates.

“He wants to show we made the world safer, to say that we are taking a **multilateral approach** and returning to **smart power**, reducing our military footprint and increasing our **diplomatic footprint**, and adapting to new threats of today,” the official said.

The White House team is also seeking a broader reorientation toward what the president has called “the battles for the next 20 years, not the last 20,” including climate change, the threat from China, COVID-19-type pandemics, and America’s economic and social problems at home.

“At the Department of Defense but also in the U.S. intelligence community, counterterrorism has taken a **back seat**,” said Seth Jones, a senior vice president and counterterrorism expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “The focus of efforts is primarily on how to deal with China and to some degree Russia. And you don’t need drones to deal with either of them. It’s just not a priority, and that’s a big shift certainly from the Obama years and partly the Trump years.”

**They’re down dramatically.**

**Keating 22** [Joshua Keating; Global Security Reporter; 2-2-2022; "What happened to the drone war?"; Grid News; https://www.grid.news/story/global/2022/02/02/what-happened-to-the-drone-war/; KL]

When it comes to fighting war without soldiers, the weaponized drone has been an essential tool — perhaps the most iconic weapon in the United States’ post-9/11 war on terrorism. Given Biden’s pledge that over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations would continue around the world, it would be reasonable to expect that drone use would have continued — or become even more common. In fact, the opposite has happened. The U.S. has **stopped bombing** Afghanistan **entirely** since the withdrawal, and strikes are **down dramatically** in other theaters as well. The long-standing practice of American drones regularly raining missiles on suspected terrorists and unfortunate civilians has ended — at least for now. One might suspect that this drop-off was the result of growing public criticism of the drone war and recent revelations about the civilian casualties it has caused. But the decline predates the revelations; it’s a trend that began **several years** ago.

What happened to the drone war? Why, in the new over-the-horizon era, are drones being used so rarely? And what are the implications of a world in which dozens of nations now have the deadly capability — and are using it more often, not less?

The drop-off

The United States’ first drone strike came on the first day of the U.S. war in Afghanistan — Oct. 7, 2001 — when a CIA Predator drone fired a Hellfire missile near Kandahar, narrowly missing Taliban leader Mullah Omar. The escalation that followed was swift and steep. In the two decades since, the U.S. has used weaponized drones thousands of times as part of air campaigns in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

Since Biden took office, there have been just 39 declared U.S. strikes (including air, drone and ground operations) in Iraq and Syria. In Somalia, nine strikes have been carried out under Biden compared with 276 under Donald Trump. The Biden administration has ordered only two reported strikes in Yemen and none in Pakistan, once ground zero of the American drone war. (There were 122 strikes in 2010.)

Overall, U.S. airstrikes (including both drones and manned strikes) were down **42 percent** in 2021 from the year before — falling from 1,459 to **852**. That may still seem like a lot, but consider that there were nearly **13,000** strikes in 2016, when the war against ISIS was at its height.

To the extent this development has received any media coverage, observers have tended to credit the Biden administration. In fact, the decline began earlier. “The bulk of what’s being discussed is the result of trends began under the Trump administration, although I wouldn’t really frame it as the result of Trump’s specific policy decisions, as the way the wars are going,” David Sterman, a senior policy analyst at New America, told Grid.

According to the monitoring site Airwars, March 2019 was the last month when the U.S.-led coalition launched more than 100 air and artillery strikes in Iraq and Syria. (There were 389.) Not coincidentally, this was the month that the last remnants of ISIS’s “caliphate” fell. After that, the tempo of strikes fell dramatically; in all of 2020, there were only 201. Similarly, in Yemen, the number of airstrikes peaked at 131 in 2017, according to New America. In 2020, there were only four. In Pakistan, the steep drop-off in drone strikes began even earlier, in the second half of the Obama presidency.

Chart, bar chart

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According to Sterman, “the one exception that I definitely would acknowledge and think is clearly something to do with Biden is **Somalia**, where there was a high pace of strikes under Trump. Biden just **completely paused** it.” The Biden administration did carry out at least four strikes against al-Shabaab militants in Somalia in the summer of 2021, but there’s been no sign of a return to the pace of strikes under Trump.

Bombing less — or less to bomb?

There are signs that while the drop-off predates his presidency, Biden is **listening** to the drone war’s critics.

Shortly after taking office, Biden **quietly imposed** limits on drone strikes and commando raids outside of declared war zones like Afghanistan and Syria. The CIA and military now must obtain White House permission for strikes in Yemen and Somalia, among other theaters of counterterror operations. (Under Trump, commanders had been allowed to make their own decisions on strikes in those countries.) Biden also ordered a **review** of U.S. targeting policy. Several analysts I spoke with suggested commanders may be **reluctant** to order strikes until the **new guidelines** are in place.

But the overall drop-off may be driven less by White House policy than by changes on the battlefield. In short, there may be fewer strikes because there are fewer targets.

The original al-Qaeda, the group that carried out the 9/11 attacks, is a shell of its former self and hasn’t been linked to an attack against the U.S. in years. ISIS at one point threatened to redraw the map of the Middle East, but since 2019, it has largely been driven underground. This isn’t to say that there still aren’t violent Islamist militant groups operating around the world — there are likely even more of them than there were in 2001 — but the vast majority are focused on local grievances and enemies rather than what Osama bin Laden once called the “far enemy”: the United States.

In the specific case of Afghanistan, Robert Grenier, former CIA head of counterterrorism and a Grid contributor, points out that drone strikes there and across the border in Pakistan were always less about counterterrorism per se than about preventing attacks against NATO and Afghan forces: “With the drawdown of U.S. and NATO troops, there was a commensurate drop in the number of attacks against them, and a similar drop in drone operations designed to protect them.”

Now that the U.S.-backed Afghan government has fallen to the Taliban, Grenier said “the current administration is focused on maintaining an over-the-horizon capability, rather than a pattern of actual over-the-horizon strikes. As of now, militants of various stripes in Afghanistan, to include those who are ISIS affiliated, do not appear to be much focused on Americans.”

**Intervention is an ethical policy tool that reduces global violence.**

**Gritten 20** (William Gritten; Contributing Writer @ the Week; 3/2/20; "In defense of 'endless' wars"; *The Week*; https://theweek.com/articles/896649/defense-endless-wars)

As the two-decade-long U.S. war in Afghanistan comes to its technical end with a peace deal signed between the U.S. and the Taliban, both poles of the current political spectrum have concluded, along with most of the country, that the massive investment of resources and lives in this conflict was materially, not to mention morally, fruitless. Western confidence has been undermined, and the belief that prosperous democracies can project their power for good now seems anachronistic — naive to some, arrogant to others. There is a **consensus**: It is time to "**end our endless wars**."

However, it is **dangerous** to draw such an **unqualified conclusion**. Bill Clinton and Tony Blair learned from **Kosovo** — where intervention **stopped a war** — and **Rwanda** — where calls for intervention went **unheeded** and up to a **million people were butchered** — that inaction can in fact be **shameful**, and this fostered a categorical conviction in righteous humanitarian intervention that propelled them into the follies of this millennium's first decade in Iraq and Afghanistan. The belief that liberalism can be forced on societies at gunpoint was then handed a crusading energy by the shock of 9/11. But now, the received wisdom is intervention does not work, but what if this new conviction propels us into the next decade's disaster? Why must we **swing between such unnuanced extremes?**

It is important we understand that sometimes **failing to intervene** is the **more costly decision**, both **morally** and in terms of **national self-interest**.

When it comes to the **Afghan war**, the mistake was **not in the intervention itself**, rather in **how it was managed**. Soon after the initial invasion [**defeated**] ~~crippled~~ the **Taliban** and sent it into hiding, its leadership consistently asked to meet at the negotiating table, but were **rebuffed**. Understandably, Washington's blood was up after September 2001, and the Bush administration was categorical: "We do not negotiate with terrorists."

This was a **mistake**. Talks could have brought a reduction in NATO involvement under **better terms** than are being agreed now. The intervention could have been conducted with a **pragmatism** that acknowledged the **impossibility of all-out military victory** and brought the Taliban to the table **early**. The **NATO presence** could still have brought the country what it did: **huge improvements** in **agriculture**, **infrastructure projects** like the successful Dahla Dam rebuild, the **social empowerment of women**, and **health initiatives** like the one that **vaccinated children nationwide.**

Writing in The Atlantic, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) is right to decry the "approach to foreign policy that relies on the U.S. military to achieve the impossible, instead of doing the hard work of statecraft." But this isn't, as she claims, an argument for ending the endless wars: We can, and should, ask the military to do the possible, while running intensive statecraft at the same time.

Many think the cost of military intervention is simply too high — but there are times when the cost of doing nothing is far greater. This is the case, for example, in Syria, where more than 1 million internal refugees face what the U.N. calls the "biggest humanitarian horror story of the 21st century."

Learning the wrong lessons from Western intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Obama administration chose not to provide the rebels who rose up in 2011's Arab Spring with the support necessary to **topple** Syrian President Bashar al-**Assad**. A **stronger U.S. commitment** early on could have **prevented ISIS from rising in Syria** — and prevented the **huge, expensive war** against ISIS that followed. It would also have helped stem the tide of refugees that continues to fuel de-democratizing forces across Europe. It could also have meant the end of the rapacious, **vindictive Assad**, who now **terrorizes his people** for **daring to resist him**. Intervening in Syria **now** would be a mistake, and this is another lesson: To be effective, intervention must be **timely**.

The U.S. did maintain a limited troop presence in Northeastern **Syria**, but, to President Trump, these troops were simply more Americans involved in an endless war. As far as he saw it, the generals and national security advisers who urged him to let them stay were just repeating the conventions that got the U.S. too deeply involved in the Middle East to begin with. So, Trump **got the troops** out — and all **hell broke loose**. Turkey and Assad moved to **fill the vacuum**, America's **Kurdish allies** were **betrayed**, **ISIS fighters** escaped captivity, and a **million** homeless Syrians now face **devastation**.

In **Libya**, another country whose civil war seems to be reaching a nightmarish crescendo after a botched Western intervention, the problem was **not in the intervention per se**, but in, as former President Obama himself diagnosed, "**failing** to plan for the **day after**." That failure, he contends, was his worst mistake as president. Obama shared Trump's instinct for retrenchment — most people agree with them both today — but here he directly admits that instinct was wrong: It was **more** investment, **not less**, that would have prevented today's Libyan hellscape. But why did Obama fail to commit fully after Moammar Gaddafi was toppled? Surely it was the mistakes made in Iraq and Afghanistan that drained, and continue to drain, Western governments of the confidence in their ability to do good through action.

There are **many examples** of **effective intervention** and **long-term presence**, and they're **not obscure**: **Japan**, **Taiwan**, and **Eastern Europe** have their own, complex, imperfect stories, but each is a **relatively stable, prosperous beneficiary** of **many decades** of political and military investment. The United Nations Command in South Korea maintains a presence amid a war that has technically never ended since its outbreak in 1950.

Another, lesser known example is the British-led United Nations involvement in Sierra Leone, in which military intervention ended a **violent decade-long civil war**. The Revolutionary United Front, whose leaders were convicted of war crimes in 2009, was bearing down on Freetown, the country's capital, but the British intervention **stopped them short** and **brought peace**. What's more, **long-term engagement** in the conflict's wake **bolstered institutions** and **restored stability.** Sierra Leone is still a country with problems, but it is **no longer a country at war**. It is no coincidence that this successful campaign began in 2000, at the height of Western confidence, before the tragedy of 9/11 turned intervention from something undertaken with discernment, strategy, and planning, into a solipsistic exercise in emotional therapy, craving glorious, impossible, all out victory.

"The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish ... the kind of war on which they are embarking," wrote the Prussian General Carl Von Clausewitz, in Vom Kriege (On War), 200 years ago, "neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature." Failing to heed this guidance led to mistakes in Iraq and Afghanistan, but heeding it, as Western governments could have done in Syria soon after the Arab Spring by giving decisive support to legitimate democratic forces, can lead to intervention that works.

After the Afghanistan chapter closes, the world will **continue to present Western governments** with **stark** and **urgent decisions** on **whether they should intervene**. If the horror currently developing in **Idlib** province were unfolding, instead, in 1999, then Washington, intoxicated with recent successes and moral certitude, would be working much harder to protect the refugees — and that would be the **right thing to do. Caution** is always appropriate, but the window of opportunity is **invariably narrow**, and **closing fast.**

As a broader geopolitical strategy, **well-judged intervention** plus its sometimes-necessary accompaniment — **indefinite military effort** — can help **keep the forces of totalitarianism at bay**; not everywhere, and never without diplomatic engagement. Rather than **vacillating** between **opposite doctrines** that say intervening is **good or not,** or realistic or not, democracies should be **engaging their collective thought** to **get better at it**. We must remember that the destructive force behind the Afghanistan conflict was the collapse of the Twin Towers, not the principle of intervention itself, or even that of endless war.

**External humanitarian intervention is necessary---emphasis on ‘local solutions’ guarantees genocide and protracted conflict**

**Stockton 98** – former lecturer of sociology, Executive Director of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (Nicholas, “In Defence of Humanitarianism,” Disasters, 22.4)

There are four major challenges to the humanitarian system that have caused great damage to its reputation. These can be summarised as: The demonisation of the 'undeserving' disaster victim and asylum seeker. The 'new pragmatism' that favours the resolution of 'local problems' by local actors. The growing hegemony of the theory of welfare dependency. The end of the 'age of innocence' in media relations with aid agencies. The `undeserving' disaster victim Perhaps the most insidious challenge to humanitarian values has been the widely reported claim that many disaster victims have no one but themselves to blame. Indeed, in the case of Rwanda it has become a commonplace that the 'extremist Hutu' leadership was able to sustain its political control over the refugee population by their astute manipulation of humanitarian aid. This story line was and is used by many, including African Rights, the US and Rwandan governments, to justify the forced repatriation of most of the refugees (or 'fugitive Hutu extremists' as they have been labelled), and the 'disappearance' of the remainder. This argument has also suited many official aid agencies who found in it an excellent reason to suspend humanitarian aid and to be 'pragmatic', i.e. to **do nothing**, irrespective of any further distress experienced by this group of pariah refugees. This argument is flawed in many places. First, by no means all refugees were guilty of genocide. Indeed some 750,000 of those forcibly repatriated or 'lost in Zaire' were children under five. Over 1.5 million were under 16 years of age. Of those who disappeared in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some 50,000 were children under five, the majority of whom had never set foot in Rwanda. Second, withholding humanitarian assistance on the grounds that those in need may be criminals is like suggesting that the ambulance service should conduct triage on the basis of alleged criminality rather than upon the clinical urgency of each case. This is the arbitrary application of punishment before trial and it constitutes cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment on a massive scale. Such treatment is arguably a crime against humanity as the right to life applies to all people. This right is non-derogable and cannot be legally removed as an act of capricious vengeance. Third, rights are indivisible and inalienable. The withholding of humanitarian aid as a substitute for judicial action is ethically and morally indefensible. Finally, extra-judicial killings and deaths arbitrarily meted out through 'humanitarian sanctions' simply serve to reinforce fear, prejudice and to fuel the cycle of violence, revenge and retribution. The concept of the 'undeserving victim' is therefore morally and ethically untenable, and practically counter-productive. It represents an outright rejection of the principles of humanity, impartiality and universalism, fundamental tenets of human rights and humanitarian principles. When operationalised, the evidence from the Great Lakes and elsewhere is that the abandonment of humanitarian principles in fact reinforces the culture of impunity--it does not, as many had naively predicted, eradicate it. The `new pragmatists': local solutions for local problems As well as blaming the victims, many commentators have claimed that aid prolongs suffering as it obviates the need for local people to invent local solutions and that it undermines political accountability and the social contract between citizen and state. Warlords can tear countries to shreds in the full knowledge that the humanitarian system will clear up the mess afterwards, and in effect, subsidise the human costs of warfare. Furthermore, as humanitarian aid does not discriminate between just and unjust causes, it consequently acts as quartermaster to all parties to any conflict and thereby prolongs warfare, irrespective of any moral and ethical considerations. Humanitarian aid also diverts attention away from long-term political solutions and focuses solely upon treating symptoms. With no prospect of international humanitarian action, local leaders would be obliged to act more humanely and responsibly. This argument assumes that the 'root cause' of the problem is to be found and resolved locally. In other words, forget colonialism, imperialism and apartheid, forget structural adjustment, forget international debt, forget economic globalisation, forget the international arms trade and forget rapacious corporate behaviour. Forget covert superpower military and intelligence operations. While not going to the other extreme by claiming that external agency is to blame entirely for the post-Cold War increase in the numbers of internal conflicts, these external forces can surely not be completely absolved of all responsibility either. Available evidence suggests that international aid is a drop in the ocean compared to war economies. For example, total international aid to Afghanistan stands at about $120 million per annum. The UK street value of Afghanistan's annual production of narcotics is an estimated $15 billion. This is about 150 times more than is spent annually on international aid to Afghanistan and perhaps five times the amount spent on humanitarian aid globally in 1997. If only an estimated $45 million is paid to Afghan farmers, the remainder is presumably shared out between international drug dealers and Afghan 'warlords'. This would suggest that cutting humanitarian aid would have little or no impact upon the ability of the Afghans, and their foreign sponsors, to wage war, nor do many in Afghanistan believe that it would persuade the warlords to shoulder the burden of the humanitarian programme and spend less on waging war.(n5) Criminalised economies obviously thrive on lawlessness and the collapse of civil authority. Embargoes on humanitarian aid can however strengthen the hold that warlords and drugs barons have over already desperate people. Bad as well as good local solutions also exist and it is very hard to see how humanitarian assistance necessarily favours only bad, or conversely, only good local solutions. Were it not so tragic, it would be **almost laughable** to suggest that without humanitarian aid wars and natural disasters would stop. It is like saying that we can prevent traffic accidents and fires by abolishing ambulances and fire-engines. Confusing correlation with causation is a **potentially deadly error** in this policy environment. In the aftermath of the cessation of humanitarian aid to Rwandan refugees in 1996, the wars in the region have all heated up and tens of thousands have died. Some speak about the resumption of the genocide in Rwanda. This contrasts with a lull in political violence in the region during the height of the humanitarian programme in 1995 and 1996. Arguably, the Great Lakes was a more peaceful place with international humanitarian aid and protection than it has become without it. Yet humanitarian protection was quite deliberately suspended and tens of thousands of people were sacrificed on the altar of a convenient combination of political correctness and short-term financial expediency that seem to underpin the 'new pragmatists', 'do no harm' and 'local solutions' policies. Cutting humanitarian assistance as a punishment for waging war is now advocated by some as a global panacea for ending conflict. The only likely result is that the victims of war will have their sentences enhanced. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, those who are willing to trade lives and suffering today for political gains tomorrow should perhaps examine the reliability of economic, political and social forecasting. The demonstration of causation and attribution in a globalised environment is perhaps more difficult than ever. The application of 'do no harm' policies is tantamount to playing God--a deadly, perhaps totalitarian business to indulge in without the benefit of 20:20 future vision, a faculty which is conspicuous by its obvious absence. There is no firmly established relationship between the provision of humanitarian aid and the prolongation of war, either in quantitative or in qualitative terms. Aid policies, including the application of 'humanitarian' sanctions or embargoes, founded upon such arguments are built upon weak theory and anecdote only. Much of the 'new pragmatists' argument is been captured in the phrase 'humanitarianism should not be used as a substitute for political action' which most prominently surfaced from the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (Borton et al., 1996). In co-opting this argument, the 'new pragmatists' have slightly modified the sentence, with a profound transformation in meaning and implication. For example, a British Foreign Office official writes that 'humanitarianism as a substitute for political action is unsatisfactory' (Evans, 1997). Does that mean that the UK will not provide humanitarian assistance if it is seen to be at odds with its political interests? Such an argument travesties the actual meaning of the Joint Evaluation's conclusion which might well have included a caveat to the effect that political action (or inaction) should not be used as a substitute for humanitarian action. This lesson very clearly emerges from the latest study of international assistance co-ordination in the Great Lakes (Lautze et al., 1998). The failure to mount coherent political and military interventions in 1994 allowed the genocide to happen. Again, in 1996/7, some blame for tens of thousands of predictable deaths in the Great Lakes region must be attributed to the failure (or subversion) of international political will to guarantee protective asylum or custody for those at risk (see, for example, Stockton, 1996). In this case **'local solutions'** were applied, while international humanitarians mainly watched in frustrated impotence and exclusion. Does anyone now wish to claim this as a great success?

**Even if humanitarianism has flaws, it is more effective than non-intervention---representing the harm is better than sweeping under the rug**

**Stockton 98** – former lecturer of sociology, Executive Director of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (Nicholas, “In Defence of Humanitarianism,” Disasters, 22.4)

As many as 100 NGOs are said to have turned up to 'help' in Goma in 1994 (Borton et al., 1996). The place was awash with the modern symbols of international aid: T-shirts, car stickers and flags. Humanitarian 'heralds' were there, the NGO press officers, doggedly pursuing journalists, brandishing their new angles on the story, often relating to their own agency's courage, skill and impact. All clamoured for television coverage and made claims about what could be achieved, some of which were indeed outrageous. Many have subsequently argued that the relief system is now badly out of control, having become a self-perpetuating expatriate industry unscrupulously exploiting other people's misery. Where genuine compassion exists, it is all too often combined with a gross naivety and amateurism that produces unforeseen and damaging side-effects. Finally, the international agencies operate in a manner that grants their staff near complete impunity for professional incompetence. They can get away, literally, with murder. While there is doubtless some truth in all of this, it is important to establish how generalisable the picture is. **There is very little empirical evidence that actual harm has been caused** by increased numbers of agencies per se.(n9) In fact increased agency competition has certainly demanded more efficient and more professional approaches. It also offers the donors, both private and official, more choice of potential implementation partners. Indeed in the 'development' zone, many of the same critics of the humanitarian scene actually celebrate institutional proliferation as an indicator of the health of 'civil society'. It is surely right that humanitarian agencies pursue television and media coverage of major humanitarian calamities. Would it be better to ignore them or cover them up? The failure to engage much serious media attention to long-term suffering and structural poverty is hardly likely to be remedied through **cleansing our screens** of disaster stories. Surely it makes little sense to argue that because some ambulances leave the scene of some accidents 'empty-handed' that in future ambulances will be despatched one at a time, no matter what the scale and severity of the reported incident. If in Goma some agencies turned up unnecessarily, it is very important to consider carefully what might have happened if an insufficient number had turned up, before jumping to the conclusion that it is possible to define and plan for an optimal response. Of course the humanitarian agencies and their staff are not perfect. But compare their response after the disaster of the Great Lakes with that of governments. While France, the UK and the US variously denied responsibility and buck passed furiously, the NGOs got on with the Sphere project,(n10) People in Aid,(n11) and the Humanitarian Ombudsman (n12) project. These very complex exercises in inter-agency co-operation, involving hundreds of very diverse organisations, are laying down clear standards of ethical behaviour, minimum standards in service delivery, best practice standards in human resource management and methods of enhancing accountability to legitimate humanitarian claimants. It is of course easy to build up a portfolio of cases pointing to venality, inefficiency and ineptitude within the humanitarian system. **However**, as is often said in legal circles, **bad** **cases do not necessarily make for good laws**. Abolition of the health service as a whole is not a rational and justifiable response to the identification of bad practice in particular circumstances. Evidence for and against needs to be weighed carefully and the principle of proportionality reflected when reforming the system. Conclusion The remarkable resilience of Henri Dunant's concepts of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence are based very particularly upon his recognition in 1859 at the Battle of Solferino that humanitarian aid will only be politically possible and ethically justifiable so long as it favours neither warring party with military advantage. These humanitarian principles are as valid now as they were in 1859; in essence the right of non-combatants to protection from violence, inhumane or degrading treatment. The Geneva Conventions and other human rights and humanitarian treaties do therefore confer obligations upon humanitarian organisations and it is absolutely right that the humanitarian system should be held accountable to these norms. In this respect, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief (1994) offers a powerful normative framework to judge the performance of the humanitarian system. In general, the humanitarian agencies are improving their performance in terms of quality, and their willingness to be held accountable to these principles and associated technical standards. This is well illustrated by the phenomenon of over 100 humanitarian agencies co-operating on the Sphere humanitarian standards project. However, growing evidence suggests that the humanitarian system is doing badly as humanitarian demand seems to be outstripping the supply of official and private compassion. But when contrasted with the failures of an international political culture that fails to get to grips with war-crime impunity, the illegal arms trade and those macro-economic processes that sustain the iceberg of poverty and inequality that lies below the surface of most violent conflicts, then the humanitarian system and its underlying values sometimes look like a warm, albeit beleaguered, beacon of hope. **This must not be extinguished**. A public engagement with the human tragedies of poverty and violence **must be renewed**, no matter how distant these may seem geographically or politically.

**Leaving the Horn alone ensures widespread conflict---states are complicit**

**Wolf 12** – Tetra Tech ARD Project Manager (Lucas, “EAST AFRICA REGIONAL CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY ASSESSMENT,” Final Report)

Conflict and instability trends in East Africa—encompassing the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes, and the traditional East Africa region (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania)—continue to make it one of the most unstable regions in the world.3 The region‘s chronic instability stands in sharp contrast to the notable successes in conflict management across most of the rest of Africa. Conflicts in South Sudan, southern Somalia, Darfur, and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)—combined with heavily armed communal clashes in some other parts of the region—wreak havoc on local, state, and regional security. Transborder criminal networks seek refuge in remote and weakly governed borderlands. While parts of the region are relatively stable and peaceful today, significant portions of East Africa remain unable to break free of a brutal and prolonged history of armed conflicts, violent crime, extremism, communal violence, political instability, displacement, human rights abuses, and state failure. The **inability** of central governments to protect their citizens from this violence—in some cases, **government complicity in the crises**—has **eroded communities‘ trust in the state**. Most of East Africa‘s zones of armed conflict and instability today are concentrated near border areas and feature powerful crossborder drivers, interests, and actors. Crossborder spillover is thus a major problem in East Africa, and has the effect of tying the fates of relatively stable countries to their troubled neighbors. At its worst, spillover has produced new crises of armed violence that match or exceed the fatality levels of the original conflict, as the case of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and ensuing wars in eastern DRC illustrates. Under such circumstances, regional governments can ill-afford to ignore violent conflicts in neighboring countries, nor can they rest assured that containment strategies will adequately shield them. Few of the region‘s central governments have the **capacity** (or in some cases the **political will**) to police and patrol their remote, expansive border areas. As a result, much of what passes for transborder conflict management and prevention falls on the shoulders of regional organizations, local communities, and local government authorities, in partnership with often distant central governments. Their resilience and adaptability are critical factors in determining whether and to what extent crossborder conflict and instability issues are successfully managed.

**These factors impede community-led efforts**

**Wolf 12** – Tetra Tech ARD Project Manager (Lucas, “EAST AFRICA REGIONAL CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY ASSESSMENT,” Final Report)

Even so, community efforts to manage crossborder violence and instability have faced **significant problems**. In Kenya, the formalization of PDCs has allowed for the model to be replicated across much of the country, but has an uneven record. Some PDCs have been used as political platforms for aspiring politicians; in the process, the PDCs have been politicized, and their neutrality damaged. In southern Somalia, community-based governance is well developed thanks to 21 years of state collapse, but in recent years has had to contend with the violent and intimidating presence of Al-Shabaab. Local civic leaders have been able to negotiate terms with Al-Shabaab, but at great risk, and as a result have been constrained by the threat of assassination from acting autonomously. In Ethiopia, the government‘s recent restrictive laws on civil society (the Charities and Societies Proclamation) has reduced formal roles for CSOs in peace building and conflict management in border areas, though civil society representatives are represented in LPCs. In some war-torn areas of East Africa, CSOs in remote border areas are weak or in disarray. Capacity and leadership quality are critical, and vary tremendously from place to place. Finally, in some conflict areas of East Africa, local community leadership is simply not committed to peace building. Years of clashes have hardened ethnic animosities and deepened distrust; competing narratives are jarringly at odds, and appear to offer only modest prospects for negotiation and mediation. Our research encountered this in the Turkana border area of Kenya and Ethiopia, where the Turkana and Dassenesh communities are locked in spiraling violence over land and the fisheries of the shrinking Lake Turkana. Border communities typically take on a broad portfolio of roles in maintaining peace. At their best, they serve as eyes and ears for early warning systems; create deterrence, by placing social pressure on would-be criminals and armed militia; mobilize the community for both conflict prevention and management; are a source of customary or religious law within their group; and serve as diplomats in managing tensions with neighboring groups. They also face serious constraints, and are especially limited in effectiveness when deprived of a strong partnership with local and national governments. Some of the factors constraining community peace building include ineffective or hostile local government in some locations, poor communication systems with crossborder groups, increasingly complex new conflict drivers and fatality levels which can overwhelm customary systems of justice and conflict management, powerful spoilers, and organizational challenges of keeping hybrid governance coalitions working together.

**The existence of habeas petitions promoting human rights proves that an institution can be caught up in systems of whiteness while still combatting violence**

**Williams 90** - American lawyer who is a notable author and legal scholar in the field of federal Indian law, international law, indigenous peoples' rights, critical race and post-colonial theory (Robert, “Encounters on the Frontiers of International Human Rights Law: Redefining the Terms of Indigenous Peoples' Survival in the World”, Duke Law Journal, Vol. 4)

Not too long ago, it was fashionable for some legal academics in this country to assert that rights discourse—that is, talk and thought about rights—was actually harmful to the social movements of peoples of color and other oppressed groups.1 And as recent times have shown, legal academics of color can attract a great deal of attention and the sympathies of anonymous white colleagues by telling us that the sufferings and stories of peoples of color in this country possess no unique capacity to transform the law.2 These legal academic denials of the efficacy of rights discourse and storytelling for the social movements of peoples of color now seem disharmonious with the larger transformations occurring in the world. Why any legal academics would discount the usefulness of such proven, liberating forms of discourse in the particular society they serve from their positions of privilege is a curious and contentious question. The disaggregated narratives of human rights struggles on the nightly news apparently have not been sufficient for some legal academics. They want documented accounts demonstrating the efficacy of rights discourse and storytelling in the social movements of outsider groups. Empirical evidence of the traditions, histories, and lives of oppressed peoples actually transforming legal thought and doctrine about rights could then be used to cure skeptics of the critical race scholarly enterprise.3 "See here," the still unconverted in the faculty lounge can be told, "this stuff works, if applied and systematized correctly." Despite the attacks from society's dominant groups in the legal academic spectrum—both the left and right—the voices of legal scholars of color have sought to keep faith with the struggles and aspirations of oppressed peoples around the world. These emerging voices recognize that now is the time to intensify the struggle for human rights on all fronts— to heighten demands, engage in intense political rhetoric, and sharpen critical thinking about all aspects of legal thought and doctrine. The rapid emergence of indigenous peoples\* human rights as a subject of major concern and action in contemporary international law provides a unique opportunity to witness the application of rights discourse and storytelling in institutionalized, law-bound settings around the world.4 By telling their own stories in recognized and authoritative intcrnational human rights standard-setting bodies during the past decade, indigenous peoples have sought to redefine the terms of their right to survival under international law.5 Under present, Western-dominated conceptions of international law, indigenous peoples are regarded as subjects of the exclusive domestic jurisdiction of the settler state regimes that invaded their territories and established hegemony during prior colonial eras.6 At present, international law does not contest unilateral assertions of state sovereignty that limit, or completely deny the collective cultural rights of indigenous peoples.7 Contemporary international law also does not concern itself with protecting indigenous peoples' traditionally-occupied territories from uncompensated state appropriation, even when indigenous territories are secured through treaties with a state. According to contemporary international discourse, such treaties should be treated as legal nullities.8 Finally, modern international law refuses to recognize indigenous peoples as "peoples," entitled to rights of self-determination as specified in United Nations and other major international human rights legal instruments.9 Since the 1970s, in international human rights forums around the world, indigenous peoples have contested the international legal system's continued acquiescence to the assertions of exclusive state sovereignty and jurisdiction over the terms of their survival. Pushed to the brink of extinction by state-sanctioned policies of genocide and ethnocide, indigenous peoples have demanded heightened international concern and legal protection for their continued survival.10 The emergence of indigenous rights in contemporary international legal discourse is a direct response to the consciousness-raising efforts of indigenous peoples in international human rights forums. Specialized international and regional bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and advocacy groups are now **devoting** greater **attention to indigenous human rights** concerns." By far the most important of these specialized initiatives to emerge out of the indigenous human rights movement is the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (Working Group). The Working Group is composed of five international legal experts drawn from the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The Working Group was created by the Sub-Commission's parent body, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1982 and given a specific mandate to develop international legal standards for the protection of indigenous peoples' human rights.12

**Civilian assistance is developed through consultation and promote African-led initiatives**

**Murphy 12** – East Coast Correspondent, Humanosphere.org (Tom, “USAID: Building Resiliency In the Horn of Africa,” Huff, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-murphy/usaid-building-resiliency\_b\_1163987.html)

Programming in the HoA seeks to give people living in the region the ability to adjust to the cyclical droughts that return every few years. Feed the Future is one USAID program that hopes to build the capacity to withstand weather challenges. Borne out of the 2007-8 food crisis and ensuing G8 Summit in L’Aquila, Italy, Feed the Future leveraged $3.5 billion in financial backing to rally support around the Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security. The signatories agreed to: Invest in **country-owned plans** that support results-based programs and partnerships, so that assistance is tailored to the needs of individual countries through consultative processes and plans that are **developed** and led **by country governments** Strengthen strategic coordination to mobilize and align the resources of the diverse partners and stakeholders — including the private sector and civil society - that are needed to achieve our common objectives Ensure a comprehensive approach that accelerates inclusive agricultural-led growth and improves nutrition, while also bridging humanitarian relief and sustainable development efforts Leverage the benefits of multilateral institutions so that priorities and approaches are aligned, investments are coordinated, and financial and technical assistance gaps are filled Deliver on sustained and accountable commitments, phasing-in investments responsibly to ensure returns, using benchmarks and targets to measure progress toward shared goals, and holding ourselves and other stakeholders publicly accountable for achieving results.

**Err aff — you’re biased to latch on to imagery of particular failures, filter those through the overwhelming statistical record of successful peacekeeping – increasing material support only makes it more effective**

**Paris 14**, (founding director of the University of Ottawa's Centre for International Policy Studies and associate professor in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Peacekeeping Works Better Than You May Think, politicalviolenceataglance.org/2014/08/12/peacekeeping-works-better-than-you-may-think/)

Does **peacekeeping work?** Janice Stein (University of Toronto) and I had a lively exchange on this subject on the CBC radio program “The House” last weekend. Have a listen. In the interview, I said that more than two dozen major peace operations have been deployed over the past 25 years in countries emerging from civil wars, and that although some have been terrible failures (e.g., Rwanda 1994), their overall record has been reasonably good at preventing a recurrence of fighting. Prof. Stein was unconvinced. Some studies, she said, “show that the majority [of peace operations] are failures and that there is a return to violence after 5 to 7 years. So I think the record is the reverse.” So, which is it? Does peacekeeping generally help to prevent a return to violence, or does it generally fail to do so? The answer to this question matters – quite a lot, actually. If peacekeeping is ineffective and if outsiders can do little to help post-conflict societies transition towards a more stable peace, as Prof. Stein suggests, then Western policymakers and other leaders would be foolish to consider contributing to, or even supporting, such efforts. If, on the other hand, peacekeeping has a reasonably positive record, it would seem foolish for the same policymakers not to support these efforts. Prof. Stein is a fine scholar and fluent analyst of international affairs, but she’s **not correct** about the peacekeeping record. Michael Doyle (Columbia University) and Nicholas Sambanis (Yale University) demonstrated in 2000 that the presence of a large peacekeeping operation in a country emerging from civil war **significantly reduced the chances of that society slipping back into violence**. They reached this conclusion by analyzing post-conflict countries that had, and had not, received peace missions, and by holding other factors constant, including the intensity of the preceding war, the type of conflict, etc. Their finding has been **replicated, modified, and reconfirmed many times in the ensuing decade-and-a-half** and is now **widely accepted** among international security scholars. One recent survey of this literature put it simply: “there is considerable evidence that [United Nations peacekeeping operations] are effective in maintaining peace.” In fact, most debates on this subject are now focusing not on whether peacekeeping reduces the risk of renewed fighting, but on how much it does so. Of course, this does not mean that every peacekeeping mission has succeeded or will succeed; rather, it indicates that “on average” peacekeeping works to reduce the risk of renewed conflict. It is a statistical relationship – and a **very strong one,** as other contributors to this literature, including Paul Collier (University of Oxford) and Page Fortna (Columbia University and contributor to this blog), have demonstrated. This finding may seem counter-intuitive at first, given **lingering images of failed peacekeeping** efforts in Rwanda and Somalia, for example. But it begins to make sense if you consider how many countries have navigated the war-to-peace transition with the assistance of international peacekeepers – including **El Salvador**, **Nicaragua**, **Namibia**, **Mozambique**, **Sierra Leone**, **Cambodia**, **East Timor**, **Bosnia** and **Kosovo**. Perhaps these cases have fallen from **public view** precisely because they are **no longer at war**. “Still no return to massive bloodshed in Bosnia” is very important news to the inhabitants of that country, but don’t count on seeing this headline in tomorrow’s paper. If it doesn’t bleed, it doesn’t lead. Nevertheless, the **evidence is clear**: ***on balance***, peacekeeping works reasonably well at preventing conflicts from reigniting. I’ve included a list of studies at the end of this post in case you wish to read further, but I’ll leave the last word to Steven Pinker of Harvard University, who, in the video clip below, sums up the findings of this scholarship more eloquently than I can. In response to the question of whether peacekeeping works, Pinker says: The answer from the **statistical studies is**: **absolutely, they work massively**. A country is much less likely to fall back in civil war if they’ve got armed peacekeepers. And the better financed and armed the peacekeeping force, the more effective they are… The United Nations does a number of things badly, but it does a number of things well, and one of them is peacekeeping – on average, not 100 percent of the time. **The headlines would never tell you that. Only a statistical study would**.

**Here’s another study.**

**Beardsley** et al. **18** [Kyle Beardsley, Duke University; David E. Cunningham, University of Maryland & Peace Research Institute Oslo; Peter B. White, University of Maryland; 6-30-2018; "Mediation, Peacekeeping and the Severity of Civil War"; Journal of Conflict Resolution; https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0022002718817092; KL]

In this article, we argue that international actors can work to **reduce** the level of violence in ongoing civil wars. In particular, we argue that mediators can contribute to a reduction in violence by facilitating negotiated settlements and by creating lulls during which negotiations can occur. We also expect peacekeeping to reduce **civil war violence**, for reasons similar to the arguments of Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon (2014, hereafter HKS). Moreover, we argue that the mechanisms through which mediation and peacekeeping can help attenuate violence are both additive—the mediators help reduce violence in ways that peacekeeping operations alone cannot and vice versa—and interactive—mediation and peacekeeping reinforce one another and may even depend on one another.

We examine these expectations in an analysis of **all** intrastate conflict months in Africa from 1989 to 2008. Since mediated peace processes and peacekeeping deployments often occur in close temporal proximity, it is important to examine their distinct contributions to reductions in armed violence within the same empirical framework. We find, consistent with our expectations, that mediation leads to a dramatic decline in battlefield casualties. We also find, consistent with HKS, that peacekeeping **reduces** battlefield casualties. In addition to these independent effects, we find that mediation and peacekeeping have a conditional effect wherein the presence of both leads to a greater reduction in battlefield fatalities. We also find that this interaction is driven primarily by mediation and peacekeeping occurring simultaneously rather than by a sequencing in which mediation precedes peacekeepers. These results illustrate that mediation and peacekeeping can have important positive impacts on conflict beyond complete termination.

**! — NATO Good — AT: Interventions — Libya**

**NATO’s involvement in Libya prevented massacres.**

**Hamid 16** [Shadi Hamid; senior fellow at the Project on US Relations with the Islamic World at the Brookings Institution’s Center for Middle East Policy; 4-5-2016; "Everyone says the Libya intervention was a failure. **They’re wrong**."; Vox; https://www.vox.com/2016/4/5/11363288/libya-intervention-success; KL]

Libya and the 2011 NATO intervention there have become synonymous with failure, disaster, and the Middle East being a "shit show" (to use President Obama’s colorful descriptor). It has perhaps never been more important to question this prevailing wisdom, because how we interpret Libya affects how we interpret Syria and, importantly, how we assess Obama’s foreign policy legacy.

Of course, Libya, as anyone can see, is a mess, and Americans are reasonably asking if the intervention was a mistake. But just because it’s reasonable doesn’t make it right.

Most criticisms of the intervention, even with the benefit of hindsight, **fall short**. It is certainly true that the intervention didn’t produce something resembling a stable democracy. This, however, was never the goal. The goal was to **protect civilians** and **prevent a massacre**.

Critics **erroneously compare** Libya today to any number of **false ideals**, but this is not the correct way to evaluate the success or failure of the intervention. To do that, we should compare Libya today to what Libya would have looked like if we hadn’t intervened. By that standard, the Libya intervention was successful: The country is **better off** today than it would have been had the international community allowed **dictator Muammar Qaddafi** to continue his **rampage** across the country.

Critics further assert that the intervention caused, created, or somehow led to civil war. In fact, the civil war had **already started** before the intervention began. As for today’s chaos, violence, and general instability, these are more plausibly tied not to the original intervention but to the international community’s failures after intervention.

The very fact that the Libya intervention and its legacy have been either **distorted** or misunderstood is itself evidence of a **warped foreign policy discourse** in the US, where anything short of success — in this case, Libya quickly becoming a stable, relatively democratic country — is viewed as a failure.

NATO intervened to protect civilians, not to set up a democracy

As stated in the UN Security Council resolution authorizing force in Libya, the goal of intervention was "to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack." And this is what was achieved.

In February 2011, anti-Qaddafi demonstrations spread across the country. The regime responded to the nascent protest movement with **lethal force**, killing **more than 100** people in the first few days, effectively sparking an armed rebellion. The rebels quickly lost momentum, however.

I still remember how I felt in those last days and hours as Qaddafi’s forces marched toward Benghazi. In a quite literal sense, every moment mattered, and the longer we waited, the greater the cost.

It was frightening to watch. I didn’t want to live in an America where we would stand by silently as a **brutal dictator** — using that distinct language of **genocidaires** — announced rather clearly his intentions to **kill**. In one speech, Qaddafi called protesters "**cockroaches**" and vowed to cleanse Libya "**inch by inch**, house by house, **home by home**, alleyway by alleyway."

Already, on the eve of intervention, the death toll was estimated at somewhere between 1,000 and **2,000**. (This was when the international community’s tolerance for Arab Spring–related mass killings was still fairly low.)

As Obama’s advisers saw it, there were two options for military action: a no-fly zone (which, on its own, wouldn’t do much to stop Qaddafi’s tanks) or a broader resolution that would allow the US and its allies to take further measures, including establishing what amounted to a floating no-drive zone around rebel forces. The president went with the latter option.

The NATO operation lasted about seven months, with an estimated death toll of around 8,000, apparently most of them combatants on both sides (although there is some lack of clarity on this, since the Libyan government doesn’t clearly define "revolutionaries" or "rebel supporters"). A Human Rights Watch investigation found that at least 72 civilians were killed as a result of the NATO air campaign, definitively contradicting speculative claims of mass casualties from the Qaddafi regime.

Claims of "mission creep" have become commonplace, most forcefully articulated by the Micah Zenko of the Council on Foreign Relations. Zenko may be right, but he asserts rather than explains why mission creep is always a bad thing. It may be that in some circumstances, the scope of a mission should be defined more broadly, rather than narrowly.

If anything, it was the Obama administration’s insistence of minimizing the mission — including the absurd claim that it would take "days, not weeks" — that was the problem from the very start. Zenko and others never make clear how civilians could have been protected as long as Qaddafi was waging war on them.

What Libya would look like today if NATO hadn’t intervened

It’s helpful to engage in a bit of **counterfactual history** here. As Niall Ferguson notes in his book Virtual Alternatives, “To understand how it actually was, we therefore need to understand how it actually wasn’t.”

Applied to the Libyan context, this means that we’re not comparing Libya, during or after the intervention, with some imagined ideal of stable, functioning democracy. Rather, we would compare it with what we judge, to the best of our ability, the **most likely alternative** outcome would have been had the US not intervened.

Here’s what we know: By March 19, 2011, when the NATO operation began, the death toll in Libya had risen rapidly to more than 1,000 in a relatively short amount of time, confirming Qaddafi’s longstanding reputation as someone who was willing to kill his countrymen (as well as others) in large numbers if that’s what his survival required.

There was **no end in sight**. After early rebel gains, Qaddafi had seized the advantage. Still, he was not in a position to deal a decisive blow to the opposition. (Nowhere in the Arab Spring era has one side in a military conflict been able to claim a clear victory, even with massive advantages in manpower, equipment, and regional backing.)

Any Libyan who had opted to take up arms was liable to be captured, arrested, or killed if Qaddafi “won,” so the incentives to accept defeat were nonexistent, to say nothing of the understandable desire to not live under the rule of a **brutal** and **maniacal strongman**.

The most likely outcome, then, was a Syria-like situation of **indefinite**, **intensifying violence**. Even President Obama, who today seems unsure about the decision to intervene, acknowledged in an August 2014 interview with Thomas Friedman that “had we not intervened, it’s likely that Libya would be Syria. … And so there would be **more death**, more disruption, more destruction.”

What caused the current Libyan civil war?

Critics charge that the NATO intervention was responsible for or somehow caused Libya’s current state of chaos and instability. For instance, after leaving the Obama administration, Philip Gordon, the most senior US official on the Middle East in 2013-'15, wrote: "In Iraq, the U.S. intervened and occupied, and the result was a costly disaster. In Libya, the U.S. intervened and did not occupy, and the result was a costly disaster. In Syria, the U.S. neither intervened nor occupied, and the result is a costly disaster."

The problem here is that US intervention did not, in fact, result in a costly disaster, unless we are using the word "result" to simply connote that one thing happened after a previous thing. The NATO operation ended in October 2011. The current civil war in Libya began in May 2014 — a full **two and a half years** later. The intervention and today’s violence are of course related, but this does not necessarily mean there is a causal relationship.

To argue that the current conflict in Libya is a result of the intervention, one would basically need to assume that the outbreak of civil war was **inevitable**, irrespective of anything that happened in the intervening **30 months**.

**The alternative was mass genocide and hundreds of thousands of deaths.**

**Debeuf 21** [Koert Debeuf; Senior Associate Researcher at Free University of Brussels, Visiting Research Fellow at Oxford University, and Director of the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy Europe; 2-17-2011; "Why Western military interventions **remain necessary**"; EUobserver; https://euobserver.com/world/152742; KL]

Since the Afghanistan debacle, more and more analysts have raised their voices against interventions by the West. According to some, the West should only intervene militarily when self-interest is at stake and if there is no alternative.

For example, many believe that the intervention in Libya was a mistake. That its late leader Muammar Gaddafi would still be in power would not matter to our interest. In other words, they believe that doing nothing is usually better than doing something.

Let me first zoom in on Libya. Following Tunisia and Egypt, Libyans took to the streets for the first time on 17 February 2011 to demand the end of the Gaddafi regime, which had been a **reign of terror** since 1969.

That happened first in Benghazi, the second largest city in Libya, which then had a population of about 630,000. In March 2011, Gaddafi's army marched with a huge force to Benghazi to, as the "Brotherly Leader and Guide" announced, **nip all resistance** in the bud, "from house to house, alley to alley".

No one doubted that tens of thousands, if not **hundreds of thousands** of people would be killed. A genocide 10, maybe 50 times bigger than Srebrenica was about to happen.

It was the **Libyans themselves**, especially the future prime minister Mahmoud Jibril, who **first convinced** the European Parliament, then French president Nicolas Sarkozy and finally US secretary of state Hillary Clinton to try to stop this massacre.

When the planes took off from France to Libya on 17 March, the Libyan army was literally already at the gates of Benghazi.

A **massive massacre** had been **avoided**, thanks to the Libyan opposition and **Nato**.

**The mistake of Libya was not enough intervention.**

**Slate 18** [James Slate; Foreign Policy liberal; 1-16-2018; "Why America was right to Intervene in Libya, and what went wrong after"; Medium; https://jameslate.medium.com/why-america-was-right-to-intervene-in-libya-d31f87202c18; KL]

If the U.S. hadn’t intervened, the result might have been another Syria-like situation of a **protracted civil war**. I was in favor of intervening, but I also warned at the time that the U.S. needed to seriously prepare for a post-Gaddafi Libya, and that the only way to ward off chaos was to send an international peacekeeping force.

The **Problem** with Obama In Libya, was that he employed American airpower to topple Muammar Gaddafi but refused to sanction any **follow-on peacekeeping** forces to help a new, pro-Western government establish its authority. The predictable result: a vacuum of authority that allowed militias and terrorist groups to flourish. U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three of his colleagues paid with their lives for that failure.

The Obama administration’s mission while “leading from behind” over the skies of Libya was never regime change. “Of course, there is no question that Libya and the world would be better off with Qaddafi out of power,” Obama said in an address to the nation. “But broadening our military mission to include regime change would be a mistake.” In that address, the president noted that regime change in Iraq was not worth the cost in lives or dollars. That’s perhaps why the administration was ill-prepared for the crumbling of Gaddafi’s regime.

**The Mistake of Libya was not enough Intervention**

With the Arabian Revolt sweeping the Middle East in early 2011, Libya’s turn came on February 17. Throwing off decades of fear, and not bothering with peaceful demonstrations as Tunisia and Egypt had to free themselves of tyranny, nor the Syrians who tried peaceful demonstrations for six entire months, the Libyans went straight to armed rebellion, and soon the city of Benghazi had been pried from the regime’s grip and become the de facto capital of the **revolution**. The Libyans had **no confidence** in protests to alter the regime of Muammar el-Qaddafi. They were right. The demented Colonel responded with a **brutality** that included using **fighter jets**against civilian areas. As the violence escalated, on March 17 the U.N. Security Council passed resolution 1973, which

Authorize[d] Member States …, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, … to take all necessary measures … to protect civilians.

Celebrations erupted in Libya at the news that deliverance was coming. For reasons unclear there was a 48-hour delay, which allowed Qaddafi’s forces to be right at the gates of Benghazi by the time the American intervention came on March 19 in the form of Operation ODYSSEY DAWN. Qaddafi’s rudimentary air defences were disabled and a no-fly zone instituted. President Obama then made the decision, on March 31, to hand the operation to NATO. This was the infamous “leading from behind“. Still, it was enough to bring down the regime. In late August, Qaddafi was driven from his capital, and on October 20, Qaddafi’s escape from his hometown of Sirte was cut off by French jets and he was pulled out of a drainage ditch and given to the crowd. They were not pretty those closing scenes in Sirte, but they were long overdue.

The Russians would protest that their abstention on the U.N. resolution was never meant to encompass regime-change, and the West, including the U.S. Defence Secretary and the British Chief of Defence, denied that this had been the intention. How they proposed to protect civilians without killing the despot giving the orders that endangered them was never explained. On Oct. 31, NATO’s Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR was ended, and that was more or less it for Western involvement, except for the victory lap of course.

In the elections that followed liberation in June 2012, the tribalists/nationalists would carry the day; the Islamists were trounced. But the problems had already begun. Between April and September 2012 there had been “at least five … attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi,” and this would culminate in the fiasco on Sept. 11, 2012, when the American ambassador and three other U.S. citizens were killed by al-Qaeda jihadists at the Consulate in that city. There were many democratic and pro-American people in Libya — protesters had expelled the Islamic militants who attacked the U.S. Consulate from their base in Benghazi after the attack — but a small group of violent fanatics can impose themselves if nobody else has the power to resist them. Lawlessness was allowed to overtake Libya, and the decent government that had come to office by elections was unable to enforce its writ. America had made one effort to send a training mission to Libya to buttress the forces of law and order but it was withdrawn in mid-2012 “until the security of U.S. personnel and equipment could be guaranteed“!

2013 did not shape up any better. The parliament passed laws at gun-point, a proposed NATO training mission went nowhere, and there were numerous kidnappings, including the Prime Minister. The east of Libya had always been fertile ground for the jihadists. Derna, for example, had contributed “far and away” the most holy warriors on a per capita basis to the jihad against constitutional government in Iraq. With no State to keep this at bay, and collapsing order around Libya, notably Mali, the jihadists converged on Libya for shelter and al-Qaeda and other Salafi-jihadists’ presence in the country became more pronounced.

Major cities in Libya, predominantly Tripoli in the west and Benghazi in the east

Elections in June 2014 had again defeated the Islamists but this time the zealots decided to take by force what they could not get by the ballot, and on Saturday, the situation unravelled completely when Tripoli fell to Islamic militants under the banner of Fajr Libya (Libyan Dawn). The Islamists set ablaze Tripoli International Airport, further destruction of the city was reported, and the remnants of the police and army, as well as militiamen loyal to the government, were being systematically rounded up by Dawn. In the east, fighting is ongoing between the Islamists and the supposedly-nationalist militias of Khalifa Haftar, a former General, a leftover of the old regime who has seemingly modelled himself on Abdel Fattah as-Sisi, a putschist and autocrat who claims he can keep the Islamists in check. Libya’s Parliament calledfor international intervention earlier this month and was rebuffed. This is the harvest.

But this wasn’t all. Regional dynamics soon intruded:

Twice in the last seven days, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have secretly launched airstrikes against Islamist-allied militias battling for control of Tripoli … The United States, the officials said, was caught by surprise: Egypt and the Emirates, both close allies and military partners, acted without informing Washington, leaving the Obama administration on the sidelines. Egyptian officials explicitly denied to American diplomats that their military played any role in the operation … In recent months, the officials said, teams of “special forces” operating out of Egypt but possibly composed primarily of Emiratis had also successfully destroyed an Islamist camp near … Derna …

Several officials said in recent days that United States diplomats were fuming about the airstrikes, believing the intervention could further inflame the Libyan conflict as the United Nations and Western powers are seeking to broker a peaceful resolution.

Officials said the government of Qatar has already provided weapons and support to the Islamist-aligned forces inside Libya, so the new strikes represent a shift from a battle of proxies to direct involvement. …

“In every arena — in Syria, Iraq, Gaza, Libya, even what happened in Egypt — this regional polarization, with Saudi Arabia and the … U.A.E. on one side and Qatar and Turkey on the other, has proved to be a gigantic impediment to international efforts to resolve any of these crisis [sic],” said Michele Dunne, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former Middle East specialist at the State Department.

A snapshot but a very dense one: The region’s actors, perhaps especially America’s allies, have taken to free-lancing because they have no confidence that the President will actually do anything; Qatar is playing as destructive a role as it can; the struggles within the Muslim world are the major front in the region (Israel is not even on the radar of these States); the Obama administration’s failure to intervene properly and stay to secure the aftermath has led to disaster in Libya, as it has in Iraq; and while bad actors are making real military gains, the administration worries that using force to stop them will only make it worse and tries to bring about a political solution in situations that have long-since passed the point of no return.

Credit where it is due: The United States had come to the **rescue** of Libya when **nobody else** would (Russia and China) or could (the Arab League). But the U.S. had not secured the aftermath, the one lesson all sides of the argument should surely have learned from Iraq.

It didn’t have to be this way. Consider an alternative history of the region over the last three years. If the intervention against Qaddafi had come sooner, in the first two weeks rather than after four, and if it had targeted him and his elite directly and unapologetically, the war would not have dragged out for eight months; there would have been much less destruction and the jihadists would have had much less time and space to set themselves up. If Special Forces, military advisers, and other help were made available to the elected government afterwards then order could have been restored, in no small part because it wouldn’t have broken down so badly. If fifteen or twenty thousand troops could have been left in Iraq it would have allowed a fighting chance of keeping peace between the sects, stopped Iran using Iraq as a transit point to support the Assad dictatorship, kept Syria’s furies largely out of Iraq, and ensured that the Islamic State didn’t get a chance to regenerate in Iraq.

If an early aerial intervention were mounted in Syria in late 2011 or early (or even mid-) 2012 it would have stopped the Zarqawi’ites metastasizing on Syrian soil, denying them the conditions they needed — including the complicity of the regime and Iran — and ensured a much better outcome by helping to power nationalists, who were overwhelmingly powerful early in this rebellion, breaking Iran’s power in the Mediterranean, and not incidentally preventing a great deal of killing and destruction. Project the worst you like for casualties from a NATO intervention in Syria and it’s not 220,000. (In Libya, 72 civilians were collateral damage in NATO’s entire campaign, less than one day’s work from Assad, and estimates of the total casualties are being revised down all the time.)

For those who worry that this is taking on too much, just remember: The West is going to get dragged in anyway. It will be on terms much less advantageous, the outcomes will be worse than they could have been with earlier intervention, and many more people will die, but these situations will eventually reach a point where they can no longer be ignored whether, as in Iraq and Syria, it is the rise of transnational terrorist groups or, as will soon be the case in Libya, the rise of transnational terrorist groups and a destabilising flood of refugees into Europe, some of whom will be agents of these terrorist groups. In Iraq and Libya, it would have been much easier to simply stay on and secure the gains the West had already achieved. As in so many other cases, what to do about Syria has not been made easier by letting it drag out.

The next question of the anti-interventionists tends to be on the “exit strategy,” but this is a fantasy on at least two counts. One is that it sets up a standard of prescience on interventionists that anti-interventionists never get held to. For example, Edward Miliband, having organised the defeat of the proposal in the British Parliament that said Bashar al-Assad should pay a military price for gassing children, now bears partial responsibility for everybody who has been killed in Syria by the regime since last August because he emboldened it by sending the message that chemical weapons use was cost-free.

But somehow the costs of inaction never seem to register in the same way. Second, an “exit strategy” can’t be known until it’s seen. The U.S. still has troops in **Germany**, **Japan**, **South Korea**, **Bosnia**, and **Kosovo** — and so much the better. Look how well they turned out as opposed to the American South, Somalia, Haiti, and Iraq where American troops were pulled out too soon. By being prepared to stay for as long as it takes, there’s every chance you won’t have to stay so long. If it is understood that you are determined to see it through, the local actors will make their long-term arrangements with you. If, like Obama in Afghanistan, you announce a commitment and simultaneously announce the end-date, the local actors make their arrangements instead with internal and external forces they know will be there forever.

In short, the lesson of Libya is not that the intervention in 2011 was a mistake. It is the lesson once articulated by Representative Charles Wilson of Texas, who was rather over-sold as having single-handedly driven the Red Army out of Afghanistan in the excellent film Charlie Wilson’s War. “These things happened. They were glorious and they changed the world,” said the Congressman. “And then we fucked up the endgame.”

Did the United States Violate its Nuclear Agreements with Libya?

To Quote Wikipedia:

In 1968, Libya became signatory of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), ratified the treaty in 1975, and concluded a safeguards agreement in 1980. The Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials were quoted “Libya had bought nuclear components from various black market dealers”, and provided the various designs of centrifuges to U.S. officials and gave the name of its suppliers.”

So right there, you have Libya admitting to violating the NPT.

Recognizing that his country was vulnerable to a similar fate as Iraq and wishing to have lifted the sanctions that had been in place since the 1980s, Gaddafi announced his intention to destroy his WMD and to allow inspectors to confirm this fact. The process began in December 2003 and was officially completed by February 2014.

“On 22 September 2011, near Sabha, Libya, toward the end of the Libyan Civil War, anti-Gaddafi forces discovered two warehouses containing thousands of blue barrels marked with tape reading “radioactive” and plastic bags of yellow powder sealed with the same tape. The IAEA stated, “We can confirm that there is yellowcake stored in drums at a site near Sabha … which Libya previously declared to the IAEA. … The IAEA has tentatively scheduled safeguards activities at this location once the situation in the country stabilises.””

So maybe he didn’t actually give up his WMD as promised?

At any rate, the US lifted its sanctions against Libya in 2004 as promised. (U.S. Lifts Remaining Economic Sanctions Against Libya)

SEVEN years later, the Libyan people decided to overthrow the Gaddafi regime. When he responded by indiscriminately bombing their cities, NATO enacted various “no fly zones” in order to minimize the civilian casualties. This air support from NATO allowed Libya rebel forces to topple Gaddafi’s regime and eventually kill him.

Conclusion:

The failure of Western policy in Libya was not the decision to intervene to prevent a massacre in Benghazi and to help the Libyans with their **only viable defence** against Qaddafi, namely **toppling the dictator**. The failure was in not committing what would have been really quite limited resources mostly military and intelligence trainers and advisers to stabilising the aftermath. Indeed none other than President Obama appears to agree with this assessment.

“Had we not intervened, it’s likely that Libya would be Syria,” said the President. His close adviser Ben Rhodes echoed this sentiment. So Obama agrees that the intervention per se even with a messy outcome — was better than no intervention. In Libya, **72** civilians were killed **accidentally** in NATO’s entire campaign, less than **one day’s work** from Assad, and estimates of the military casualties are being revised down all the time. In Syria, 300,000 people and more are dead and the chaos has opened the way to worse actors. (That Obama has elsewhere said the idea that intervening earlier in Syria to support the moderates would have resulted in a better outcome was “horseshit,” can be safely put down the political necessity of never admitting a mistake.)

On the other half of this argument that more needed to be done in the aftermath Obama also agrees but says he “underestimated the need to come in full force if you’re going to do this.” Obama ran for office against the Iraq invasion in no small part highlighting the incompetence of the Bush administration’s reconstruction. The need for a post-war plan is the most salient lesson of the Iraq experience. It seems unlikely this came to Obama after 2011: the 2012 Election, where the President ran on his record of extricating the U.S. from the Middle East, Iraq most notably, serves as a much better explanation for why Obama would not commit to Libya in a way that could be interpreted as “boots on the ground”.

Ultimately, the lesson of Libya is one that keeps being shown from Afghanistan to Iraq to Bosnia: by refusing the small, early intervention when allies would be easier to enlist, the U.S. ends up intervening at much greater cost later, almost alone, and achieving a far less desirable outcome.

The way we remember Libya suggests that the way we talk about America’s role in the world has changed, and not for the better. Americans are probably more likely to consider the Libya intervention a failure because the US was at the forefront of the NATO operation. So any subsequent descent into conflict, presumably, says something about our failure, which is something we’d rather not think about.

Outside of the foreign policy community, politicians are usually criticized for what they do abroad, rather than what they don’t do. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates put it, “[Qaddafi] was not a threat to us anywhere. He was a threat to his own people, and that was about it.” If the US had decided against intervention, Libya would have likely reverted to some noxious combination of **dictatorship** and **insurgency**. But we could have **shirked responsibility** (a sort of inverse “pottery barn” principle if you didn’t break it, you don’t have to fix it). We could have claimed to have “done no harm,” even though harm, of course, would have been done.

It’s easy for some to suggest that Western interventionism is the problem here, and the world would be better off if the cries of the civilians Gaddafi slaughtered **went ignored**. That’s only an argument that can be made from outside the Oval Office, but it is one that has a broad political constituency. To claim that Libya is a “neo-con” failure, however, is a **willful misrepresentation** of neo-conservatism. Libya is a disaster today as a result not of Western engagement but **withdrawal**. The worst lesson from the Libyan debacle is: half-measures will almost always produce suboptimal results.

There was a time when the United States seemed to have a perpetual bias toward action. The instinct of leaders, more often than not, was to act militarily even in relatively small conflicts that were remote from American national security interests. Our country’s tragic experience in Iraq changed that. Inaction came to be seen as a virtue. And, to be sure, inaction is sometimes virtuous. Libya, though, was not one of those times.

**Libya was not an ad hoc, unilateral NATO invasion. The world called for action.**

**Slate 18** [James Slate; Foreign Policy liberal; 1-16-2018; "Why America was right to Intervene in Libya, and what went wrong after"; Medium; https://jameslate.medium.com/why-america-was-right-to-intervene-in-libya-d31f87202c18; KL]

With the Arabian Revolt sweeping the Middle East in early 2011, Libya’s turn came on February 17. Throwing off decades of fear, and not bothering with peaceful demonstrations as Tunisia and Egypt had to free themselves of tyranny, nor the Syrians who tried peaceful demonstrations for six entire months, the Libyans went straight to armed rebellion, and soon the city of Benghazi had been pried from the regime’s grip and become the de facto capital of the revolution. The Libyans had no confidence in protests to alter the regime of Muammar el-Qaddafi. They were right. The demented Colonel responded with a brutality that included using fighter jetsagainst civilian areas. As the violence escalated, on March 17 the **U.N.** Security Council passed resolution 1973, which

Authorize[d] Member States …, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, … to take all necessary measures … to **protect civilians**.

**! — NATO Good — AT: Interventions — Iraq**

**NATO said no and wasn’t involved.**

**Al Jazeera 4** [Al Jazeera; 11-20-2004; "Nato members **turn down** Iraq mission"; https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2004/11/20/nato-members-turn-down-iraq-mission; KL]

But the refusal of **France**, **Germany**, **Spain**, **Belgium**, **Greece** and **Luxembourg** to let their officers assigned to Nato’s command centres in Mons, Belgium, and Norfolk, Virginia, be part of that effort underscores that serious differences persist.

“Some of the countries have said they’re not going to allow their officers stationed in those Nato commands who come under the Nato structure itself to serve in Iraq. A number of us have been surprised by that,” said a senior US official.

**Wars are bad but there was no better solution. Hussein’s reign was horrific.** The problem was the US withdrew too fast.

**French 19** [David French; senior editor at The Dispatch; 3-20-2019; "In Defense of the Iraq War"; National Review; https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/iraq-war-just-cause-saddam-hussein-threat-stability/; KL]

Today is the 16th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, and Twitter is alive with condemnations of the conflict — countered by precious few defenses. Yet I believed the Iraq War was just and proper in 2003, and I still believe that today. When Donald **Trump** condemned the war during the 2015 primary campaign and claimed that if Saddam was still in power we “wouldn’t have the problems you have right now,“ I believed he was dead wrong. As I argued then, from the moment Hussein took power until he was deposed in 2003, there were few greater **instruments of instability** in the world than Saddam Hussein.

Before he was allegedly “contained” by constant, substantial American military deployments, he invaded his neighbors, **gassed his people**, harbored and supported terrorists, and was responsible for **not one but two** of the largest conventional military conflicts since World War II — the **horrific** Iran–Iraq war and Operation Desert Storm. Even after American containment efforts attempted to lock into place and limit his malign reach, he was a prime supporter of a deadly Palestinian suicide-bombing campaign that caused proportionately more Israeli civilian casualties than American civilians lost on 9/11, he tried to **assassinate** an American president — George H. W. Bush — and he routinely fired on American pilots enforcing lawful no-fly zones. He violated the Gulf War cease-fire accords, interfered with weapons inspections, and hid away **chemical weapons** by the thousands. No, his WMD program wasn’t nearly as extensive as we thought, but it is **fiction** to believe his weapons were entirely gone. Americans were injured by Saddam’s chemicals during the war.

Moreover, it’s easy to forget that before Barack Obama’s terrible decision to withdraw in 2011, the Iraq War had been won. Saddam was gone, the follow-on insurgency had been **wiped-out** — reduced to a few hundred fighters scattered in a vast country — and American and Iraqi forces were masters of the battlefield. Joe Biden asserted that Americans would look at Iraq as “one of the great achievements of this administration.” But Obama withdrew **too soon**. He squandered American gains, opened the door to unrestrained factionalism, and left the fragile Iraqi nation vulnerable to renewed jihadist assault.

And lest we think that non-intervention can’t also carry a terrible price, we can’t forget the Ba’athist **dictator** we left alone, Hafez al-Assad. His nation was caught up in the unrest and ferment of the Arab Spring — a movement that began far from the Iraq War. His nation has since become a charnel house, and not only did it spark a **refugee crisis** that has helped destabilize Europe, but it became the battleground where the remnants of al Qaeda in Iraq were reborn as ISIS, a genocidal force that invaded a weakened Iraq from Syria, ignited yet another phase of the Iraq War, and inspired a renewed wave of terror in the Europe (and deadly attacks in the United States). Non-intervention does not always bring peace, and the consequences can include death on a **mass scale**.

While I believe the war against Saddam represented the best of a series of **bad options**, there is no question that our intervention in Iraq was marred by two very costly mistakes. I’ve already mentioned one — Obama’s premature withdrawal. The first mistake belongs to George W. Bush and his commanders. It’s by now quite clear that we invaded with insufficient force to properly secure the country and then compounded that error with early blunders after Saddam was deposed. We not only failed to secure vast quantities of munitions, we disbanded the Iraqi Army and then pursued seriously flawed counterinsurgency tactics before righting the ship during the Surge. Bush’s mistakes made the war more costly. Obama’s mistakes gave room for the ISIS offensive and necessitated renewed American involvement in Iraq. Both men eventually corrected their errors. Bush reinforced American forces as his commanders changed tactics, and Obama put boots back on the ground to help save Iraq from potential collapse.

More than 4,400 Americans died during Operation Iraqi Freedom, including men I served with and loved like brothers. They died in a just cause fighting enemies of this country — a regime and an insurgency that in different ways threatened vital American interests and actively sought to kill Americans and our allies. War is horrible, and the Iraq War is no exception to that rule. Civilian casualties were terrible and often intentionally inflicted by our enemies to destabilize the country and inflame sectarian divisions. But I truly believe the choice our nation faced was to fight Saddam **then**, on our terms, **or later**, when he had recovered more of his nation’s strength and lethality. The United States is safer with him gone. It’s just a terrible shame that for a time we chose to throw away a victory bought with the blood of brave men.

**Iraq’s doing way better now. The solution to incorrect justifications is to conduct careful analysis, not to reject all action.**

**Simon 17** [David M. Simon, lawyer in Chicago; 6-2-2017; "Important Objective Measures Show That The Iraq War Was A Success"; Forbes; https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/06/02/important-objective-measures-show-that-the-iraq-war-was-a-success/?sh=2121db6481de; KL]

As we consider further military action in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East, we cannot avoid assessing the Iraq War.

The Iraq War was controversial and polarizing. Our sharply divisive debate about it can impair **objective analysis**. Many label the Iraq War a failure. **They are wrong**.

The key question in assessing the Iraq War is what kind of Iraqi state did the war produce? We have objective measures used to judge states around the world to answer this question. What are the state’s relations with other states? Does it repress its population? Is it a dictatorship or a democracy? What are its levels of prosperity, life expectancy and infant mortality? By each of these measures, the Iraq War was a **success** because the resulting Iraqi state is **vastly better**.

**Peace with other states**

In 1980, Saddam Hussein’s Iraq attacked **Iran**. In 1990, it attacked **Kuwait**. In 1991, it attacked **Saudi Arabia** and **Israel**. Between 1993 and 2001, it attacked patrolling American aircraft. Since the war and the overthrow of Hussein in 2003, Iraq **has not attacked** another state.

No more systematic **military repression** of most of the population

Hussein used Iraq’s military to **violently** and **systematically repress** Iraq’s Kurds and Shia Arabs, even using **chemical weapons** against civilians. Kurds are about 16% of Iraq’s population and Shia Arabs are about 49%. The war ended the systematic military repression of this combined **65**% of Iraq’s population.

The freest system of government in the Arab world

The war transformed Iraq from one of the world’s most repressive states into a state with the **freest system** of government in the Arab world. The war began in 2003. Since 2004, Iraq has had **seven major elections**: the 2004 National Assembly Election; the 2005 Constitutional Referendum; the 2005, 2010 and 2014 Parliamentary Elections; and the 2009 and 2013 Provincial Council elections. All have been judged free and fair by international monitors. These seven elections are more free and fair elections than the rest of the Arab world has ever had. More than 11 million voted in both the 2010 and 2014 Parliamentary Elections. In 2014, 27 political parties won seats. No other Arab state has been remotely as democratic, during this period or over any other decade.

Higher income and life expectancy, and lower infant mortality

The other important objective measures used to assess states around the world show that life has improved for Iraqi citizens. More Iraqis are alive today than before the war.

World Bank data show that in 2002, the last year before the war, Iraq’s population was 24.94 million. In 2015, it was 36.42 million.

Iraqis are **living longer**. World Bank data show that in 2002, average life expectancy in Iraq was 68.94 years. By 2015, it was 69.59 years. The data show similar increases in life expectancy for both men and women.

**Infant mortality** has declined in Iraq. World Bank data show that in 2002, the infant mortality rate per 1,000 births was 34.6. By 2015, it was 26.5.

Iraqis are much more **prosperous**. CIA World Factbook data show that in 2002, per capita GDP, measured in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, was $2,400. By 2013, the last year of this PPP data series, it was $7,100. (Tradingeconomics.com data show a modest 3.4% decline since 2013.)

None of this excuses the intelligence failure about **w**eapons of **m**ass **d**estruction. None of this suggests that the we should not use the **most careful analysis** before deciding whether to risk significant amounts of blood and treasure and invade or take other militarily action. None of this suggests that Iraq is an easy place to live. Iraq’s political and civic institutions need to take big steps to reach Western standards. Relations between Shia Arabs, Sunni Arabs and Kurds need significant improvement. Iraq must defeat the remaining Islamic State forces in the country and prevent other groups from committing similar violence. Iranian influence in Iraq is undesirable and unhelpful.

Decisions concerning military action in the Middle East are **difficult** and **complex**. In making these decisions, we should recognize that by important objective measures, the Iraq War was a success – a victory for America that resulted in a much better Iraq.

**! — NATO Good — AT: Interventions — Afghanistan**

**NATO wasn’t eager to intervene; the UN got them involved.**

**Moller 22** [Sara Bjerg Moller, an assistant professor at Seton Hall University’s School of Diplomacy and International Relations; 9-5-2021; "Five Myths About NATO and Afghanistan"; Lawfare; https://www.lawfareblog.com/five-myths-about-nato-and-afghanistan; KL]

An additional concern arose over the precedent invoking Article V could set if U.S. authorities subsequently determined that the attack had originated from within the U.S. homeland and not from abroad. The Bush administration feared that the United States could then be asked to intervene against domestic terrorist attacks in NATO treaty states in the future. The Canadian chief of defense, who by happenstance found himself in the room when NATO ambassadors began debating whether or not to invoke Article V on Sept. 12, recalls the Americans “wanting to be absolutely sure that it was an attack from outside the U.S.[,]” and not a domestic terrorist act like the Oklahoma City bombing, before NATO authorized any follow-on action. After confirming that the attacks originated outside the United States, it then took “**substantial work**” on the part of U.S. Ambassador to NATO Nicholas Burns to convince other Bush administration officials that having the NATO alliance formally invoke the mutual defense clause was important. Consequently, it was not until Oct. 4, 2001, that the North Atlantic Council formally invoked Article V, paving the way for NATO allies to send Airborne Early Warning and Control Force aircraft (AWACs) to patrol U.S. skies and offer other assistance, such as intelligence sharing, to Washington.

Although some NATO allies, including Canada, Britain and Germany, chose early on to contribute special operations forces (SOF) and, later, other military assets to the U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom, which lasted from 2001 to 2014), they did so **independent** of NATO headquarters and command structures.

Nor did NATO play any part in the creation of the International Security Assistance Force, despite subsequently going on to lead it for more than a decade. When the security assistance force was announced at the Bonn Conference in December 2001, it was done so under the auspices of the **U.N**. Security Council, not the alliance. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1386 officially mandated ISAF to “assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas.” Responsibility for overseeing the original 5,000-person multinational force for the first six months was assigned to the United Kingdom. Thereafter, ISAF’s command rotated to a new lead nation every six months, first to Turkey (July 2002-January 2003) and then Germany (January 2003-August 2003).

By fall 2002, however, it was becoming increasingly clear to nations contributing forces to ISAF that the security force would benefit from having NATO’s military headquarters in Mons, Belgium, assume responsibility for the force generation process needed to sustain the Kabul-based operation. The difficulties ISAF’s lead countries experienced sourcing personnel to sustain the Kabul force, coupled with the Pentagon’s waning attention toward Afghanistan as it prepared to invade Iraq in spring 2003, led Washington and its NATO allies to conclude that the time had come for the alliance to take charge of ISAF. Accordingly, on Aug. 11, 2003, NATO assumed command of ISAF, marking the alliance’s official entree into Afghanistan.

Yet while NATO would remain in charge of ISAF until the security force was eventually stood down at the end of 2014, ISAF remained a NATO-led (as opposed to a purely NATO) force, owing to the large number of **non-NATO** countries—including Australia, Georgia, Jordan and the Republic of Korea, each operating under its own rules of engagement—that contributed personnel to the mission. Following the conclusion of ISAF’s operations in Afghanistan in December 2014, NATO stood up a new mission, Resolute Support, focused on building Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) sustainability. But, like its predecessor, Resolute Support was a NATO-led mission, comprising both NATO allies as well as non-NATO countries, and not an Article V collective defense mission by the alliance.

**The Afghanistan intervention was good.**

**Byman** and Wittes **22** [Daniel Byman, foreign policy editor of Lawfare. He is a senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, where he focuses on counterterrorism and Middle East security. He is also a professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service; Benjamin Wittes, editor in chief of Lawfare and a Senior Fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution; 7-6-2022; "Remembering the Gains of the Afghanistan War"; Lawfare; https://www.lawfareblog.com/remembering-gains-afghanistan-war; KL]

The end of a war is a time to reflect. So is a milestone anniversary like the 20th anniversary of Sept. 11. Now, in September 2021, the two are bound up together—the end of the U.S. war in Afghanistan, not coincidentally, taking place in close proximity to the milestone anniversary.

For Lawfare, the two events are also intimately tied to the history of the site itself. Lawfare surely wouldn’t exist but for the Sept. 11 attacks and the war in Afghanistan. The early years of the site were far more concerned with issues arising out of that conflict than they were with cybersecurity, disinformation, authoritarian populism and the other issues that predominate on the site these days.

It is probably not possible to over-reflect on the withdrawal and the anniversary. But it is possible to draw the wrong conclusions from reflections on what went wrong in the Afghanistan war—which ended, as it began, with the Taliban in control of the country. And with Afghanistan today facially seeming like Afghanistan as it was on Sept. 11, it is possible to reflect one’s way to the conclusions that the invasion of Afghanistan was a mistake, that it accomplished nothing and that Americans died in vain. It is possible to conclude that any gains were ephemeral, that only the civilian casualties and the policy blunders had lasting consequences, that 20 years of keeping the Taliban at bay was worth nothing and that the destruction of al-Qaeda’s base of operations was all an exercise in squandered blood and treasure.

A great many sober, serious people have embraced these gloomy conclusions—in some cases selectively, in many cases as a morose, defeatist package. The instinct to evaluate the war in binary terms is understandable. People tend to think of wars as won or lost. And watching the chaotic evacuation from Kabul, it certainly didn’t look like a win. It didn’t even look like a stalemate. It looked like a rout.

The final scorecard looks bad too. The vicious gambler played by George C. Scott scoffs at the young pool shark played by Paul Newman in the movie “The Hustler,” for suggesting he had been way ahead in a game against the world’s best player before losing it all. “This game isn't like football. Nobody pays you for yardage,” the gambler says. “When you hustle you keep score real simple. The end of the game you count up your money. That’s how you find out who’s best. That’s the only way.” By this standard, certainly, the Taliban bested us. U.S. forces smashed them for years, but at the end of the game, they have Afghanistan—and the government the United States supported evaporated just like Paul Newman’s early lead.

Yet there is more to be said on behalf of America’s two-decade-long effort in Afghanistan than these crude analyses allow. We certainly don’t mean to suggest that the war was a complete success. It was not. Many Americans lost their lives fighting there (and far more Afghans died), and the United States spent trillions in a vain effort to build the Afghan state. Yet here it’s not just the end point that matters but the nature of the curve that led to that endpoint. And there’s a great deal of area under the curve of the Afghanistan war, area one shouldn’t throw away lightly.

The truth is that the war actually accomplished a **good deal**—even if its most ambitious objectives remained ever-elusive. Far from a mistake, the invasion of Afghanistan to topple the first Taliban regime was a **necessity** in the post-Sept. 11 environment. Indeed, it’s hard to imagine a successful counterterrorism campaign in the years that followed Sept. 11 without it. It played a decisive role in dismantling what had become a major and persistent threat to American lives. It provided for a long period of imperfect but **nonmurderous** government for many Afghans, particularly **urban**, **minority** and **female Afghans**. And it helped to facilitate a long period in which successful foreign-based terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland simply did not happen.

Whether one regards the war ultimately as a success or a failure, it is important to tally its costs and benefits accurately. As people currently seem to be tallying only its costs, we offer this post to remind people of the complexity of assessing the Afghanistan war.

The Afghanistan Sanctuary

With two decades of water under the bridge, people often treat the Sept. 11 attacks as a bolt out of the blue to which the country responded by reorganizing and militarizing its entire foreign policy and domestic politics. There’s some truth in this story, but lost in it is just how active and menacing al-Qaeda had become in the years leading up to Sept. 11. Jihadists with ties to Afghanistan had bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, killing six people and injuring over 1,000. In 1996, al-Qaeda moved to Afghanistan and, in 1998, attacked two U.S. embassies in East Africa—**killing hundreds** and wounding thousands. Two years later, it pulled off a bombing of a U.S. warship, the USS Cole. Sept. 11 was really a culmination of a mounting and increasingly deadly terrorism campaign that no reasonable government would have continued to tolerate.

It was a campaign run chiefly from Afghanistan, and it was possible because the Taliban allowed al-Qaeda a haven from which it could build a mini-army and launch attack after attack on its enemies.

So while the 20-year military intervention in Afghanistan may have been a mistake, it was important, indeed essential, that the United States remove the Taliban from power in 2001 and destroy al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the years that followed.

Indeed, Afghanistan became an important base for al-Qaeda well before Sept. 11, and high-profile terrorist attacks were only one element of the danger posed as a result. As long as al-Qaeda enjoyed a base in Afghanistan, it could convene planning sessions and generate new plots: The United States was always playing defense.

To get a sense of how important Afghanistan, and nearby facilities in Pakistan, were to al-Qaeda, and the many facets that the Afghanistan base played in al-Qaeda’s overall operations and successes, it’s useful to examine the Sept. 11 plot in more detail:

Plotting began in earnest in late 1998 or early 1999, more than two years before the attack occurred. The plot’s mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, met with al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan to pitch his novel idea for an attack. He received approval, and, crucially from his point of view, gained the money and recruits that bin Laden had available. These leaders and others enjoyed a sanctuary in Afghanistan to oversee the operation with little interference. From there, they could confer with one another, communicate with operatives, and otherwise organize a broad movement even as they launched individual attacks.

The cell leader, Mohammed Atta, had originally sought to fight in Chechnya, and he ended up going to Afghanistan to train, along with three friends who also went on to play important roles in the plot. Once he arrived in Afghanistan, al-Qaeda leaders spotted Atta’s leadership abilities, discipline and fluency in English, redirecting him to the Sept. 11 operation. As Atta’s experience suggests, in Afghanistan al-Qaeda was able to screen and vet would-be members, choosing the most committed and skilled to join its own ranks while enabling others to become more capable.

Indoctrination and control were important parts of what made the camps so dangerous. Al-Qaeda was able to knit together a disparate array of groups and causes—anti-Israel, anti-Egypt, anti-Russia, pro-Taliban and so on—and make them a more unified movement. This was a tremendous achievement for a movement that often fought (and would fight) more within its ranks than against outsiders. In addition, it could take committed activists like Atta and redirect them against the leadership’s preferred targets.

Al-Qaeda leaders later selected other plot members, the so-called muscle, primarily from Saudi volunteers who had come to Afghanistan to join the jihad.

The hijackers were not alone: Other jihadists, between 10,000 and 20,000, according to CIA estimates, received a wide array of training in Afghanistan. Most volunteers learned basic weapons skills and had a boot-camp-like experience to weed out the uncommitted, enabling them to become more effective insurgents in various struggles around the Muslim world. These al-Qaeda recruits would also help the Taliban in its campaign to conquer all of Afghanistan. Indeed, during the invasion after Sept. 11, U.S. soldiers found that the Arab jihadists, not the Taliban, were the most ferocious and skilled fighters. A select few went to camps that offered more advanced training, such as counterintelligence, bomb-making and other skills useful for terrorism. The muscle hijackers, for example, received the basic training to determine their fitness and dedication and then received more advanced training on how to hijack airplanes, disarm air marshals and use explosives.

The training camps and Afghan experience proved instrumental for insurgencies around the Muslim world. Figures like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who later founded al-Qaeda in Iraq, the forerunner of ISIS, went to Afghanistan in the late 1990s and ran a training camp there.

Taken together, these factors made the pre-Sept. 11 haven in Afghanistan devastatingly dangerous. Al-Qaeda could knit together a divided and far-flung movement, train operatives to a lethal degree of proficiency, and plan elaborate operations with little interference.

The Taliban sheltered al-Qaeda. Although the Taliban did not approve of al-Qaeda’s terrorism operations against the West, it did not stop them either. Nor would the Taliban surrender bin Laden or other terrorists, doubting the veracity of U.S. charges and being unwilling to lose face with Taliban members and supporters by handing over to the infidels a man they considered a good Muslim. Even today, Taliban officials deny bin Laden’s responsibility for Sept. 11.

The U.S. invasion quickly toppled the Taliban and proved devastating for al-Qaeda. Some of those captured included leaders or others in the movement who revealed ongoing plots, such as a plot to conduct multiple terrorist attacks in Israel that was well along in its planning. The movement lost its archipelago of training camps and with it the ability to provide a wide array of training to thousands of recruits. Nor could it indoctrinate as effectively, although advances in information technology would pose new challenges. The movement also lost much of its cadre fighting the U.S. invasion. Its leaders who survived found themselves under constant pressure. Finally, the apparent overthrow of the Taliban, which many jihadists deemed the one true Islamic government, made many jihadists question the wisdom of al-Qaeda’s strategy.

Post-Sept. 11 Operations

Despite these many advances, al-Qaeda’s terrorism threat didn’t end with the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001 and the establishment of a new government in Afghanistan. Key leaders, including bin Laden, dispersed to Pakistan, and from there, they directed numerous operations against the West and in the broader Middle East. Many of these involved individuals who were recruited and trained before Sept. 11, but the plans and operations continued in its aftermath with direction from Pakistan. Notable attacks and plots included the 2002 Bali bombing and 2004 Madrid and 2005 London transportation bombings, which killed 202, 193 and 52 people, respectively. Bin Laden financed the Bali bombing, and terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman noted in 2007 that “almost all major incidents” in Europe had ties to al-Qaeda, with key operatives being trained or based in Pakistan. In 2006, security officials disrupted a plan to smuggle liquid explosives aboard airplanes flying from Europe to the United States and Canada and detonate them midair, which would have killed around 1,500 people according to prosecutors—a plot that also had many of its origins in Pakistan.

Although the Pakistani government arrested many important al-Qaeda leaders, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Afghanistan proved an important base for the U.S. in going after the al-Qaeda haven in remote parts of Pakistan, removing senior figures that Pakistan could not, or would not, take out. The United States conducted numerous strikes on al-Qaeda in the remote Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) along Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan. According to analyses from the New America Foundation, the first drone strike in Pakistan was conducted in 2004, and the dozens that occurred during the Bush administration would grow to hundreds under President Obama, peaking in 2010 before declining rapidly as the decade went on. The United States killed almost 100 leaders, as well as numerous lower-level cadre.

Many of these strikes were launched from bases in Afghanistan. To do persistent surveillance and regular strikes, as was being done a decade ago, bases in Afghanistan close to the FATA proved essential. In addition, the most famous counterterrorism operation in U.S. history, the killing of bin Laden, also depended on access to Afghanistan, the base from which operatives launched their cross-border operation.

Over time, the strikes hollowed out al-Qaeda. As New America’s David Sterman contends, “[T]hese drone strikes have knocked out the ability of Al Qaeda to plot from Pakistan.” In addition to the death of experienced commanders, if its leaders communicated in real time by phone or by using the internet, they risked being located and killed. Forced into hiding, the core was no longer able to orchestrate attacks in the West. And although the drone strikes caused significant civilian casualties, an analysis by Aqil Shah found that—contrary to common mythology—they did not increase terrorist recruitment.

In other words, Afghanistan was essential to al-Qaeda in the years before Sept. 11, and depriving al-Qaeda of the use of it was, consequently, a post-Sept. 11 necessity. Less well understood, Afghanistan became an important base of operations for ongoing U.S. counterterrorism activity in the decades that followed, particularly in the critical period in which U.S. forces were able to reduce the once-menacing organization to a husk of itself. These are both major successes of the Afghanistan operation. Few people imagined in the period immediately after Sept. 11 that the United States would go two decades without a second major homeland attack emanating from abroad. That accomplishment simply cannot be separated from the decision to go into Afghanistan and stay there a good long while. Whether it can be sustained in the absence of U.S. forces on the ground there remains to be seen.

The Edifice of American Counterterrorism

There’s a legal aspect to this point as well: The entire legal edifice of post-Sept. 11 U.S. counterterrorism policy was bound up with the war in Afghanistan. That is, because the enemy was in Afghanistan, U.S. administrations needed a legal framework that allowed U.S. forces to operate in Afghanistan. Because suspects were not reachable by traditional law enforcement means, the Bush, Obama and Trump administrations required an operating framework that engaged military authorities. That framework was the war in Afghanistan. And it’s a bit difficult to imagine, even in retrospect, what that framework might have looked like without the war.

It is, to be sure, perverse to suggest that the Afghanistan war was necessary so that the United States could have the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) and the rules and authorities that flowed from it. Laws authorize wars, after all, not the other way around. It is also not quite accurate. The AUMF did not, after all, require the invasion of Afghanistan; it merely authorized it. The statute’s broad operative language, which does not mention Afghanistan and operated worldwide, could have supported—and did, in fact, support—other military activity, or it could have supported no military activity at all, as some AUMFs historically have done. Yet it is safe to say that the AUMF, passed in the immediate wake of Sept. 11 with policymakers eyeing the Afghan sanctuary, presumed that the coming military action would take place in Afghanistan. It seems unlikely it would have been passed had the Bush administration not envisioned an attack on that country imminently on its passage.

So try to imagine, for a moment, that the Bush administration had not headed in that direction—as so many analysts, with the hindsight of two decades, now think would have been wiser. What would the combined strategic and legal framework for counterterrorism have looked like?

One possibility is that it might have looked very much as it did. Congress might have passed an AUMF like the one it did, in fact, pass; it just would have been used more sparingly, less ambitiously—for the occasional spree of air strikes, or special operations forces raids. American forces still would have the statutory authority to do all the things they did that were so effective in counterterrorism. They just would have done them without a long-term presence in Afghanistan. But this scenario raises a significant obstacle to the lethal force and detention aspects of post-Sept. 11 counterterrorism operations. Without the bona fide armed conflict in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the American invocation of law of armed conflict authorities would have depended (as they now, in fact, depend) solely on the claim that episodic violent engagements between the United States and al-Qaeda suffice to create a real armed conflict. That has always been a hotly disputed claim, even in the U.S. court system. So the no-invasion scenario would have made it significantly harder, in practice, to legally justify detention, military commissions and possibly even air strikes.

But there’s another possibility too. The rejection of “forever war” in Afghanistan is not, after all, an argument for more limited forever wars. It is an argument against protracted military commitments at all. If we project that Congress and the Bush administration in 2001 shared that skepticism, so in vogue today, we are left with the probability that there would have been no reason for them to pass a broad AUMF in the first place. If America was not going to invade Afghanistan to deal with the entrenched al-Qaeda presence there, it probably wouldn’t have bothered to deal with lesser presences such as jihadists in Somalia, Yemen or other countries. It therefore would have needed the legal architecture policymakers put in place—on either the military or covert sides of the ledger.

So one possibility when analysts retrospectively reject the war in Afghanistan is that they are actually proposing to throw out a large portion of the legal edifice of post-Sept. 11 counterterrorism policy. That has implications well beyond Afghanistan itself. Under the AUMF, remember, the United States conducted drone strikes in Yemen, crushed ISIS, and killed hundreds of al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan. It detained operatives around the world. It’s fair to ask those who casually now assert that the war was a mistake: Is the rejection of the war in Afghanistan a rejection of that entire military approach to counterterrorism, or is it merely a rejection of that approach coupled with an invasion and long-term presence in Afghanistan? The answer to this question is surely different from analyst to analyst. But those who mean the former should answer the question of what combined strategic-legal approach they imagine the Bush administration should have adopted in the war’s place. And those who mean the latter would do well to specify what kind of conflict they imagine having taken place in the absence of the underlying war in Afghanistan.

We are not suggesting there are no possible answers to these questions. One might imagine a more purely law-enforcement-based post-Sept. 11 response with limited uses of force under, say, a narrower AUMF. One could also imagine a legal approach similar to the one the U.S. took, only used less aggressively—or with a briefer stay in Afghanistan. Moreover, as is true today, alternatives to basing and access in Afghanistan did exist. The United States has launched drone attacks from bases in Pakistan in the past, but as relations soured the United States was expelled from these bases. As the United States left Kabul, it launched a drone strike from the United Arab Emirates against the ISIS branch in Afghanistan.

But these questions do require answers. It will not do to pocket the gains of the Afghanistan war as though they were given and tally only the costs. Giving up the war means giving up the gains as well.

And those gains were not all military, and they are not all counted in enemy fighters captured or killed. It has become an empty talking point to mention that millions of Afghan girls attended school after the Taliban’s ouster, and thousands of women went on to university and to jobs outside the home, that religious minorities like the Shiite Hazara population enjoyed **greater rights**, and that soccer stadiums were not used for public executions. It is certainly true that human rights gains in Afghanistan, however real, were not the purpose of the mission—and that they cannot ultimately be the metric by which the mission gets evaluated. Yet if one is counting the yardage of gains and loss, these human rights improvements are not negligible either. Such collateral improvements to the human rights and lives of **millions of people** are no more to be ignored than the collateral damage to individuals in errant military operations. It is **simply a fact** that over 20 years, the United States made itself safer by improving life for millions of Afghans.

**! — NATO Good — AT: Middle East**

**No Middle East war or escalation.**

**Glaser ’17** — John; associate director of foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute, Master of Arts in International Security at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University July 18, 2017; "Withdrawing from Overseas Bases: Why a Forward-Deployed Military Posture Is Unnecessary, Outdated, and Dangerous”; *Cato Institute*; <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/withdrawing-overseas-bases-why-forward-deployed-military-posture>; //CYang

Regionally, the circumstances are similarly advantageous. According to Rovner, “the chance that a **regional hegemon** will emerge in the Persian Gulf during the next twenty years is slim to none. This is true even if the United States **withdraws completely**.” 134 There are only three potential major powers in the region: Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. None of them possesses the capabilities necessary to conquer neighboring territories or gain a controlling influence over Persian Gulf oil resources. In addition to being **too weak** to make a bid for **regional dominance**, all three are bogged down and distracted by internal problems. Overall, the region is in a state of defense dominance: the major states are too weak to project **power beyond their borders**, but they do have the capability to deter their neighbors. Deterrence works well in this environment because the costs of **offensive action** remain **prohibitively high**. 135 Some scholars argue that the decreased importance of Persian Gulf oil means the United States should completely phase out its military commitment to the region during the next 10 years. 136 But even if Washington rejects that position and continues to factor in military intervention to deal with supply disruptions and other contingencies, maintaining a peacetime military presence in the region is not necessary. The United States can rely on carrier-based airpower and long-range bombers if military intervention in a crisis becomes necessary. 137

**Alt — T/L**

**The alt can’t solve states going to war.**

**Isacoff ’15** [Jonathan; 2015; Associate Professor of Political Science and the Chair of Environmental Studies at Gonzaga University; *Why IR Needs Deweyan Pragmatism*, “Perspectives on Political Science,” p. 26-33; GR]

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**.

### Alt — AT: Material

#### Armed opposition to the state fails.

**DeBoer ’16** [Fredrik; March 15th; Ph.D. from Purdue University; Fredrikdeboer, “c’mon, guys,” http://fredrikdeboer.com/2016/03/15/cmon-guys/; GR]

I could be wrong about the short-term dangers, and the stakes are incredibly high. But in the end we’re left with the same old question: what tactics will actually work to secure a better world?

In a sharp, sober piece about the meaning of left-wing political violence in the 1970s, Tim Barker writes “If you can’t acknowledge radical violence, radicals are reduced to mere victims of repression, rather than political actors who made definite tactical choices under given political circumstances.” The problem, as Barker goes on to imply, is those tactical choices: in today’s America they will essentially never break on the side of armed opposition against the state. The government knows everything about you, I’m sorry to say, your movements and your associations and the books you read and the things you buy and what you’re saying to the people you communicate with. That’s simply on the level of information before we even get to the state’s incredible capacity to inflict violence.

Look, the world has changed. The relative military capacity of regular people compared to establishment governments has changed, especially in fully developed, technology-enabled countries like the United States. The Czar had his armies, yes, but the Czar’s armies depended on manpower above and beyond everything else. The fighting was still mostly different groups of people with rifles shooting at each other. If tomorrow you could rally as many people as the Bolsheviks had at their revolutionary peak, you’re still left in a world of F-15s, drones, and cluster bombs. And that’s to say nothing of the fact that establishment governments in the developed world can rely on the numbing agents of capitalist luxuries and the American dream to damper revolutionary enthusiasm even among the many millions who have been marginalized and impoverished. This just isn’t 1950s Cuba, guys. It’s just not. In a very real way, modern technology effectively lowers the odds of armed political revolution in a country like the United States to zero, and so much the worse for us.

This isn’t fatalism. It doesn’t mean there’s no hope. It means that there is little alternative to organization, to changing minds through committed political action and using the available nonviolent means to create change: a concert of grassroots organizing, labor tactics, and partisan politics. Those things aren’t exactly likely to work, either, but they’re a hell of a lot more plausible than us dweebs taking the Pentagon. Bernie Sanders isn’t really a socialist, but he’s a social democrat that moves the conversation to the left, and if people are dedicated and committed to organizing, the local, state, and national candidates he inspires will move it further to the left still. You got any better suggestions?

Listen, commie nerds. My people. I love you guys. I really do. And I want to build a better world. Not incrementally, either, but with the kind of sweeping and transformative change that is required to fix a world of such deep injustice. But seriously: none of us are ever going to take to the barricades. And it’s a good thing, too, because we’d probably find a way to shoot in the wrong direction. I can’t dribble a basketball without falling down. American socialism is largely made up of bookish dreamers. I love those people but they’re not for fighting. And even if you have a particular talent for combat, you’re looking at fighting the combined forces of Google, Goldman Sachs, and the defense industry. Violence is hard. Soldiering is hard. In an era of the NSA and military robots, it’s really, really hard. “Should we condone revolutionary violence?” is dorm room, pass-the-bong conversation fodder, of precisely the moral and intellectual weight of “should we torture a guy if we know there’s a bomb and we know he knows where it is and we know we can stop it if we do?” It’s built on absurd hypotheticals, propped up by the power of anxious machismo, and undertaken to no practical political end. It’s understandable. I get it, I really do. But it’s got nothing to do with us. The only way forward is the grubby, unsexy work of building coalitions and asking people to climb on board.

#### The military obliterates the alt.

**Flaherty ’5** [Kevin; 2005; B.A. in International Relations from the University of South California; Cryptogon, “Militant Electronic Piracy:  
Non-Violent Insurgency Tactics Against the American Corporate State,” <http://cryptogon.com/docs/pirate_insurgency.html/>; GR]

Any violent insurgency against the American Corporate State is sure to fail and will only serve to enhance the state's power. The major flaw of violent insurgencies, both cell based (Weathermen Underground, Black Panthers, Aryan Nations etc.) and leaderless (Earth Liberation Front, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, etc.) is that they are attempting to attack the system using the same tactics the American Corporate State has already mastered: terror and psychological operations. The American Corporate State attained primacy through the effective application of terror and psychological operations. Therefore, it has far more skill and experience in the use of these tactics than any upstart could ever hope to attain. This makes the American Corporate State impervious to traditional insurgency tactics.

- Political Activism and the ACS Counterinsurgency Apparatus

The American Corporate State employs a full-time counterinsurgency infrastructure with resources that are unimaginable to most would be insurgents. Quite simply, violent insurgents have no idea of just how powerful the foe actually is. Violent insurgents typically start out as peaceful, idealistic, political activists. Whether or not political activists know it, even with very mundane levels of political activity, they are engaging in low intensity conflict with the ACS.

The U.S. military classifies political activism as “low intensity conflict.” The scale of warfare (in terms of intensity) begins with individuals distributing anti-government handbills and public gatherings with anti-government/anti-corporate themes. In the middle of the conflict intensity scale are what the military refers to as Operations Other than War; an example would be the situation the U.S. is facing in Iraq. At the upper right hand side of the graph is global thermonuclear war. What is important to remember is that the military is concerned with ALL points along this scale because they represent different types of threats to the ACS.

Making distinctions between civilian law enforcement and military forces, and foreign and domestic intelligence services is no longer necessary. After September 11, 2001, all national security assets would be brought to bear against any U.S. insurgency movement. Additionally, the U.S. military established NORTHCOM which designated the U.S. as an active military operational area. Crimes involving the loss of corporate profits will increasingly be treated as acts of terrorism and could garner anything from a local law enforcement response to activation of regular military forces.

Most of what is commonly referred to as “political activism” is viewed by the corporate state's counterinsurgency apparatus as a useful and necessary component of political control.

Letters-to-the-editor...

Calls-to-elected-representatives...

Waving banners...

“Third” party political activities...

Taking beatings, rubber bullets and tear gas from riot police in free speech zones...

Political activism amounts to an utterly useless waste of time, in terms of tangible power, which is all the ACS understands. Political activism is a cruel guise that is sold to people who are dissatisfied, but who have no concept of the nature of tangible power. Counterinsurgency teams routinely monitor these activities, attend the meetings, join the groups and take on leadership roles in the organizations.

It's only a matter of time before some individuals determine that political activism is a honeypot that accomplishes nothing and wastes their time. The corporate state knows that some small percentage of the peaceful, idealistic, political activists will eventually figure out the game. At this point, the clued-in activists will probably do one of two things; drop out or move to escalate the struggle in other ways.

If the clued-in activist drops his or her political activities, the ACS wins.

But what if the clued-in activist refuses to give up the struggle? Feeling powerless, desperation could set in and these individuals might become increasingly radicalized. Because the corporate state's counterinsurgency operatives have infiltrated most political activism groups, the radicalized members will be easily identified, monitored and eventually compromised/turned, arrested or executed. The ACS wins again.

### Alt — AT: NATO Withdrawal

#### Even given the best-case scenario for NATO withdrawal, the alternative greenlights Russian aggression.

Meijer and Brooks 21 [Hugo Meijer, CNRS Research Fellow at Sciences Po, Center for International Studies, and the director of the European Initiative for Security Studies; Stephen G. Brooks, a professor of government at Dartmouth College; 4-20-2021; "Illusions of Autonomy: Why Europe Cannot Provide for Its Security If the United States Pulls Back"; MIT Press; https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article/45/4/7/100571/Illusions-of-Autonomy-Why-Europe-Cannot-Provide; KL]

THE COUNTERFACTUAL: A COMPLETE U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM EUROPE

The counterfactual scenario examined in this article, the one favored by restraint scholars, is that the United States officially exits from NATO and fully withdraws its forces and military units from Europe, including the roughly 65,000 active-duty personnel under the U.S. European Command, 2,000 reservists, 16,350 Department of Defense civilian personnel, and around 930 personnel assigned to NATO’s Command Structure. The United States also would no longer continue its rotational presence of air, land, and sea forces throughout Europe as part of the European Deterrence Initiative (which includes a U.S. armored brigade combat team and a combat aviation brigade).33 In addition, the United States would remove all its European-based nuclear capabilities.

Although it is difficult to envision a full U.S. pullback from Europe in the short term, it is hardly implausible in the longer term in light of both domestic and international dynamics. Structural trends in the international system— most notably, the rise of China relative to the United States and the growing strategic centrality of the Asia-Pacific region—have caused the United States to downgrade the importance of Europe in its grand strategy.34 Moreover, the United States pursued an isolationist grand strategy for most of its history; leaving Europe would simply be a return to its traditional foreign policy baseline regarding the region. And significantly, there is every indication that Trump tapped into, rather than created, the political momentum for curtailing the United States’ security presence overseas. Prior to Trump becoming president, U.S. public opinion in favor of the United States disengaging from the world had already increased substantially.35 Reflecting these public attitudes, in the early 2010s, a number of Republican fiscal hawks and liberal Democrats ramped up their calls for eliminating the U.S. presence in Europe.36 Likewise, according to a 2011 poll, 65 percent of the U.S. public favored scaling back U.S. military commitments to reduce the country’s debt.37

A U.S. decision to actively withdraw from Europe is not the only means by which this outcome could occur; it could also unfold passively with Europe and the United States drifting further apart over many years, eventually reaching a point where NATO has been hollowed out and exists essentially in name only. In fact, because of rising doubts about the long-term credibility and robustness of the U.S. commitment, many prominent European policymakers and security analysts have concluded that Europe should rely less on the transatlantic partnership and bolster its capacity for autonomous action.38 As then President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker stated in 2016, “If Europe does not take care of its own security, nobody else will do it for us.”39 Yet, as we show in the next two sections, two overarching constraints jointly limit the capacity of Europeans to achieve strategic autonomy: Europe’s strategic cacophony and profound capability shortfalls that will take a long time to close.

Europe’s Strategic Cacophony

The first two decades after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the Soviet Union constituted an era of strategic exception, characterized by the absence of a major conventional security threat. During this period in which European states lacked any semblance of a unifying threat, wide discrepancies emerged in their national threat assessments. The threat perceptions of European defense policymakers shifted away from conventional state threats to nonconventional ones such as terrorism, instability in the Mediterranean area, migration, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and failed states.40

Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014 shattered the long-held assumption that the European territorial status quo would not be upset via the use of military force. Yet, far from bringing Europe together, Russia’s assertiveness only further deepened Europeans’ profound divergences of threat perceptions, with growing disagreements among Europeans about how to prioritize Russia versus other challenges.41

Below we provide a bottom-line assessment and systematic coding of national threat perceptions across twenty-nine European countries. We include all countries that are members of the EU or NATO, or both, except for Turkey and seven countries that have GDPs smaller than $25 billion: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, and Montenegro. We identify where the threat assessment of each country falls across five categories: (1) Russia is unimportant or not a threat; (2) Russia is a threat, but other threats are more significant; (3) Russia and other threats have roughly equal significance; (4) Russia is the highest threat, but other threats also are significant; and (5) Russia is the dominant threat by far.

To produce these codings, we adopted a nested approach. First, we coded the threat evaluations of these countries made by eighteen experts who contributed to a recent comprehensive examination of European defense policies.42 To double-check our codings, we consulted all eighteen authors to ensure that our understanding of each country corresponded with theirs.43 Second, we looked at all available government reports that provide a national assessment of the regional threat environment and prioritize among different threats. In particular, we examined the national security/defense/military strategies, the intelligence threat assessments, the analyses of particular threats (e.g., cyberthreats and terrorism), and regional/geographic analyses of all twenty-nine European states in our study. In total, we examined eighty-seven official documents and reports. (Online appendix A provides a full list of these sources; they are referenced in the footnotes by document number as indicated in this appendix.)44

Table

Description automatically generated

For most states, the combination of these first two sources provided enough information to reliably code national threat assessments. But for others, they were insufficient because official threat assessments were somewhat ambiguous. For these countries, a third step was thus to interview senior foreign policy and defense officials to obtain additional information and gain further clarity into the national threat assessment.45 We conclude that Europe is characterized by strategic cacophony (see table 1). Whereas some states rank terrorism and instability in the Mediterranean region at the top of their threat assessments—with little, if any, threat perception vis-à-vis Russia—others identify Russia as their overarching security concern, while largely ignoring the diffuse threats on Europe’s southern shores. Between these two extremes, different countries and groups of countries exhibit varying perceptions of their core security challenges. Overall, the continent is marked by profoundly divergent threat assessments and ensuing strategic priorities.

The varied threat perceptions of European states have been shaped by a complex mix of history, politics, and geography, as well as by changes in the regional strategic environment. Details on our country codings are discussed below, according to category of threat prioritization.

RUSSIA IS UNINMPORTANT OR NOT A THREAT

Most smaller powers in Western and Southern Europe prioritize as their main sources of concern transnational terrorism, WMD proliferation, and instability across the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) and the resulting flows of migrants (see table 1).46 By contrast, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, which was perceived as the overarching conventional and nuclear threat during the Cold War, Russia has little, if any, significance in their national threat assessments.47 Indeed, some of these countries, such as Italy or Spain, have long advocated for sustained engagement with Moscow.48

Likewise, two countries that do not share the same level of anxiety held by most Central and Eastern European countries vis-à-vis Russia are Hungary and Bulgaria. Considering the threat of conventional war to be minimal, and given their strong ties with Moscow, they instead prioritize terrorism, migration flows, WMD proliferation, and cyberattacks.49

RUSSIA IS A THREAT, BUT OTHER THREATS ARE MORE SIGNIFICANT

Other countries also prioritize transnational terrorism, regional turmoil around Europe and the MENA, cyberattacks, and illegal migration, but display higher threat perceptions of Russia than do states in the first category (see table 1). They perceive Russia as a threat, but nonetheless see other threats as relatively higher sources of concern.50

Croatia’s threat assessment, for instance, focuses largely on challenges such as terrorism, regional instability, migration, and the proliferation of WMD.51 Still, in a veiled yet clear reference to Russia’s influence in the Western Balkans, Croatian policymakers put greater emphasis than the first group of countries on threats such as “non-conventional, asymmetric, and cyber actions” that are “planned, permanent and systematic activities supported by state bodies.”52

France is the only major power in this group. Its threat perceptions revolve, foremost, around transnational terrorism and regional instability in Europe’s southern periphery. French policymakers consider jihadist terrorism as “the most immediate” threat,53 especially in light of the steep rise in the number of terrorist attacks on French soil since the mid-2010s.54 France is also concerned with the proliferation of conventional and WMD-related technology,55 as well as with regional instability in Northern Africa and the Middle East.56 The French government puts particular emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, where, partly because of its postcolonial history, France retains “a direct security and economic interest” in the stability of the region.57 Accordingly, although France has displayed growing concerns vis-à-vis Russia’s assertiveness after the Ukrainian crisis,58 other threats remain more significant.

RUSSIA AND OTHER THREATS HAVE ROUGHLY EQUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The United Kingdom and Germany—together with less powerful Western European states (Belgium and the Netherlands) and Denmark—consider Russia and other security challenges to be equivalent threats (see table 1).

British policymakers include both Russia and terrorism in the UK’s “Tier One” category of risks (in terms of probability and impact).59 In light of Russia’s increasingly assertive behavior, they assess that the “risks from statebased threats have both grown and diversified,”60 which is why the UK “cannot rule out the possibility that [Moscow] may feel tempted to act aggressively against NATO Allies.”61 According to a UK former senior defense official, the main areas of concerns vis-à-vis Moscow are (1) Russia’s military modernization, including the development and deployment of weapon systems that can threaten the UK’s NATO allies; (2) Russia’s gray-zone activities (e.g., subversion, use of proxies, cyberattacks, use of military-grade nerve agents for targeted killings); and (3) Moscow’s activities outside Europe, such as in parts of Africa, but, most notably, in the Middle East.62

Yet, at the same time, the UK sees transnational terrorism as an equally substantial threat. British policymakers have perceived a rising threat from terrorism since at least the 2005 London bombings and the subsequent wave of terrorist attacks that swept across Europe and the UK in the 2010s.63 In their eyes, “ISIL [the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant], Al Qa’ida, and affiliates remain committed to attacking UK and Western targets” and continue to be “the most direct and immediate threat” to the UK’s “domestic security.”64 In 2015, the British government therefore decided to increase its counterterrorism spending by 30 percent, including £2 billion of new investment in the capabilities of UK special forces.65

Germany, too, considers terrorism and Russia to be threats of roughly equal significance. German policymakers view terrorist attacks as “the most immediate challenge” to their country’s domestic security.66 In 2018, Germany’s minister of interior stated that the security situation concerning terrorism continued to be “very threatening.”67 For Germany, transnational terrorism is tied closely to regional stability in the MENA and to the existence of failing states in which terrorist organizations can thrive.68 Accordingly, it seeks to bolster cooperation with partners in Africa and the Middle East to train their security forces so as “to create a bulwark against international terrorism.”69

At the same time, Germany sees Russia as “openly calling the European peace order into question with its willingness to use force to advance its own interests and to unilaterally redraw borders guaranteed under international law, as it has done in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.”70 According to the ministry of defense, “this has far-reaching implications for security in Europe and thus for the security of Germany.”71 A comparison of Germany’s 2006 White Paper and of the subsequent strategic documents (i.e., the 2011 Defense Policy Guidelines and the 2016 White Paper) highlights the enhanced focus of the German armed forces on territorial defense since the Russia-Georgia war and Moscow’s landgrab in Crimea.72

Interviews with current and former German officials reveal that the foreign affairs, interior, and defense ministries have different threat assessments. Whereas the first two consider terrorism to be Germany’s main security challenge, the latter prioritizes Russia as the main threat.73 Across the German government, terrorism and Russia ultimately emerge as being roughly equally significant threats.

Smaller Western European powers such as the Netherlands and Belgium similarly consider Russia and other threats to be largely equivalent.74 Likewise, in Northern Europe, Danish policymakers rank terrorism and regional instability in the MENA—which can provide fertile ground for terrorists— relatively higher than do their Nordic neighbors in their threat assessments.75 At the same time, Russia is seen as posing “a significant security challenge,”76 and its military buildup and increased military exercises in the region, as well as its use of gray-zone operations, are considered “a clear challenge” to Denmark.77 The Danish government thus sees Russia, terrorism, and regional instability in the MENA as equally signiªcant threats.

RUSSIA IS THE HIGHEST THREAT; OTHER THREATS ARE ALSO SIGNIFICANT

Several Northern and Eastern European states have displayed mounting threat perceptions of Russia—which they see as their major threat—especially since the Russo-Georgian War and, increasingly, the Ukrainian crisis (see table 1). Yet, they continue to share security concerns vis-à-vis terrorism, regional instability in the MENA, and illegal migration.

In Northern Europe, Norway and Sweden emphasize both the “long belt of instability” to the south of Europe and terrorism as signiªcant national security concerns.78 Yet, most notably since the 2010s, Russia has returned to the top of their national security concerns. In particular, they highlight the development of Russia’s anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities, its numerous military exercises in Northern Europe, and its activities in the Arctic as amplifying the risk of an accident or a crisis resulting in unintended escalation to war.79 The Norwegian government, for example, considers that “Russia’s overall military capacity is the most signiªcant security challenge for Norway and NATO.”80

Likewise, in Central and Eastern Europe, although the Czech Republic, Romania, and Slovakia also emphasize other security challenges (e.g., instability in the Southern Mediterranean and terrorism), their threat assessments prioritize Russia’s assertiveness.81 While refraining from ofªcially labeling Russia a threat, the Romanian government argues that Russia’s naval buildup— and the ensuing “destabilization of the security situation in the Black Sea Extended Region”—“represent the most important factor of military risk against national security.”82

RUSSIA IS THE DOMINANT THREAT BY FAR

The Baltic states, Finland, and Poland exhibit the highest threat perceptions of Russia in Europe. The former Soviet-controlled states in the Baltic region (i.e., Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) prioritize Russia’s conventional and grayzone military threats as their core national security concern.83 Likewise, given Finland’s geographical proximity to Russia and their shared border, policy makers in Helsinki have viewed Russia as their dominant national security threat throughout the post–Cold War period.84 Finland considers that the “use or threat of military force against Finland cannot be excluded.”85

Given its history of recurrent invasion by foreign powers, Poland has also consistently put Russia at the center of its security concerns since the end of the Cold War.86 Moscow’s “aggressive policy”—through which it aims to “destabilize the internal order of other states and to question their territorial integrity”—is seen as “a threat mainly for Poland and other countries in the region.”87

European Defense Capacity Shortfall

European national assessments thus diverge profoundly regarding the prioritization among different threats. Significantly, Europe’s strategic cacophony greatly exacerbates a second overarching constraint on Europe achieving strategic autonomy: severe military capacity gaps that cannot be closed anytime soon. Since the end of the Cold War, Europe’s defense capacity has markedly decreased.88 Operationally, the 2011 European military action in Libya revealed a severe shortage of key enablers for offensive military operations: the United States had to provide critical capabilities that the Europeans otherwise lacked, such as air-to-air refueling; suppression of enemy air defenses; and intelligence, target acquisition, and reconnaissance.89 Indeed, a recent systematic study by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and the German Council on Foreign Relations found that, because their capability shortfalls are so significant, Europeans would struggle to autonomously undertake operations even at the low end of the spectrum of conflict (such as peace enforcement missions).90 In this section, we focus on Europeans’ capacity for conventional warfare because it is indispensable for defense and deterrence vis-à-vis Russia and because this allows us to directly address the argument of restraint scholars who maintain that the Europeans could autonomously balance Russia with ease. We identify four major challenges that are likely to hinder the capacity of Europeans to develop an autonomous conventional defense capacity.

LACK OF WEAPON SYSTEMS FOR CONVENTIONAL DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE

During the Cold War, Europeans invested heavily in the kind of conventional capabilities required for conventional deterrence and defense. But after the Cold War, European defense spending plummeted, and a great proportion of these limited resources were directed toward out-of-area operations.91 As a result, Europeans are lacking in even the most basic conventional deterrence and defense capabilities. A key reason for this situation is Europe’s strategic cacophony. The five economically largest European countries—the UK, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy—are all located in Western or Southern Europe, which collectively have greatly de-emphasized the territorial defense mission since the end of the Cold War. In contrast, states in Central and Northern Europe have tended to focus relatively more on territorial defense, especially after Russia’s 2014 invasion of Crimea; yet, these parts of Europe contain only small to medium-sized countries.92 Until now, there has been no long-term examination of the year-to-year shift across all of Europe of the kinds of core capabilities needed for conventional deterrence and defense. To address this gap, we systematically gathered data from the IISS Military Balance for the 1990–2020 period on three core military systems for conventional warfare: main battle tanks (MBTs), armored personnel carriers (APCs), and artillery. To be sure, conventional warfare requires more than simply land capabilities. Yet, Russia’s A2/AD capacity is aimed at eroding, or nullifying, NATO’s local control of its airspace, thus compelling NATO forces, in the case of confiict, to operate in an environment of land warfare with contested air support.93 In this context, land resistance—and thus

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land capabilities—become key, which is why we focus on these three specific systems (they constitute a sample of the needed land warfare capabilities). The data for MBTs of Europe’s major powers are displayed in ªgure 1.94 (Online appendix C shows the data on MBTs of medium and smaller European countries as well as the data for APCs and artillery for all European countries.)

These data underscore the marked decline of European conventional warfare capabilities in the past three decades. From 1990 to 2020, the combined European total number of MBTs plunged by 85 percent; APCs fell by 64 percent; and artillery declined by 56 percent. As Sven Biscop concludes, “Europe’s capability shortfalls are such that it can neither meet its NATO obligations for territorial defense, nor achieve strategic autonomy with regard to the protection of Europe.”95

In reality, the situation is even worse than these data indicate, because most European militaries have significant readiness deficiencies. For example, an analysis by the German Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces concluded in 2018 that the “readiness of the Bundeswehr’s major weapons systems is dramatically low in many areas,”96 noting that only 39 percent of Germany’s Leopard 2 battle tanks were available for use given a lack of spare parts; the operability of only a quarter of its PUMA infantry combat vehicles; the nonavailability of any of its six submarines; and the ability of less than half of its Eurofighters and Tornado combat aircraft to fly.97 Significantly, Europe’s readiness problems, such as the obsolescence of its MBTs, are projected to become even more challenging in the decades ahead.98

THE COMPLEXITY OF EMPLOYING MODERN WEAPONS SYSTEMS

As dramatic as these weapons shortfalls are, European defense spending—if allocated properly—could eventually secure the needed systems. Yet, not only is the efficient allocation of resources a major challenge because of Europe’s strategic cacophony (as detailed below), but securing the needed weapons systems would only be the first step.

The effective employment of modern weapons systems is far more challenging than in past eras for a variety of reasons. A key consideration is the immense premium put on command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR). C4ISR—often referred to as the “nervous system” of modern militaries—is crucial for gathering information about the combatants, for effectively processing that information, and for disseminating and using that information to develop and implement complex plans.99 NATO’s 2011 mission in Libya shows the heavy reliance of Europeans on the United States’ C4ISR capacity. Europeans would therefore need to develop their own C4ISR capacity to be able to autonomously balance Russia, which would not be an easy undertaking given that Russia is no Libya. They would need large amounts of new C4ISR systems (e.g., reconnaissance and communication satellites; early warning and control aircraft; sensor systems; air, naval, and land command and control platforms), the most complex of which have very long development times. Notably, the already significant difficulty of Europeans assembling the needed systems would be made even more acute if the UK’s exit from the EU ends up meaning that British capabilities also need to be replaced: at present, the UK detains, among other capabilities, 53 percent of the EU’s combat intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance heavy unmanned aerial vehicles (CISR UAVs), 42 percent of airborne early warning and control aircraft, and 38 percent of electronicintelligence aircraft.100

In addition, European countries lack the kind of specialized personnel needed to operate modern weapons systems effectively. Redressing this weakness would be a significant undertaking, as they have reduced their number of military personnel drastically since the end of the Cold War. As figure 2 shows, the size of the total active militaries of the large European powers declined by 57 percent during the 1990–2020 period.101 Furthermore, beyond the difficulty of securing the financial resources to pay the needed personnel, recruiting sufficient specialized personnel would be a major challenge, as demonstrated by the difficulties faced by many European militaries in attracting personnel for skilled positions.102 Notably, a recent study has shown that the employment of advanced weaponry calls for highly skilled and highly trained military personnel, which are now more difficult to recruit and retain in the military.103 Obtaining specialized military personnel to operate modern weaponry is only the beginning; they must also be trained to effectively use modern weapons, which is extremely challenging and time consuming, partially because these weapons need to be used as part of a cohesive package that places a premium not just on information gathering, but also on coordination and delegation.104 It has taken U.S. military personnel an extraordinarily long time to develop the skills required for effectively using today’s weapons systems: as Posen stresses, the United States’ “development of new weapons and tactics

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depends on decades of expensively accumulated technological and tactical experience.”105 It would likely take Europeans even longer to develop the needed skills, given differences across countries regarding operational cultures, levels of ambition, languages, and so on.106 Finally, the effective use of modern weaponry in the European theater depends on European forces being able to move quickly and securely over large distances within Europe. Yet, as a UK parliamentary report puts it, “NATO has difficulty moving large forces” across Europe.107 In recent years, the Europeans have sought to bolster military mobility through a variety of initiatives dispersed across different institutions (within both the EU and NATO).108 Yet, the movement and training of military personnel and assets in Europe remain severely hampered by a combination of capability shortfalls, legal/procedural hurdles, and infrastructural deficiencies that will not be easy to resolve.109

THE DIFFICULTY OF INSTITUTIONALIZED MILITARY COOPERATION

An additional challenge is institutional. Europe’s strategic cacophony has prevented Europeans from developing an autonomous, military-planning, command and control (C2) structure.110 Indeed, a report by the European Parliamentary Research Service explains that one of the greatest challenges of European defense is “the lack of integration of the military structures of the Member States.”111 Although an effective and autonomous European defense would require the creation of a permanent planning and C2 infrastructure, the question of developing an autonomous Operational Headquarters (OHQ) has proven highly divisive.112 An OHQ was never established because of conflicting national interests and priorities among Europeans, in particular France, Germany and the UK. Whereas Paris has long supported the establishment of a military OHQ to bolster the EU’s strategic and operational planning structures and its contingency planning and C2 capacity, London has strongly resisted, seeing it as a duplication of NATO’s assets. Germany has stood somewhat in between, though closer to the UK, favoring a focus on civilian-military planning and C2, not least to avoid duplicating structures already existing at NATO.113 As a result, the EU remains entirely dependent on NATO or national assets for the planning and conduct of major executive operations, for which it has no autonomous military structures.114

If the United States were to pull back from Europe, it remains to be seen whether the Europeans could rely on a “Europeanized” NATO, in which the integrated structures would stay in place but without the United States.115 Military planning and C2 require a clear chain of command. When NATO was created, Europeans agreed to be under U.S. military command, rather than attempting the far more difficult task of agreeing to be under the command of another European country or group of European states. More generally, as the hegemonic power in NATO, the United States has facilitated institutionalized cooperation among Europeans and helped partly contain Europe’s strategic cacophony.116 For decades, a U.S.-led NATO has been the overarching shaper of national defense policies and military transformation in Europe, helping overcome coordination and collective-action problems.117 In light of Europe’s deep-seated strategic divisions, a U.S. disengagement would amplify these coordination and collective action problems (assuming NATO survived) and would further hinder institutionalized, intra-European defense cooperation at all levels: strategies and doctrines; training; operational learning; interoperability; and joint capability development. Likewise, without the United States, the persistent and profound divergence of threat perceptions and strategic priorities among Europeans is likely to impede their capacity to agree on shared C2 structures for conducting operations, except for the lowest end of the spectrum of conºict (e.g., peace support operations).118

As a result of strategic cacophony, the EU has, in fact, struggled mightily to create even the most minimal C2 structure. As Luis Simón underscores, “It has taken nearly 20 years of allegedly significant steps for the European Union to establish a ‘Military Planning and Conduct Capability’ composed of up to 25 staffers, devoted to assisting with the planning and conduct of so-called non-executive (i.e., training and assistance) missions,” with an advisory role only.119 Ultimately, given Europe’s deep-seated divergences, there is no basis for optimism that Europeans will be able to agree being under the permanent command of another European country for deterrence and defense or to consistently undertake effective institutionalized military cooperation without the enabling role played by the United States within NATO.

THE FRAGMENTATION OF EUROPE’S DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE

If Europeans want to be strategically autonomous, they will have to produce the defense systems they need without being reliant on the United States. The entrenched fragmentation of Europe’ defense industrial base, however, would make this a daunting task.

On the demand side, European states have consistently privileged domestically procured defense equipment over European arms cooperation. According to data from the European Defense Agency, from 2006 to 2015, collaborative defense procurement in Europe accounted for less than one quarter of total procurement.120 For example, a mere 7 percent of the European surface vessels currently in use have been built through European armament cooperation.121 As for fighter aircraft—where the economic incentives for Europeanwide collaboration are especially powerful given the immense cost and complexity of these systems—there has been relatively limited defense cooperation: less than a third (32.6 percent) of combat aircraft used by EU militaries come from European collaborative production.122 Similarly, European states spend more than 80 percent of their military research-and-development budgets within national borders.123

On the supply side, these compartmentalized national markets for weapons systems have resulted in a fragmented and noncompetitive European defense and technological industrial base (EDTIB) characterized by duplication, inefficiencies, endemic overcapacity, and a lack of economies of scale.124 In 2017, 178 different weapons systems were in use in the EU, compared to 30 in the United States.125 As a result, the components that sustain the industrial capacity to deliver high-end to low-end capabilities are scattered across Europe.126 This is a significant problem given that today’s scale requirements are massive for many weapons systems, which also explains why Europe remains highly dependent on the import of key components and weapons systems from the United States.127

Europe has recognized the need for stronger defense production coordination for a long time, and the mechanisms for fostering European-wide collaboration in weapons production have been a topic of discussion for the past several decades. On the demand side, this coordination would require a uniform European procurement policy, with common requirements and with defense industrial cooperation among EU countries being prioritized over national procurement.128 And on the supply side, this would require an integrated defense and technological industrial base (e.g., with one or two major European prime contractors per sector) capable of sustaining military innovation and the development, production, and maintenance of arms at reasonable cost.

Yet, efforts to formulate the kinds of policies that would foster Europeanwide defense collaboration have been feeble. As Matthew Uttley explains, initiatives taken over the years to rationalize and bolster the EDTIB have had a “limited impact,” because governments see a strong national DTIB as a necessary prerequisite for national political sovereignty and, as a result, “national protectionist practices” remain “the dominant driving force in E.U. defense procurement.”129 A report by the European Parliament conªrms that a key reason for this lack of collaboration is Europe’s strategic cacophony, speciªcally, “the current fragmentation of the defense market in terms of demand, regulations, standards and supply.”130

Assessing the Counterargument: Can Europeans Balance Russia?

Together, Europe’s strategic cacophony and its defense capacity shortfalls feed and reinforce each other. For one thing, many of the needed steps to make up for Europe’s defense capacity shortfalls will require prolonged cooperation; Europeans would thus need to overcome their entrenched strategic cacophony not just for a short time, but over a very long period. Moreover, because diverging interests hamper defense industrial cooperation among Europeans, this—coupled with major capability shortfalls—deepens their technological dependency on the United States, further reinforcing the challenges to addressing Europe’s capability shortfalls.

Restraint scholars arguing for a U.S. pullout would undoubtedly respond that, even if Europe is currently split by strategic divisions and has severe defense capacity shortfalls, a U.S. withdrawal would result in heightened European threat perceptions of Russia and thereby lead Europeans to bolster their defense investments—thus prompting them to come together to balance Russia (through a balancing coalition or through the EU, or both). For restraint scholars, it is the U.S. presence in Europe that affords Europeans the luxury of low threat perceptions of Russia and thereby drives them to underinvest in defense. Below, we assess the validity and robustness of this counterargument.

EUROPEAN THREAT PERCEPTIONS AFTER A U.S. WITHDRAWAL

We now evaluate how European threat perceptions would likely evolve if the United States were to pull back, focusing first on Europe’s three major powers (France, the UK, and Germany) and then on its medium and lesser powers.

Given its geographical location, colonial past, and continued engagement in Africa, France tends to look south rather than east for the defense of its core strategic interests.131 Furthermore, France’s strategic outlook remains shaped partly by its Cold War, Gaullist foreign policy legacy, which was based on the willingness to carve out a “third way” between the Soviet-led and the U.S.-led blocs through some form of accommodation with Moscow while maintaining an independent nuclear force and a French area of influence in Africa.132

The UK, as an offshore seapower, has since the early Cold War concluded that the only way to deter the Soviet Union (and later Russia) is to use the United States as a counterweight.133 Accordingly, the “special relationship” with the United States, both bilaterally and through NATO, has been the center of gravity of the UK’s defense policy—as illustrated by its heavy reliance on U.S. military technology.134 Indeed, NATO has been the main vehicle through which Britain has sought to entrench U.S. power in Europe and deter external threats.135

Likewise, Germany, because of its history and location in the heart of the European continent, has strategic priorities different from those of France. The defeat and subsequent occupation of Germany in World War II, including by the Soviet Union, was followed by the division of the country in two, with one side under Soviet influence—thus making Germany the geostrategic epicenter of the Cold War. After its reunification and the end of the Cold War, as well as its self-imposed stringent parliamentary constraints on the use of military force, Germany has opted for a combination of economic and political integration with the EU and military reliance on NATO, with the United States as the ultimate guarantor for its security and the stability of the continent.136

Idiosyncratic historical legacies, geography, and distinctive local security environments have thus profoundly shaped the threat assessments of the three major European powers. To be sure, these differences existed during the Cold War, too, but they were muted by the overwhelming, common Soviet threat.137 By contrast, in light of the diversification of the post–Cold War threat environment, if the United States withdrew from the continent, the threat perceptions of these major powers would be unlikely to converge around Russia.138

In such a scenario, the UK and Germany would be prone to exhibit heightened threat perceptions vis-à-vis Russia. Given their historical reliance upon NATO as their ultimate security guarantee, if the United States were to remove its conventional and nuclear forces, the credibility of NATO’s deterrent vis-à-vis Russia would founder in the eyes of British and German policymakers. As a result, there is every reason to expect they would raise the significance of Russia and of territorial defense in their defense planning. At the same time, they would still have to reckon with other significant threats (e.g., transnational terrorism and regional stability in the MENA).

By contrast, France’s threat assessment would most likely remain unchanged if the United States withdrew. Although France might view Russia with greater concern, it would continue to prioritize terrorism and, crucially, threats on Europe’s southern periphery (i.e., regional instability in the greater Mediterranean area, in general, and in Africa, in particular). As a senior current French defense official put it in an interview, “If the United States withdrew, the risk represented by Russia would ostensibly be greater but, at the same time, it would be greater only if France considered that the threat posed by Russia to the Baltic states, Poland, etc. constitutes a threat to our vital interests, which is far from sure.” This is because threats to Europe’s southern periphery, such as “the destabilization of Africa or the Middle East are considered to be a much higher priority than Russia. . . . Our vital interests are not threatened by Russia.”139

In sum, in the case of a complete U.S. pullback from the continent, London and Berlin would likely move rightward into the second column from the right in table 1 (Russia is a higher threat, but other threats are also significant), while France would not shift from its current position. Given their differing threat prioritizations, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France would be very unlikely to reach agreement on a common position vis-à-vis Russia. Germany and the UK might lean more toward balancing and expand bilateral defense cooperation to that end. However, unlike countries that view Russia as the dominant threat by far (i.e., the Baltic states and Poland), they would face important trade-offs in their allocation of resources—between territorial defense and power projection capabilities, between Europe’s eastern and southern periphery, and so on—given that they would continue to grapple with other signiªcant threats. For its part, because France would likely continue to prioritize threats on Europe’s southern periphery, it would be unlikely to provide a substantial (if any) contribution to a balancing coalition. In fact, it might opt for accommodation with Russia to develop a sphere of inºuence in Western/ Southern Europe or, potentially, even see some strategic advantages to bandwagoning with Russia.

This predicament would be further compounded by fundamental divergences in threat perceptions among Europe’s medium and small powers. Except for lesser powers in Northern and Eastern Europe (i.e., the Baltic states and Poland), which would consistently see Russia as their overriding threat, the other medium and small European states would likely display profoundly different reactions to a U.S. pullback, depending on their geographic location, history, and strategic priorities. While some countries would undoubtedly perceive a higher threat from Russia and thus revise their threat assessments (moving one column to the right in table 1), others would likely maintain their existing threat hierarchization given the equivalent or higher priority they as sign to other threats or regions, or both. In fact, there is every indication that most medium and small European countries that currently perceive threats other than Russia to be more signiªcant or dominant would be highly unlikely to revise their threat assessment. Several of these countries might even become neutral or bandwagon with Moscow. It is therefore extremely implausible that all European states would move Russia up in their ranking of threats. And even if they did, the cacophony of threat perception would remain, with only a few lesser powers in Northern and Eastern Europe perceiving Russia as their dominant threat.

Restraint scholars might reply that the above discussion is excessively pessimistic about the chances for European defense coordination because it neglects the role the EU can play in bringing Europe together in the security realm if the United States leaves.140 The EU is not an effective institutional platform for overcoming Europe’s strategic divergence, however. There are many reasons for this, with the most notable being that the EU is a kaleidoscope of countries with diverging interests that operates on the basis of consensus in the ªeld of foreign and defense policy—thus making the Common Security and Defense Policy a “structurally limited undertaking.”141 If the United States were to pull back, rather than work to overcome European divisions, the EU would be prone to inaction because of such divisions. Thus, only an effective institutional structure could probably overcome, or at least mitigate, Europe’s divisions, but strategic cacophony would prevent the EU from being enabled to perform this function.

HOW EASILY CAN EUROPEANS BALANCE RUSSIA’S MILITARY STRENGTH?

A complete U.S. withdrawal would thus not mitigate Europe’s strategic cacophony and could exacerbate it. Restraint scholars might argue, however, that, even if threat perceptions did not converge across Europe, balancing Russia would not require much effort because it is so weak. Yet, Russia is a much tougher adversary to match than restraint scholars now assess it to be— both in the conventional and the nuclear realms.

CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE AND DETERRENCE. As Michael Kofman and Richard Connolly convincingly argue, “Russian military expenditure is considerably higher” than commonly estimated.142 Of key importance, they stress, is that Russia gets a lot for what it spends on its military: it pays its soldiers a pittance in rubles, and, even more important, it buys its weapons from its own defense contractors in rubles, not dollars. Moreover, the Russian government has squeezed profits in the defense sector, making the weapons it buys artificially cheap. Notably, Russia’s unusually high capacity to produce advanced weaponry using domestic resources is a legacy of the Soviet Union’s massive level of defense production during the Cold War. Ultimately, Kofman and Connolly maintain that, because Russia’s rubles can purchase so much military power so cheaply, it is inappropriate to use market exchange-based estimates of its military spending. Based upon purchasing power parity exchange rates, “Russia’s effective military expenditure actually ranged between $150 billion and $180 billion annually” (from 2015 to 2019), and “taking into account hidden or obfuscated military expenditure, Russia may well come in at around $200 billion.”143 Given this understanding, Russian military spending likely exceeds the combined levels of defense expenditures of the three major European powers (France, Germany, and the UK).

High levels of military spending have, in turn, spurred significant modernization and expansion of Russia’s military forces, particularly in the 2010s.144 The Russian Federation is the descendent state of the Soviet Union, which created a formidable military industrial base with a huge cadre of highly trained personnel, providing a strong foundation for Russia’s current military infrastructure. Although the Russian armed forces still display important weaknesses in areas such as surface shipbuilding, in the past decade Moscow has substantially “modernized its armed forces through a massive introduction of new and modernized weapons and infrastructure, accompanied by radical structural changes in the military organization, evolving modes of operation and a sharply increased number, scale and complexity of military training and exercise.”145 Of particular note, from 2015 to 2019, Russia’s army increased in size by almost 25 percent.146 (In online appendix D, we measure the military capabilities of Russia and four potential European balancing coalitions regarding two overall indicators of military personnel [total active and total reserves] and three core weapon systems for conventional warfare [main battle tanks, artillery, and armored personnel carriers]. Across all five of these measures, the data show that Russia possesses a very substantial military superiority as compared to all four potential European balancing coalitions.)

Additionally, Russia possesses substantial C4ISR capabilities for employing weapons systems in a coordinated manner and for managing military operations. These capabilities are the combined result of legacy Soviet systems and of the Kremlin’s ongoing military modernization effort.147 Especially in the past decade, Russia has developed a more modular, flexible force structure with an emphasis on joint forces through a large-scale military modernization.148

Military satellites are a useful indicator for understanding why Europeans would have difficulty building up the necessary C4ISR infrastructure for balancing Russia. For one, military satellites are critical, because they enable the rest of the C4ISR architecture to operate effectively by facilitating the flow of informational inputs. Specifically, military satellites are crucial for communications, navigation, early warning, attack assessment, and surveillance and reconnaissance—and thus are key for pooling and employing military power. Other C4ISR systems, such as ISR UAVs and airborne early warning and control systems constitute more specific components of a C4ISR architecture that play particular roles therein. Furthermore, whereas full comparison data are available for military satellites, existing databases do not list other C4ISR capabilities systematically. The profound gap between Russia and European countries in military satellites is shown in table 2.

To be sure, notwithstanding such quantitative preponderance in military satellites, one challenge faced by the Russian military in past decades has been the integration of highly interoperable systems for network-centric warfare.149 Yet, Russia has placed such systems (referred to as the Reconnaissance Strike Complex in Russian strategic parlance) at the “epicenter” of its military modernization in the 2010s, investing massively in C4ISR integration and electronic warfare and in modernizing infrastructure, while boosting and streamlining command and control, among other features.150

The net result is that, as stressed by a 2019 RAND report, the Kremlin has

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implemented “a modern, whole-of-government C4ISR infrastructure that will enable Russia to pursue its vision of net-centric or ‘non-contact warfare’”; these “advances in long-range strike, Russia’s command and control and information gathering systems are fundamental in their ability to compete directly with the West and dominate regional adversaries”151—an assessment shared by other studies.152 Significantly, the Russian military tried and tested its C4ISR capabilities during the Syrian conflict.153

The experience of European states during the 2011 Libyan conflict showed that they lack the technological infrastructure and personnel to autonomously use weapons systems in a coordinated manner: they would need to replace the United States’ C4ISR systems that they currently rely on; hire and train the personnel to operate them; and develop a permanent, effective command structure to conduct effective joint military operations in wartime. Likewise, in stark contrast to Russia’s unity of command, Europeans display an “enormous variation” in their C4ISR capacities, with “both technological and operational gaps within Europe.”154 In sum, Europe exhibits a cacophony of C4ISR capabilities.

A final and related consideration that restraint scholars do not sufficiently recognize is that Russia gains efficiencies—when compared to Europe— because it is a single actor, rather than a collective patchwork of countries. By contrast, as a 2018 European Parliament report concludes, “It is precisely because European defense is fragmented by the decisions of 27 political and military chiefs of staff, duplicates the same research, the same programs and the same capabilities and has no chain of command that it is, collectively, inefªcient.”155 The report notes further that “increasing the level of spending without ªrst addressing the coherence between the different national defense systems would only increase the amount of wastage.”156 Exactly how much efªciency is lost would depend on how many European countries would need to act together to balance Russia; but even two actors working together would result in less efªcacy and effectiveness as compared to a single, unitary actor of comparable size.157 If the United States pulled back, a single, centralized Russian actor would confront a group of potential European balancers with diverging threat perceptions that would face coordination challenges likely to hamper their capacity to devise a common strategy, to share the burdens of their defense investments, to rationalize Europe’s highly fragmented defense industrial base, to build integrated C2 structures, and to sustain the development and deployment of a C4ISR capacity. As a report of the French Senate states, “Compared to other European countries, Russia enjoys a considerable but not quantifiable advantage: unity of command. The Russian army has one commanding authority, one hierarchy, one language, and one equipment range. Obviously, at the operational level, these are very important assets.”158

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE. As a legacy of the Cold War, Russia maintains a formidable arsenal of approximately 6,400 nuclear weapons, which vastly overshadows the combined arsenals of France and the UK (290 and 195 nuclear weapons, respectively).159 In addition to Russia’s numerical preponderance, it matters greatly that this force is wielded by a single actor, not a collective one. In contrast, strategic divergences and technological constraints are highly likely to hamper the emergence of a European nuclear deterrent either through the Europeanization of the French and/or British nuclear deterrents and/or through a German nuclear deterrent.

As Ulrich Kühn and Tristan Volpe explain, Germany would have to surmount major technical, political, and security obstacles before acquiring a nuclear deterrent.160 Not only would it face the domestic and international pressures fueled by reviving fears of German hegemony, but it would have “to either repurpose its nuclear energy infrastructure for weapons production or sprint to the bomb from new military facilities,”161 a prospect made even more unlikely given that Germany plans to shut down its entire nuclear fleet by 2022.162 Accordingly, “Germany does not have the required wherewithal for even a rudimentary program.”163

In turn, the Europeanization of nuclear sharing (or Euro-deterrent) based on the nuclear capabilities of France and/or the United Kingdom independent of the United States would also “face high hurdles and immense costs that might well prove prohibitive.”164 French nuclear experts note that there is “near-zero appetite in France for transferring its nuclear assets to Europe.”165 Likewise, Barbara Kunz observes that analysts across Europe agree that the Europeanization of the French bomb, however defined, is “unlikely and hardly feasible.”166

The prospects of a Franco-British nuclear deterrent are even less likely. For one, it is highly improbable that French or British policymakers would be willing to sacriªce London or Paris for Tallinn or Riga. Second, the UK has left the EU, so France and the UK would have to overcome their previously discussed divergent strategic priorities to create an integrated Franco-British military structure for nuclear planning outside the EU. Finally, the heavy dependence of the UK’s nuclear deterrent on U.S. technology and on cooperation with the United States would further complicate such an endeavor.

Ultimately, the notion forwarded by restraint scholars that European countries can easily and quickly balance Russia is ungrounded. Balancing Russia would be extremely difficult, and such a buildup would necessarily take a very long time. Our interviews with European policymakers reveal that they clearly understand this problem. A former UK ministry of defense official stresses that the “temporal factor would be quite long. . . . These sort of capabilities take a long time to develop.”167 Likewise, as a former German official bluntly explains, “The whole defense and capability requirements would be so extreme that the upgrade that would be needed to fill the gap if the U.S. completely withdrew is totally off limits for the foreseeable future.”168

Conclusion

Europe is characterized by profound, continent-wide divergences across national defense policies, particularly threat perceptions, as well as by a fundamental defense capacity shortfall that cannot be closed anytime soon because of a series of overlapping challenges. Given the combination of strategic cacophony and capacity gaps, which are mutually reinforcing, Europeans are currently not in a position to autonomously mount a credible deterrent and defense against Russia. This situation would likely continue for a very long time, even if there were a complete U.S. withdrawal from the continent, and all the more so in the event of a partial U.S. withdrawal, a much more likely counterfactual. If a U.S. pullback were to occur, it would leave Europe increasingly vulnerable to Russian aggression and meddling, allowing Russia to exploit Europe’s centrifugal dynamics to augment its influence. A U.S. withdrawal would also likely make institutionalized intra-European defense cooperation appreciably harder. Accordingly, a U.S. pullback would have grave consequences for peace and stability on the continent.

These findings have major implications for both sides of the Atlantic. In Europe, scholars and policymakers need to be realistic. The strong desire for strategic autonomy is justified and understandable, but it is necessary to discern between distant hopes and present realities. Ultimately, the barriers to strategic autonomy are so substantial that the achievement of this goal would require a long-term, sustained and coordinated effort. Sound European defense policymaking needs to reflect this: working under an unrealistic assumption that Europeans can quickly achieve strategic autonomy is both unwarranted and unwise. Pursuing unrealistic goals can, in fact, undermine the achievement of realistic ones. Instead, European policymakers should focus on a manageable, affordable set of initiatives for augmenting military capacity in the short term that the United States would see as valuable—and thus would help consolidate the transatlantic alliance—but that would nevertheless also prove useful if the United States does someday pull back. Such an approach could gradually and cumulatively create the foundations for greater commonality and cooperation in the future and, over time, help mitigate the centrifugal dynamics at play in Europe. In the United States, restraint scholars—virtually all of whom are selfdescribed realists—also need to be realistic. Far from portraying the world as it is, their assessment of Europe is guided by an unfounded optimism that Europeans can easily balance Russia if the United States pulled out. Currently, Europe is presented by restraint scholars as the “easy” case for a U.S. withdrawal, with Asia being the “hard” case.169 Although China is rising fast and already has much more latent power than Russia, the latter is a greater threat to the United States’ European allies than the former based on the other three components of the balance of threat: geographic location, offensive military capabilities, and aggressive intentions.170 The assessment of restraint scholars that pulling back from Europe is an easy call ultimately rests on a wholly unsubstantiated assumption: that an effective European balancing coalition would emerge quickly if the United States pulled back. What our analysis shows is that Europeans would for a very long time be unable to effectively confront Russia on their own if the United States were to withdraw, and thus if America does want stability in Europe, it should retain a presence on the continent.

### Alt — AT: Relationalism

#### Grove disagrees. The alt can’t solve violence.

Grove 22 [Jairus Victor Grove; Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Hawai'i Research Center for Future Studies at the University of Hawai'i; 6-29-2022; "The President as Mascot: Relations All the Way Down"; *Uncertainty and Its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*, Part I - Substantialism and Relationalism, Chapter 4; https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/uncertainty-and-its-discontents/4F8C9A81F97824652654F3BEC6E1F889; KL]

While I follow a relational and primarily historical and interpretive approach, I do depart from many other adherents of relationalism in two significant ways.4 The first involves the assumption of an ethical or normative content to what Milja Kurki calls the “relational cosmology” of the “relational revolution” (Chapter 3, this volume). Kurki believes an ethical impulse is “baked into” a relational worldview. There are a number of examples of this in contemporary theory inside and outside of IR. Two variants are those following Judith Butler and her debt to Emmanuel Levinas and Hannah Arendt, who account for violence as an abrogation of relations and a possibility of nonviolence in relations themselves. Here, violence is in some sense the ignoring of a fundamental relationality among human beings that would, if recognized, create an understanding mutuality opposed to violence. From these accounts, consciousness-raising about the fact of relationality is a solution to global violence just as “realizing” and “experiencing” relationality makes us open or indebted to “the other,” to use Levinas’ terms. The second variant focuses more on the natural environment and violence against nonhuman others. From this perspective on relationality, environmental destruction and extreme cruelty toward nonhuman animals is, like the Levinasian/Arendtian account, the result of a loss of relationality often attributed to modernist accounts of mind/body and nature/culture dualisms, or, more generally, of anthropocentrism. Like normative relationalism, the environmental strand believes that an awareness of this fact, or a cultivation of an ethos of interdependence beyond the human species, will reduce violence and possibly may make planetary life more sustainable. It is not unusual to take as evidence of this position the confluence of environmental protections by indigenous peoples with relational cosmologies.

Both variants conflate the methodological insights of relationalism with a relational worldview. One is empirical while the other is aspirational. The risk, I believe, in this conflation is a confusion of expectations and a false sense that one has solved more philosophical questions than are possible to solve. It is enough to have an account of the world that integrates ideational and material forces into a single substance and ontology. We ought not expect that this, in addition, restores the world to some perfect order, or that striving for a more universal notion of the good escapes somehow the deep problems of competing interests, relativism, or incommensurable worldviews. Too often the appeal to relationalism’s debt to science or fundamental, ancient ontologies is used to depoliticize its normative commitments. However, the ambivalent relationship between relationalism’s cosmological and scientific origin stories ought to demand the inverse. Rather than seeing relationality as an ethical exit from particularity and the divisions in politics, it ought to insist upon both as the beginning of inquiry.

While an ethics can be built within a relational ontology, it does not necessarily follow from the ontological insights. After all, seals and great white sharks are deeply relational and aware of each other, and yet could not easily arrive at a common sense of the good. If any interspecies consensus could be reached between predator and prey, it would be minimal (maybe a consensus value on saving the ocean, for instance) and not as a mere result of their relationality, which is mostly characterized by teeth and blood. Could such a relationship be at least free of violence? Even that seems far-fetched given the findings of animal behaviorists that predators enjoy their hunt; killing for fun has been observed in orcas, dolphins, and cats.

In fact, rather than say that relationality and violence are opposed, I believe that the opposite claim can and should be made. If everything is relational — from our cells to our consciousness — then certainly violence is relational too. To go a step further, violence — a thoroughly human concept — only distinguishes itself from force or change because of the particular relationships of attention and intimacy which make cruelty possible. What makes an earthquake tragic — that is, unavoidable and indebted to no misanthropy or purposive end — is precisely what makes an act of war violent. Malice, sadism, cruelty, cultivated indifference — all of these extra characteristics are what change the ecological and political relations of actions such that they are violent as opposed to something else.

### Alt — AT: Quantum

#### Individualism is good. Quantum IR rejects freedom.

Nau 22 [Henry R. Nau; professor of political science and international affairs at Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University; 6-29-2022; "Weberian and Relationalist Worldviews: What Is at Stake?"; *Uncertainty and Its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*, Part II - Accountable Agents and Epistemic Engines, Chapter 6; https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/uncertainty-and-its-discontents/4F8C9A81F97824652654F3BEC6E1F889; KL]

This volume challenges us to stretch our imagination and rethink the world of international relations. It engages modern substantialist, Weberian approaches to social science with new postmodern, relationalist or quantum approaches and concludes that substantialist views which emphasize the individual are outdated. 1 This conclusion is premature. Stretching our imagination is one thing; tearing it up is another. As we proceed, we need a clear picture of what we are stretching and potentially tearing up; it could be the reasoning individual and the human capacity to imagine itself.

This chapter offers a full-throated (albeit limited) exposition and defense of the Enlightenment/Weberian worldview that underlines modern social science. The Enlightenment worldview gave form to the aspiration for individual freedom and choice. It rescued humanity from the stultifying clutches of mysticism (Nature) and religion (the Divine). It dethroned philosopher kings and papal elites and empowered ordinary, individual human beings, equipped with reason, spirit (emotion, faith), and education, to create, assess, debate, and pass judgment on alternative worldviews. Natural science exploded under Isaac Newton’s vision of an orderly universe fixed in time and space following predictable laws. And social science spawned a virtual cornucopia of modern worldviews, both individualistic and authoritarian. Liberalism (John Locke), capitalism (Adam Smith), humanism (Max Weber), communism (Karl Marx), and fascism (Friedrick Nietzsche), among others, competed (and fought) to organize and direct social and scientific life. 2 In the West, through struggle, humanist and capitalist worldviews prevailed, fueling material progress, the spread of republican institutions, and gnawing anguish about minorities left behind.

Now, postmodern worldviews of relationalism and hyper-humanism (unity of human beings and nature) challenge Enlightenment worldviews. They reject the individualistic ontology of human affairs in favor of a wholistic or cosmological one. Milja Kurki writes: “The relational perspective explored here suggests that the sciences – natural and social – are undergoing a ‘relational revolution,’ moving from Cartesian, Newtonian, and empiricist ways of knowing toward more relational ontologies and epistemologies in line with not only quantum science and relativity theory but also with ecological thought and decolonization of the sciences.” 3 Relationalist views envision a world of intense and entangled relationships deeply embedded in historical and cosmological context, in which substantialist things such as individuals and institutions do not exist or exist only in emergent form when they are investigated. In this holistic and processual universe, individual human beings have no location (position), no alternative (choice), and no escape (only one observed universe). The relationalist worldview draws from quantum science, in which reality is not fixed in time or space but appears simultaneously and unpredictably in multiple places and dissolves the distinction between the observer (individual) and the observed (universe).

These different worldviews not only reflect different ontologies, they prescribe different world politics. As Kurki infers, the relationalist turn entails a political agenda – a broadside assault on western rationality (reason), individuality (freedom), capitalism (growth), and colonialism (control/hierarchy). 4 In place of Enlightenment goals, relationalism advocates a future agenda of environmentalism that prioritizes climate change, hyper-humanism that relinquishes human control of nature, and egalitarianism that flattens material and moral differences. Much more is at stake than abstract intellectual discourse. The relationalist turn may imperil the very notion of free, reasoning individuals capable of self-conscious thought and choice in human affairs.

This chapter insists that individual human beings remain at the epicenter of social science inquiry. Quantum science does not mandate an epochal transformation of worldviews from rationality and individualism to relationality and cosmology. 5 Modeling the social sciences after the natural sciences is, in fact, a cardinal mistake. Relationalists highlight that mistake when they argue that Enlightenment science under Newton hijacked the social sciences and created a disenchanted modernity of atoms (individuals) and laws (causality) devoid of spirit and meaning. Now they make the same mistake by modeling the postmodern world after quantum science. But the Newtonian world was never just a billiard ball world of fixed entities, time and space. It was inspired and limited by Christian beliefs that the divine did not roll dice (a predictable world) and human beings were made equally worthy in the image of the divine. And the quantum worldview today is not just a mathematical model of entanglement and uncertainty; it is also a social vision to reimagine the political world as harmonious, contingent, and relationally or group-based (identity politics, multiculturalism, etc.), rather than as competitive, progressive, and individually based (markets, individual human rights, etc.).

The Enlightenment produced good and evil. This chapter does not claim otherwise. The Enlightenment’s crown jewel, however, was the emancipation, for better and worse, of the individual human being as a reasoning, responsible, and rights-seeking agent in society. On balance, this secular, individually driven humanist worldview was progressive, materially and socially. Despite all of its wars and warts, the Enlightenment era superintended unparalleled expansion of material prosperity, human longevity, public education, political freedom (yes, more democracies than ever before), and global equality (yes, half of the world’s population is now middle class). 6 Any post-Enlightenment worldview that challenges the individualist ontology of the Enlightenment has a high bar to meet.

The chapter proceeds in four parts. The first part explores the relationship between the individual and the whole, the timeworn conundrum of agency and structure. It contends that the individual remains primary over structure in several principal ways: as a source of endless diversity, a repository for the capability of reason, a portal of entry for human conversation, and the only species thus far that practices science and is capable of representing and studying itself. Individuals are not autonomous, but they have space in their embedded situation for choice and change. The main issue between this chapter and others in this volume is how much space they have and where that space resides. Relationalist accounts tend to discount agency at the individual level, Weberian accounts at the structural level. We risk a lot by disregarding either.

The second and third parts address the content and juxtaposition of competing worldviews. How do we compare and test them? This part holds fast to the notion of a universal capability of individual human beings to reason and a universal method of science to test alternative propositions (worldviews) by experiment against an outside physical and social world. To be sure, the content of reason and science is parochial and differs by culture. In some worldviews, rational and individualistic factors play the larger role, in others nonrational (e.g., emotion, intuition) and holistic factors. 7 If these multiple worldviews are incommensurable, however, we have no way to evaluate and test them. Worldviews become religious not scientific undertakings, adopted by faith not reason. On the other hand, if we retain science as a common method (mathematics, experimentation), we can compare and evaluate worldviews across different cultures. In this section I assume that all worldviews incorporate two elements: content, or their relative emphasis on rational vs. nonrational factors; and scale, or their relative emphasis on individualistic vs. structural levels of analysis. 8

The fourth part addresses the ethics of different worldviews. Worldviews have consequences – some horrific, such as the Holocaust. Who or what is accountable for these outcomes? If Weberian worldviews have moral shortcomings – and they do – relationalist worldviews do as well. Calling for openness and multiple worldviews (modernities), relationalist views are at times quite dogmatic. They pass judgment on worldviews as “right” or “wrong” not as “false” or “not false,” and speak of the pursuit of “truth” against which, they claim, resistance is futile. 9 They downplay individual agency and emphasize entangled relationships, conjuring up a “totalizing” worldview that marginalizes individual rights and privacy. They blur distinctions between science and religion and argue that worldviews “are inescapably normative.” 10 Yet, curiously, relationalists say little about the substance of relationalist norms. They pass over the question of how a relationalist world, in which all possibilities are welcomed, defends itself against the barbarity of an Adolf Hitler or a Joseph Stalin; they infer that other religions (Hinduism, Buddhism) are more in tune with nature than Christianity; they refrain from spirited criticism of worldviews that discriminate against women (Saudi Arabia, India) or Muslims (China); and they blame America and the Enlightenment for elevating European worldviews and marginalizing others. Weberian worldviews, by contrast, with their individualistic and disaggregated ontology, accommodate alternative worldviews as long as these worldviews submit to objective falsification and do not claim that their world is the only world which cannot be tested or resisted. 11

#### Quantum science disagrees with its application to IR.

Nau 22 [Henry R. Nau; professor of political science and international affairs at Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University; 6-29-2022; "Weberian and Relationalist Worldviews: What Is at Stake?"; *Uncertainty and Its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*, Part II - Accountable Agents and Epistemic Engines, Chapter 6; https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/uncertainty-and-its-discontents/4F8C9A81F97824652654F3BEC6E1F889; KL]

6.3 Worldviews and Science

To do this, however, we need standards. The Enlightenment gave us the standard of science as a universal method: mathematics, experimental practice. That method depends upon the assumption of a real “objective” world even if we can never know that world. We ask and test how that world works, based on the values we hold (e.g., world is predictable or uncertain), and the real world pushes back against our experimental inquiries and tells us which worldviews are consistent with it and which are not. Notice science as method tells us only which worldviews are not false (i.e., not inconsistent with reality); it never tells us which worldviews are true (i.e., the actual reality).

This is a crucial point, at least for me. Truth lies not in the universal method of science but in the multiple values that inform science as method. Newton’s Christian views led him to expect and practice a “predictable” science; Weber’s human-centric views led him to anticipate a “progressive” science; the values held by Weber’s critics led them to expect a “disenchanted” science; Hitler’s fascist and Stalin’s communist worldviews led them to promote “racist” and “pseudo” sciences (Mengele and Lysenko). Relationalists value conjunctive relationality (not individuals) and pursue a science of local not universal knowledge. Values inform all worldviews, but science as method tells us which worldviews fare best against an assumed objective world.

Strong relationalists reject science as a universal method of testing against an objective reality. They talk about “different sciences” 55 and argue that “science … is not defined by a ‘method’.” 56 Quoting Roberto Unger and Lee Smolin, Kurki concludes: “There is no scientific method, science is fundamentally defined as a collection of ethical communities.” 57 Here we come very close to worldviews as pure values (ethical communities) with methods being anything – scientific, magical, religious – that values dictate. Each community defines its own value and methods, and presumably the “real” world accommodates them all because there is no common method to determine which worldviews are not consistent with an assumed “real” (i.e., objective) world.

There are three layers of uncertainty involved in this issue of scientific objectivity (universality). Newtonian science studies the natural (nonhuman) world: objects such as planets and particles which cannot change their characteristics and which scientists neither like nor dislike. Laws are fixed and cannot be affected by the scientist. The human observer is also situated outside and independent of the natural world. In Newtonian science, the observer can be mostly objective even though scientists still operate in an intersubjective, ethical (social) community (for Newton, the Church of England) that defines what is or is not to be investigated and expected.

Weberian science studies not only the natural but also the social world in which human beings are involved and can change their minds. Laws are no longer fixed, and the observer, though still distinct, studies things it likes and dislikes, such as churches, trade unions, markets, political parties, etc. While Weberian scientists assume they can strip their social preferences from their scientific pursuits, they are human, not superhuman, and can succeed only up to a point. Objectivity is more elusive. 58

Quantum science adds a third level of uncertainty. 59 It assumes that the human observer is not only studying itself but is now inextricably entangled with the world it is studying. The observer, the observed, and the background exist only together (there is no separate individual, observation, or background), and emerge only when a particular question (measurement) is asked (made). Observation triggers or collapses the entangled quantum world and reveals the only world we can know. There is no world behind the observed one. Objectivity, in short, is now out of the question. The world depends entirely on the questions the observer asks.

Relationalism in general pushes us toward this quantum level of uncertainty. But a strong relationalism goes beyond quantum science in two ways: it drastically reduces (if not eliminates) the role of the observer (the individual investigator), and it gives up the universal method of experimental science in favor of a localized and diluted method of “trial and error.” 60 Quantum science does neither. In the case of the observer, it elevates, not eliminates, the significance of the observer (individual). Through the act of measuring, the observer now literally “creates” (“gives meaning to”) the world we observe, which is the only world we can know. 61 As Steven Weinberg muses, “Man may indeed be the measure of all things.” 62 That seems to reinforce the Weberian worldview that individuals are a significant location of agency. But in quantum physics the observer now has no way to test observations against an objective world because there is no objective world. The universal scientific method is no longer available, and we have to settle for a localized form of experimentation based on trial and error, yielding results which cannot be generalized. That point seems to reinforce the relationalist worldview.

But wait a minute. Some Newtonian (classical) physicists still contest the quantum proposition that there is no objective world. They argue that wave collapse is going on all the time objectively in a real but unknown world behind the observed world. They seek evidence of such “objective” wave collapse, independent of “subjective” measurement. 63 Interestingly, in these efforts, Newtonian and quantum scientists use the same methods of science, mathematics and experiments, but derive very different content from those methods. Neither, however, has given up on the idea of science as a universal method. Quantum science may still prevail, but if it does it won’t prevail forever, any more than Newtonian science did. Science advances from one falsified theory to another “not yet” falsified theory, not from false to true (at which point science ends). 64 And, since scientists tell us that we know only about 4 percent of the universe as we see it, the real world that we don’t see is likely to remain elusive for a very long time to come. Scientists therefore should not speak about “the reality” let alone “the truth” of their findings, only about a method that tells them which findings are not false or not yet false.

In the meantime, quantum science raises some harrowing ethical issues when applied to the human world: the potential of unhinged human observers playing the role of creator, and the absence of any common moral standard by which to hold varying worldviews accountable.

#### Absent analyzing the decisions of individual leaders and treating them culpable, genocide becomes inevitable.

Nau 22 [Henry R. Nau; professor of political science and international affairs at Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University; 6-29-2022; "Weberian and Relationalist Worldviews: What Is at Stake?"; *Uncertainty and Its Discontents: Worldviews in World Politics*, Part II - Accountable Agents and Epistemic Engines, Chapter 6; https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/uncertainty-and-its-discontents/4F8C9A81F97824652654F3BEC6E1F889; KL]

6.4 Worldviews and Ethics

Having downsized if not eliminated the role of the reasoning individual in shaping worldviews, and having adopted a quantum view that the world we see is the only one there is, relationalism in this volume has surprisingly little to say about ethical and moral responsibility, either individual or collective. This neglect follows from relationalist logic. Because the world is holistic and incorporates all possibilities, there is little or no choice, and hence little or no responsibility. We have removed practically all degrees of human freedom to act and change the world. What’s left are different values or religions and related methods of science which are compatible but not commensurable, harmonious but not integral, and equivalent but not competitive. Katzenstein writes:

both science and religion are variegated practices of different ways of knowing … Both inquire into the possibility that the world might be different than it appears. Both are instances of us living in multiple realities and thus are examples of the profound human capacity of meaning-making … Religious and scientific practices are rooted in the world of play. 65

Play is an interesting term, implying a game or imaginary reality. In that game, however, what are the rules, and who makes them? Maybe no rules are needed. Science and religion are drawing closer together: “the border between quantum mechanics and religion is porous.” 66 Religious values and scientific methods do not collide, they resonate. Multiple beliefs and realities cut or “smear” into one another like quantum waves. They blend, harmonize.

Such a harmonious concatenation of multiple worldviews expresses an aspiration that we all share. If relationalism is nothing more than an appeal for curiosity, openness, and tolerance, it is welcomed. But what if multiple worldviews do not harmonize? What if some worldviews condone slavery, deny individual human rights, justify genocide, discriminate against women (Islam in Saudi Arabia) or minorities (Uighurs in China), wage holy war against the infidel, and so on? In the flattened ontology that relationalists advocate, are all worldviews “true” or “moral”?

The issue here is not whether human beings are entangled but what the content of that entanglement is. The content of entanglement is what Haas and I try to get at with the concept of “ideological distance,” whether worldviews are converging or diverging. 67 According to relationalists, the quantum social world is cooperative; ideological distance is always at or near zero. Conversely, the Weberian world is conflictual; ideological distance is always positive and sometimes large. As Alexander Wendt explains:

If your starting premise for thinking about social life is atomistic, then conflict is the natural starting point for life – every organism is out for itself, they’re all selfish, it’s all about survival of the fittest. Cooperation is very difficult because we’re all separate and all trying to survive and do our own thing. On the other hand, if your starting point is holistic, where everything’s entangled, then cooperation may be much easier to achieve. It may even be the default situation, and conflict is the exception. So it turns upside down a lot of the foundational assumptions, I think, of mainstream social science. 68

Whether social life is atomistic or entangled, however, does not tell us much about outcomes. The master–slave relationship is entangled but not cooperative. The relationship between liberal states in the democratic peace is separate but not conflictual. No conflict in either case may mean no freedom to challenge slavery or democracy, and therefore no moral accountability – a totalitarian entanglement for which no one is responsible and which, apparently, no one can change.

Over time, of course, the content of social entanglement does change. Outright slavery is no longer acceptable. Communism, at least in the Soviet form, is gone. How does such change occur, and who is responsible for the original conflict and its eventual outcome? Katzenstein writes: “Divergent worldviews do not get resolved by appeals to logic and evidence but through individual experiences and social processes.” 69 So, how do “individual experience” and “social processes” accomplish this resolution? If logic and evidence are ruled out, what are the means of resolution – emotion, habit, intuition, etc.? Are these means peaceful or violent? Practically everyone agrees that Nazism had to be defeated by rationalist instruments (Grove might say assemblages) of power; Nazi ideology could not be blended or accommodated by relationalist effects of norms.

The relationalist worldview lacks any ethical standard for evaluating or resolving divergencies in the content of alternative worldviews. Everything is local and specific even though the world itself is holistic and entangled. And all events are uncertain even though the quantum model itself is certain and can’t be challenged. The combination of the loss of objectivity (no real world behind the observed one) and the multiplicity of incommensurable but equivalent worldviews leaves almost everything up for grabs. A flattened ontology leads to a flattened ethical landscape as well.

Kurki seeks a relational ethic of response-ability: an ability to respond sensitively, openly, and thoughtfully to human and nonhuman relationships. 70 It is an appealing insight. But in a world in which there are no things (individuals) or backgrounds (objective world), where exactly is this responsibility located, and what is its substance? Grove, for example, sees violence as relational but not easily overcome by consciousness-raising. 71 You can become aware of relations, he points out, without coming to a sense of the common good. Kurki ponders the same point about knowledge: science “is part of becoming … what this means is that we do not have clear criteria for good or bad knowledge.” 72 The substance of ethics or knowledge, what is good and what is bad, is hard to pin down. Even harder to pin down is the location of ethical responsibility. In Grove’s examination of presidential powers and nuclear weapons, he admits that the president is ultimately unaware of who or what is in control.” 73 And if no one is in control, no one has responsibility.

Responsibility is not merely the “ability to respond.” It’s the ability to respond “by someone or something” in a “substantive” way toward some moral “end.” Weber distinguished between an “ethic of responsibility,” which Kurki’s formulation might capture, and an “ethic of ultimate ends,” which Kurki does not consider. 74 Perhaps this is because an ethic of ultimate ends requires more than a relationship; it requires a direction, an arrow, not simply a flat surface or “fold.”

As noted earlier, Grove suggests that “the scale of the investigator … radically alters what appears as a part and what appears as a whole.” If that’s the case, the individual investigator, the individual, is back at the heart of a quantum-based social science model. 75 The Weberian commitment to the individual human being as the source of meaning and morality in a multiscalar world remains indispensable. That does not rule out agency at other levels. Relationalist factors are multiple, real, and often confining. But, to a meaningful extent, they form out of the interpretations and interactions of reasoning individuals, they change because of individual initiatives, and they dissolve because individuals leave and join other relationships. The only “authenticated” actors beyond the individual in a Weberian worldview, therefore, are those groups, institutions, classes, etc., that are chosen or affirmed voluntarily by the consent of individual human beings acting in a setting where they have a meaningful degree of choice. Holistic worldviews diminish that degree of choice and consent, however well-meaning they may be by embracing all possibilities.

The Weberian view judges and chooses. That is neither easy nor pleasant. No one wants to be accused of being judgmental. But we all do it. 76 Indeed, how does one avoid it? The Holocaust was a monstrous act of evil. How do we understand it in a world that blends religion and science? As Barnett (Chapter 5) shows, the Holocaust poses a wrenching question of existence, not just a vague smearing of relationships and “response-ability” to change or becoming. If such a question can be answered only in a specific situation (when the quantum wave function collapses), then we have abandoned both our humanity and our influence on world affairs.

Am I forcing everyone into a Weberian worldview? 77 Possibly, but I am not saying that the Weberian view is the only view. I am saying that I can find a location in the Weberian universe to host an alternative point of view (and do so when I compare the worldviews in this volume; see earlier in this chapter); I cannot find such a location in a relationalist universe. At the beginning, this project postulated a revolution in natural and social science thought rejecting Enlightenment and Newtonian worldviews. In later stages, Katzenstein emphasized complementarities among Newtonian and Post-Newtonian worldviews. 78 By complementarity, however, Katzenstein forces the Newtonian view into the relationalist universe where “the determinist or probability-inflected Newtonian world can be thought of as a special case that reveals itself when the quantum world of infinite possibilities and radical uncertainty collapses.” 79 Bottom line? There is no location in the relationist world for dissent. Alternatives either fit into the quantum world or are patently false.

Moreover, understanding another worldview does not mean accepting it or making it equivalent. Would the world be better off today if the Reformation and Enlightenment had not occurred, or if the Haitian lwa not the Weberian worldview had dominated world politics after 1600? 80 Best, you say, if neither dominated? OK, but spell out the global consequences of the Haitian worldview or the specific parameters of equal coexistence which makes all worldviews (fascism, communism) acceptable and worth learning from. Unless we specify “what” we learn from “which” worldview, we are simply treating worldviews like souvenirs, collecting and trivializing them. Worse, we are opening the floodgates to any worldview with no standard for judging good and bad. Maybe the relationalist turn pops open an irresistible, new window of a more harmonious world that we have missed because of the atomistic and competitive frame of western modernism. But maybe it doesn’t. And if it doesn’t, not only material progress but individual freedom is at stake.

Which leads to a final question: where do relationalist cosmologies place the divine? What lies behind the Big Bang? Relationalists are eager to unify the human and natural worlds and see a growing commonality between science and religion. The obstacle to unifying the human and natural worlds, however, is an understanding of consciousness which humans have and nonhumans do not. And the obstacle to uniting the scientific and religious (supranatural) worlds is an understanding of the soul, the human capacity to imagine the divine. 81 Separating these three worlds – nature, humanity, and the divine – has led to abuse: humanity masquerading as gods (the Church before the Enlightenment) or humanity “lifted up” to control nature (the critics’ view of the Enlightenment). But uniting them may lead to even worse abuse. What stands in the way of a science that poses as a religion or a nature that restrains prosperity? 82 By blurring the distinction between religion and science, nature and humanity, relationalism weakens Enlightenment institutions that separate state and church, markets and feudalism. It enables potentially powerful new gods of unchallenged expertise and science to take the stage (because, remember, there is no objective universe). We could wind up again in a pre-Enlightenment world wherein scientists and their authoritarian enablers usurp the power of privilege to suppress the rights of reasoning individuals. Resistance would be anti-science and futile, as it was anti-God and heresy in pre-Enlightenment times. As Timothy Byrnes writes, “if a relational cosmology is grounded in faith or in the pursuit of what is ‘really real,’ then the unknown itself is the basis of Truth and the human propensity to resistance is ultimately futile.” 83 And if the unknown is truth and cannot be resisted, the Dark Ages may be upon us once again.

6.5 Conclusion

I come back to the need, therefore, to maintain a Weberian worldview, whatever the debate in physics, if only to retain a “critical” perspective on the totalizing tendencies of the relationalist school of thought. As Mike Barnett concludes, “Without worldviews we would not know how to go on, and would be lost in the wilds until a charismatic leader arrived to provide guidance.” 84 In the barren “wilds” of relationalism (the jungle), that charismatic leader would probably be a totalizing ideology, one admitting of no alternatives – radical Islam under the Caliphate, Medieval Christianity under the Inquisition, totalitarian atheism under fascism and communism, or scientific elitism under a relationalist banner that substitutes expertise for politics and human choice. The Weberian worldview is still a necessary defense against that sort of evil.