**AFF Answers**

**2AC – Extinction First**

**Extinction outweighs.**

Seth D. **Baum &** Anthony M. **Barrett 18**. Global Catastrophic Risk Institute. 2018. “Global Catastrophes: The Most Extreme Risks.” Risk in Extreme Environments: Preparing, Avoiding, Mitigating, and Managing, edited by Vicki Bier, Routledge, pp. 174–184.

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

**2AC – Extinction Reps Good**

**Preventing existential risk and framing it as a “we” claim is good.**

**Coles and Susen 18**—Research Professor at the Institute for Social Justice at Australian Catholic University AND Reader in Sociology at the School of Arts and Social Sciences of City, University of London (Romand and Simon, “The Pragmatic Vision of Visionary Pragmatism: The Challenge of Radical Democracy in a Neoliberal World Order,” Contemporary Political Theory May 2018, Volume 17, Issue 2, pp 250–262)

Visionary pragmatism is driven by a political ethos that accents radical receptivity and a sense that a greater degree of wildness in our efforts is indispensable for transformative democratic movements. While some of my earlier works accented the ethical character of receptive generosity in political life, Visionary Pragmatism argues that receptivity is **indispensable** for **generating democratic power** – precisely because receptivity involves **vulnerability**, **relationship formation**, **capacities to modulate**, and **learning in unexpected ways** amidst **difficult differences**. Drawing on my engagements with the movement for democratic action research in Northern Arizona, I argue that receptive practices **engender remarkable capacities** for **fostering grassroots critique** and **alternatives**, **powerful political assemblages across differences**, and **transformative dynamics** in the face of what otherwise appear to be **intractable problems**. Our **best** and **most powerful possibilities** for co-creating urgent democratic change **almost always advance** along pathways **engendered partly through relationships of careful attentiveness** to what we **initially took to be oblique**, **unintelligible** – or, perhaps, even **odious**.

For these reasons, my political, theoretical, and pedagogical engagements move across many different configurations and a wider range of situations, ideologies, modes, and commitments than most. Eschewing a single subject position, in Visionary Pragmatism, I experiment with first-person plurals in which the ‘we’ **morphs** in relation to the **different loci of initiative** that animate my reflections. Sometimes ‘we’ refers to **proponents of radical** and **ecological democracy very broadly**, sometimes to **scholars in higher education**, sometimes to **political theorists**, sometimes to the action research movement that formed among people at Northern Arizona University and its community partners, sometimes to a specific action research team, sometimes to **all people facing the possibility of planetary ecological collapse**. Among the many things I find compelling about the writing of **James Baldwin** is how he shifts his pronouns **without notice** – for example, **sometimes** using ‘**we**’ to represent **black people**, sometimes as an **uncanny member of the white-majority United States**. This rhetorical shiftiness **encroaches upon** and **pulls his readers** – **especially white readers** – **beyond** the ‘**innocence that constitutes the crime**’ of their **assumed individual** and **collective white subjectivities** in ways that work in **visceral**, **relational**, and **conceptual registers** (Baldwin, 1992, p. 6). Such uncertainty has **significant capacity to erode habits** and **defences**, as one finds oneself **unexpectedly drawn into perspectives**, **locations**, **energies**, and **tendencies** that **unsettle** and **reorient one’s own subjectivity**. Much of my work has theorized ‘moving democracy’, and my rhetorical shifting of the first-person plural is a textual practice that aims to enhance this in ways that facilitate reflection.

Throughout Visionary Pragmatism, I argue that there are **powerful reasons for active hope**. At the same time, we **do not live far from tipping points** beyond which **planetary ecological collapse**, **globalizing neoliberal fascism**, and **violent chaos** may **overwhelm our efforts**. I **do not think so much** in terms of **pessimism** or **optimism** as I do about **seizing** and **co-creating opportunities** for **catalysing dynamic changes** in theory and practice that **foster a powerful movement** of **receptive democracy**, for **complex democratic commonwealth** and **ecological flourishing**. In one sense, as Walter Benjamin’s discussion of Paul Klee’s ‘Angelus Novus’ makes poignantly clear, it is **always ‘too late’ for so much** and **so many**, as catastrophic history **keeps piling wreckage at our feet**. **At the same time**, there are what Benjamin (1968) calls ‘weak messianic powers’ that emerge as the **retroactive force** of salvaged aspects of past struggles **ignite sparks with emerging struggles** to explode the continuum of progress. In this sense, up to our day, it is **never altogether too late**. With the language of ‘game-transformative practice’, I argue that a **visionary-pragmatic movement** of radical democracy must do something analogous in response to the **fierce urgency of now**, to **avoid a sixth extinction** in which this possibility **could well become a casualty**.

**Priming of existential risk focuses on *compassion* which results in progressivism**

**Vail et al, 9** (Kenneth E. Vail III, University of Missouri Department of Psychological Sciences researcher, Jamie Arndt, University of Missouri psychology professor, Matt Motyl, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Masters in Experimental Psychology, and Tom Pyszczynski, University of COlorado at Colorado Springs professor and co-developer of terror management theory; "Compassionate Values and Presidential Politics: Mortality Salience, Compassionate Values, and Support for Barack Obama and John McCain in the 2008 Presidential Election," Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 263-266, IC)

The present findings extend those of Rothschild et al. (2009). **Rothschild** et al. **showed that priming religious fundamentalists with compassionate values** that were clearly tied to their religious foundations in either Christianity or Islam **led to lower level of support for the use of violence against Iran among Americans and to less hostile attitudes toward the United States** (including less support of martyrdom attacks) **among Iranians; in the absence of priming these compassionate values, death reminders led to increased support for violence among both groups**. The present study goes beyond a religious context to show that **in the absence of being faced with compassionate values, death reminders increased support for** John **McCain; but when oriented toward compassionate values, MS increased support for Barack Obama**. **This** study also **provides convergent support for a growing number of findings that existential threat is capable of motivating defense of progressive, prosocial values like tolerance, egalitarianism, and empathy** (Gailliot et al., 2008; Greenberg et al., 1992; Rothschild et al., 2009; Schimel et al., 2006). **Because people possess a variety of resources for buffering existential fear, terror management trajectories can be quite malleable**. Thus, **increasing the salience of** a particular aspect of one’s cultural worldview, such as **the prosocial value of compassion, can motivate increased adherence to this value after reminders of death**. As such, examining the effects of MS in light of individual differences in progressive value orientation might be a useful direction for the future research on the psychology of politics and/or intergroup relations. For example, emerging research suggests that **compassion might be found in the perception of interdependence among diverse groups of people, helping to reduce or eliminate reactionary, hostile forms of worldview defense**. Motyl et al. (2009) report that **priming a perception of a common humanity attenuated an increase in anti-Arab prejudice and hostile immigration policy among Americans reminded of death. This compassionate perception** of a common humanity **can** also **be observed**, rather ominously, **in universal dangers** (i.e., global warming) **that threaten humanity as a whole**. In research conducted with both Americans and Palestinians living in Israel, Pyszczynski et al. (2009) demonstrated that the **perception of** such **global threat bolsters support for peaceful coexistence in the face of increased death awareness**. Future research on these values and concerns might provide useful directions for those seeking peace and political harmony among groups embroiled in long-standing conflicts. The present analysis of compassion also offers potential insights into understanding reactions to other political figures. Weise et al. (2008) found that MS motivated securely attached adults to support John Kerry instead of Bush. Given that secure attachment is linked to compassion and empathy (e.g., Mikulincer et al., 2005), the existentially motivated activation of secure adult attachment systems may have increased support for Kerry to the extent that he was perceived as the more compassionate candidate. However, comparing the current study with Weise et al. suggests a crucial distinction between the ability of Obama and Kerry to capitalize on the MS-induced need to achieve psychological equanimity by rigorously defending culturally cherished values. Whereas both men might very well have been harbingers of compassion, for Kerry, this may have been obscured by his relatively dry speaking style and meeker presence; Obama, on the other hand, wore compassion on his sleeve (Steinhauser, 2008). Thus, it may have been that Obama’s frequent, eloquent outbursts of compassion boosted his support by priming thecultural defense of this value amid frequent discussion of issues involving reminders of mortality (e.g., healthcare, Iraqi occupation, Russian invasion of Georgia, etc.). It is important to note, however, that the present analysis does not imply that compassionate associations are limited only to Democratic candidates. Indeed, as the quote which opens this paper illustrates, then-President George W. Bush co-opted the term “compassionate conservative” during his second campaign, a move that may have helped garner support, assuming both that he was perceived as the more compassionate candidate and that such values were made salient. The present **research** also **contributes to understanding the nature and specificity of responses to thoughts of death** (cf, Pyszczynski, Greenberg, Solomon, & Maxfield, 2006). Like a number of other studies, here we tested the impact of MS against that of personal uncertainty. **Proponents of the uncertainty management model claim that MS effects are actually a result of increased personal uncertainty, which motivates efforts to regain a sense of certainty by defending the validity of one’s cultural worldview and confidently adhering to its norms and values (**e.g., Van Den Bos, Poortvliet, Marjolein, Miedema, & Van den Ham, 2005). **The** present **study demonstrates that uncertainty concerns did not impact political preferences, or produce reactions to cultural values** (e.g., compassion) **similar to those triggered by MS**. The recently proposed **uncertainty-threat model** (e.g., Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003) **claims that uncertainty and mortality threat both produce a shift toward political conservatism. Critics** of this model (e.g., Anson et al., in press; Greenberg & Jonas, 2003), on the other hand, **have argued that the motivated social-cognitive foundations** (i.e., dogmatism; intolerance of ambiguity; personal need for closure, structure, or order; etc.) **of political ideology are not limited to a conservative shift**, but can readily trigger support for progressive change. **The present study provides clear and direct evidence for the latter contention: MS-induced threat is** indeed **capable of motivating support for either conservative or progressive politicians, depending on the values that are salient at the time**. This idea, however, does raise an interesting possibility with regard to interpreting the present effects. The compassionate value statements were designed for this study to directly emphasize the value of compassion. While the comparison statements were designed to lack such references, it is possible that these statements might have been construed as priming wisdom. Previous research (e.g., Landau et al., 2004; Cohen et al., 2004, 2005) demonstrated that MS motivated increased support for authoritarian candidates, and for Bush specifically, without moderating factors such as a wisdom induction. This is consistent with the notion that Republican candidates tend to enjoy increased support from those reminded of mortality because these candidates tend to emphasize American superiority. However, McCain was considerably older than Obama and held his Senate seat for much longer; thus, he may have been seen as “wise” relative to Obama’s “na¨ıvete.” If this were the case, and if the neutral value condition’s statements did ´ prime wisdom, this may have motivated increased support for McCain after death reminders. While the participants in this study were by no means representative of the diverse American electorate, they provided crucial insight into the psychological impact of each candidate’s campaign and even of the candidates themselves. **Embedded within a social climate boiling over with death reminders** (e.g., war, terrorism, fear-mongering rhetoric, etc.), **people may latch onto certain political leaders in an effort to affirm their faith in the permanence and validity of their particular culture**. However, it would seem that **the individual can achieve this** leader-based worldview defense **in several different ways. Depending on the salience of particular cultural values, a person might be motivated to follow a conservative leader who rigorously asserts the fundamental superiority of one’s culture** and aggressively “defends” it from the clutches of evil, **or they might be motivated to support progressive prototypes of their more compassionate social values**. As Ernest Becker (1973, p. 139) concluded, “[The human] is a trembling animal who pulls the world down around his shoulders as he clutches for protection and support and tries to affirm in a cowardly way his feeble powers. The qualities of the leader, then, and the problems of people fit together in a natural symbiosis.

**2AC – Scenario Planning Good**

**Scenario planning is good – our scholarship is not white silencing---IR can change from its racist origins---if predictions are false, there can be more studies that prove it wrong---their paradigm is worse because there is no falsification mechanism.**

Monika **Sus &** Marcel **Hadeed 20**. \*Postdoctoral Fellow at the Hertie School of Governance and works in the Dahrendorf Forum, which is a joint initiative by the Hertie School, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Stiftung Mercator. \*\*Dahrendorf Research Associate at the Hertie School of Governance. February 2020. “Theory-infused and policy-relevant: On the usefulness of scenario analysis for international relations”. Contemporary Security Policy.

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**.

**2AC – 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.

**2AC – Debating Nuclear Risk Good**

**Debating nuclear risk is good.**

**Bernstein ’18** [Aron; September 21st; Emeritus Professor of Physics at MIT; The Bulletin, “Reducing the risk of nuclear war begins in the classroom,” https://thebulletin.org/2018/09/reducing-the-risk-of-nuclear-war-begins-in-the-classroom/]

The need for education on nuclear weapons. When it comes to nuclear weapons, the students of today have **less lived experience** to draw on than older generations. Today’s typical **college student** was born after the end of the Cold War and has no memory of a time when most Americans were deeply afraid of nuclear war (excluding, to an extent, the fiery exchange of threats between President Trump and Kim Jong-un last year). Perhaps as a result, these students also have very limited knowledge about nuclear weapons. The majority do not have a strong understanding of what **nuclear weapons** are, their destructive power, or their role in the international order, and even fewer have a sense of how many nuclear weapons exist. They are not aware of the $1.2 trillion nuclear **modernization program**, in which the majority of costs come from modernizing and improving delivery systems rather than performing the technically necessary maintenance of the nuclear warheads. History education on the Cold War often addresses the US-Soviet arms race of that time, but nuclear weapons issues in other regions—such as the tense situation between India and Pakistan—are rarely ever mentioned. The distant, but persistent, possibility of an **unintentional nuclear launch** due to unauthorized access, technical failure, or a cyberattack on warning systems, is also overlooked, as is general information about which states possess nuclear weapons today.

In short, students in the United States (and likely elsewhere) typically graduate from high school having received almost no information on nuclear weapons. It is generally **assumed** that today’s American public simply **doesn’t care** about the **complicated** and somewhat **abstract** issues of **nuclear weapons** and **deterrence** because they **rarely affect people’s lives directly**. However, an alternative explanation exists: The American public doesn’t know enough about nuclear weapons to have much political opinion on them, **but** if they had **more knowledge**, that could **change**. If so, educating students **on nuclear weapons** on a large scale could have the **long-term effect** of creating an American public that is **politically engaged** on the nuclear issue and **motivated to hold its elected leaders accountable** for implementing nuclear policy that **reduces the risk of nuclear war**.

For some students, education on nuclear issues may have an impact beyond just putting nuclear weapons on their radar (pun intended). Today’s **students** are the **next politicians, scientists, and journalists**, and some of them will inevitably be tasked with addressing the nuclear issue in their careers. For these students, early exposure to the issues of nuclear weapons in an educational context could be **useful preparation** for grappling with those issues professionally. Indeed, for some students, learning about **nuclear weapons** could have a **decisive impact** on their career trajectory and **inspire them** to dedicate themselves to solving **these problems**.

**2AC – IR Racist**

**IR isn't anti-black -- it's a minimalist theory to explain the occurrence of interstate war -- purity in scholastic exercises have zero concrete solvency.**

**Wæver &** **Buzan ’20** [Ole and Barry; May 15th; Professor of International Relations at the University of Copenhagen; Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics; KU, “Racism and Responsibility -- The Critical Limits of Deep-Fake Methodology in Security Studies: A reply to Howell and Richter-Montpetit,” Racism and Responsibility -- The Critical Limits of Deep-Fake Methodology in Security Studies: A reply to Howell and Richter-Montpetit; GR]

Racism is a powerful, malignant force in world politics, and our discipline, IR, has deeply problematic entanglements with it. It is a serious matter both to come intellectually to grips with this and to find the most effective strategies to act on it. We worry that more serious **problems** and **possibilities** are **marginalised** by an ultimately very **inward-looking** and **scholastic exercise** where a particular definition of racism and a specific theoretical perspective makes it possible to deem the vast majority of scholarship in IR ‘racist’, ‘methodologically white’ and ‘antiblack’- every work that does not explicitly follow one exact version of anti-racist scholarship. Especially, the role played in H&RM’s argumentation by our **sins of omission** does ultimately seem to rest on the premise that **only** their **distinct form** of scholarship can be redeemed, because even post-colonial scholarship and critiques of euro-centrism are not enough; you are a racist if you do not follow exactly this particular route. It is not important whether your scholarship actually supports or hinders anti-racist analysis or political engagement; it is all about **who you cite** and what **declarations you make**. **Here**, a theory is not judged by **what can be done with it**, but by the question whether **self-appointed anti-racists** can find **supposedly problematic sentences** somewhere in its key texts. In this section, we will first point out that the H&RM article is a personal attack on us for racism, despite their reassurances about the opposite. Then, we discuss what an analysis of structural racism (systems of power) could amount to, given that they claim to do one but utterly fail to do so, resorting instead to a pretend examination of the foundations of ST. Next, we discuss what could be methodological guidelines for actually proving whether or not a theory like ST is racist.

H&RM’s usage of the term racism for all scholarship that does not foreground race as the primary theme, means that **99% of IR will be ‘racist’**. There will be **no room** for any other scholarship (unless you will live with the moniker of being racist). Not only does this seem **very unproductive** in terms of disciplinary conversations, not to talk of **diversity** and **pluralism**, it also means that it becomes **very hard** to use the category of ‘racism’ for **critical purposes** for those cases where it **actually is at stake** in a sense closer to what the rest of the discipline, and indeed the public discourse, means by it. It has been **watered down** by the fact that everyone but those in critical whiteness studies have been deemed racist, one by one, where we just happened to get the special honour of being among the first. H&RM might protest that this is not their plan, but we **fail to see how this can be avoided** when the logic they apply is that the term racist can be based primarily on **sins of omission** in the sense of a theory being focused around other categories.

As documented above, they claim numerous times that ST ‘occludes’ or ‘refuses’ various dynamics relating to race that they find important, but they never offer any basis for concluding that the theory makes it harder to see these things, only that it does not as such zoom in on them. This does not have to do with a choice particularly regarding race but the structure and nature of the theory as a general analytical apparatus that can be applied to all instances where actors try to securitize or desecuritize something, and the user is free then to include race more or less in this analysis, just as the theory is not deciding how important nationalism is or gender51, but it enables the analysis of the way different categories and distinctions become politically mobilised in security struggles.

H&RM will probably argue that if you do not mention race in these contexts, you ‘**hide’ it**. **Three answers**: 1) **no**, there is a difference between **not mentioning** and **hiding**, it takes a step more of the critic to show that the theory **prevents** something from being articulated or that it uses abstractions that stand in the way of articulating race; that certainly is the case for some theories, so it is a legitimate avenue of critique, but they haven’t shown this, 2) the theory is **intentionally** (as we have explained numerous times) **minimalist** in having a clear conceptual core and then not putting all kinds of factors like the role of media or populism into the theory -- **not** because we haven’t noticed these factors but because they **belong in applications**, and the theory exactly allows you to study these phenomena, 3) we are very explicit that one of the **advantages of a minimalist theory** is the ability to **combine it** with other theories especially general theories about the nature and structures of society; one should not build out ST to become a general theory of society or international relations, better in any specific usage of the theory combine it with the theories one finds productive for the particular research project. (Wæver 2011, 2015) The latter point has come up in replies to the ‘sociological’ version of ST (Balzacq), which has more of a tendency to add all relevant factors to the theory, while the classical Copenhagen version is tight and invites combination with theories that complement it, which could exactly be theories of race and racism. Our ultimate concern here is: how do we actually get to study racism in world politics in a practically and politically helpful way?

When developing our own framework, ST, we took **care** to make sure it could do critical work in concrete analyses, in our view on racism as well, and H&RM fail to show that this is not the case. In addition, we have then on a more mundane, human level engaged ourselves in various ways to foster non-Western scholarship and theories in IR (Tickner & Wæver 2009; Acharya & Buzan 2010, 2019). One has for instance co-founded a book-series with the aim to identify “alternatives for thinking about the ‘international’ that are more in tune with local concerns and traditions outside the West” and “provincializing the West” (quoting from the Routledge homepage of the book series); the other has amongst many other things re-written this history of the IR discipline to show both that it has ignored non-Western contributions and that the Western part of it is indebted to ‘scientific racism’ (Buzan & Lawson 2015; Acharya and Buzan 2019). Closer to ST, the project in Buzan & Wæver 2003 was to a large extent to challenge the euro-centrism enshrined in dominant conceptions of polarity and of the relationship between global and regional, to enable theories to be more attentive to actual security dynamics in ‘most of the world’.

Surely, all of these efforts can be critically assessed as to what has been helpful and what hasn’t. But we find it strange that H&RM choose to ignore completely the possibility of assessing the ability of ST to form the basis for helpful analyses of racism. They neither look at those analyses that have actually been done, nor do they show systematically why it would be impossible to do so. On the contrary, they limit themselves to highly abstract and indirect attributions of racism to the theory as such through various unconvincing routes. From this they deduce (without any discussion) that ST can’t inform studies of racism (and when it has actually done it, they presumably are able to magically make those publications go away) (see section 6 below).

H&RM offer **no explanation** as to how their type of analysis helps in combating racism. It is **unclear** if it is a kind of **ground clearing operation** to be followed up by new and better theories after getting us out of the way. Or whether they believe that we are so much a part of the oppressive structures that attacking us is in itself liberating. Or -- as we will consider below in more detail -- the whole exercise is more about making universities more inclusive and hospitable to students and scholars of colour. Closely linked to the latter option, their rationale could be that the attack is meant more as a kind of ‘happening’ drawing attention to the question of race. Especially in the latter case, it would be intentional that the article plays ambiguously with making a very personal attack while pretending not to.

**IR scholarship regarding the liberal order is not irredeemably racist**

Gideon **Rose 16**, editor of Foreign Affairs, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, March/April 2016, “Review of, ‘White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations,’” https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2016-02-16/white-world-order-black-power-politics-birth-american

In this interesting and important yet flawed book, Vitalis seeks to bridge the “vast gulf divid[ing] international relations from Africana studies,” bringing the “racism [of the discipline of **i**nternational **r**elations] to light.” Conventional narratives of the field’s history, he argues, trace it to the rise of realism and national security concerns in the years around World War II, adding a few historical thinkers, such as Thucydides, to claim a timeless intellectual pedigree. But this ignores both the **extensive mainstream scholarship** of the first decades of the twentieth century that dealt with colonialism and racial issues and the pioneering work of African American writers in what he calls “the Howard School.” Consigning both to the memory hole, he says, paints a distorted picture of the discipline’s origins and nature, obscuring the role that international relations scholarship has played in the construction and perpetuation of white Western dominance. These are major claims, and some of them hold up better than others. Vitalis is correct to shine a spotlight on the forgotten academic work of the first third of the twentieth century and offers a timely reminder of just how prevalent racialized thinking was and how central a role imperialism—**as opposed to straightforward great-power relations**—played in global affairs. Back then, for example, “policy relevance” in political science often meant figuring out how to train good colonial administrators. Vitalis also provides a service by telling the story of scholars such as Alain Locke, Ralph Bunche, and Rayford Logan, enriching readers’ understanding of midcentury intellectual debates over U.S. foreign policy and tracing how racism operated inside various professional institutions. Vitalis is **less convincing**, however, in casting his analysis as an indictment of the postwar discipline of international relations, let alone **its contemporary incarnation**. To get there, one has to share his politics. Vitalis sees a project of U.S. imperial domination playing out over the course of the past century, with the “subjection” continuing today, “through new-old policies of intervention, tutelage, and targeted killings in new-old zones of anarchy and civilization deficit.” Given such a reading of U.S. foreign policy, it is not surprising that he believes “the history of ideas, institutions, and practices [in the field] has a constitutive role in their present forms and functions”—or that he sees today’s mainstream international relations scholars as handmaidens of an evil national security state and as the direct descendants of their racist predecessors of a century ago. Scorning the notion that the postwar liberal international order represents anything particularly new or admirable, Vitalis scores a few points in noting how long it took for some earlier social and racial hierarchies, both international and domestic, to erode. But he refuses to accept the fact that they have indeed **eroded**. One is left wanting more analysis of how and why the attitudes and **patterns of domination** Vitalis describes gave way over time, and how the midcentury theorists and practitioners of the liberal international order understood and handled the paradoxes of its **halting and inconsistent implementation.**

**There is no monolithic IR – the field is reflexive and effective – its track record of prediction proves. AND, sweeping criticisms of a fragmented field of research don’t answer the specificity of our studies.**

Dan **Reiter 15**. Professor of Political Science at Emory University. “Scholars Help Policymakers Know Their Tools.” War on the Rocks. 8-27-2015. <https://warontherocks.com/2015/08/scholars-help-policymakers-know-their-tools/>

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**.

**2AC – Eurocentric**

**IR’s not intrinsically Eurocentric – they need to indict our specific studies, or their vague theoretical cards just don’t apply**

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.

**2AC –Grove**

**Grove is wrong about everything.**

Christopher **Mott 20,** PhD in Political Science from St. Andrews, Master’s degree from London Metropolitan in IR, former Scholar in Residence @ Helmerich Center for American Research at the Gilcrease Museum, Trickster’s Guide to Geopolitics, “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/> \*note: the identity of the author isn’t immediately obvious but he links his book title in the comments, and you can look that up and it reveals his identity

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 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’s move is totalizing, preemptive, and cedes the present to fascists**

Benjamin **Tallis 20**, Researcher at Institute of International Relations Prague, “Un-cancelling the future,” New Perspectives 1–18, 2020, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2336825X20937580

Timeless pessimism, hopeless critique Hope is a Form of Extortion. (Jairus Grove, Savage Ecology, 2019: 25) Both Rutger Bregman (2014) and Franco Berardi (2011) have written extensively on this pessimism. In different ways and with different aims, they argue that despite the **huge** and **real** (although highly uneven and inequitable) progress that we (in this case, many of us who live in the West) have made in helping more people live longer, healthier, happier lives, we no longer believe we can **improve further**. We have become **collectively disappointed** by the **failures** of **political** and **technological** vision; shocked by the **downsides** of **modernity**, stunned by the **scale** and **complexity** of our challenges – and by the **pace** of **change**. As Jonathan Meades (2014) observed, change itself has changed: for many in the West, it used to mean change for the better2 but for too many people that is no longer the case. This fear of change itself has exacerbated the problem, leading to a stasis of ideas, a lack of daring, deficit of vision and vacuum of purpose. Even faced with the existential crisis of climate change, our responses have been **piecemeal** and **incremental**. Too often even the bolder proposals have been mealy mouthed or, worse, have framed human life itself as the problem (e.g. Sparrow, 2019; Wilkinson, 2020). A pious puritan streak in the environmental movement seems to relish in the idea of a future of less, a restricted and spartan life, purged of joy. It has not been widely embraced. Both Bregman and Berardi note that majorities or significant minorities of people in richer countries have long believed their children will be worse off than they are (see, e.g. Pew, 2019) – but they don’t wish to actively spur this process along. There has been no credible **positive vision** of **radical change** to **countervail** this **negativity** and so we drift, **seemingly helpless** as well as **hopeless** in the **interregnum of ideas**. As Bregman puts it: the real crisis of our times, of my generation, is not that we don’t have it good, or even that we might be worse off later on. No, the real crisis is that we can’t **come up with anything better**. (Bregman, 2014: 22) He goes on to note that we have become so **wary** of positive visions of progress that: today we **stamp out dreams of a better world before they can take root**. **Dreams** have a way of turning into **nightmares**, goes the cliche´. **Utopias** are a breeding ground for **discord**, **violence**, even **genocide**. Utopias ultimately become dystopias; in fact, a utopia is a dystopia. (Bregman, 2014: 23) 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 life5** ’; 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 ...

**2AC – Nation State**

**Analysis through nation-states and security is good.**

Robin **Luckham 17**, an Emeritus fellow at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, where he has been based since 1974. Following the publication of his book The Nigerian Military in 1971, he has researched and published extensively on civil-military relations, militarism, political violence, democratisation, security and development, security sector governance, security ‘from below’ and peacebuilding. Whose violence, whose security? Can violence reduction and security work for poor, excluded and vulnerable people? 2017.https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/21647259.2016.1277009

6. The two faces of security – and of peace Security, especially state security, tends to be enacted in contexts of the violently contested **political authority**. Often it is enacted through **violent power**, rebranded as legitimate force. Small wonder that some in the development community, including those who drafted SDG 16, hesitate to use the word at all. But **although** security is a **deeply disputed** idea, it is also a **highly necessary** one. Security functions simultaneously as an analytical construct, as a **frame for policy** and as a **moral narrative**. It is distinct from the equally ambiguous if less contentious concept of peace. Yet, at the same time, it is often seen as **essential** to the preservation of **peace**. Most of the things that international decision-makers, political and security elites and development practitioners do in security’s name are supposed to protect the safety and welfare of people in a world of multiple challenges and threats. However, there is a tendency to slide from **global**, to **national**, to **citizen** and to human security and back again, without enough serious reflection on how they **interconnect** and on where tensions and contradictions lie hidden. Development agencies have too often plunged into security policies and programmes, without a clear understanding of where they might lead, who would benefit and how they might go wrong. The ambiguities stem in part from a deep-seated tension between two distinct visions of security (summarised in Table 3), which interconnect, yet are in deep tension with eachother. On the **one hand**, security can be seen as a process of political and social ordering, aiming to reduce violence and keep the peace. As such it is territorially organised and kept in place globally as well as nationally through the authoritative discourses and practices of power, including socially sanctioned violence. It connects to conceptions of what Galtung termed ‘negative peace’: the ending of overt violence, without necessarily **transforming the conditions** giving rise to this violence or attending to the **quality** of the **subsequent peace**. In this view security is a public good delivered in principle by states, much like official or donor-driven development.29 Yet in a world where states and indeed the international order face sustained challenges, security is often kept in place also through alternative nonstate or ‘hybrid’ networks of violence and protection.30 Moreover, security is far from being an unalloyed public good. In principle, it is equally shared and socially inclusive, even if in practice it is anything but, especially at the insurgent margins where insecurity is most acute. For in practice it protects **socially embedded power**, established property relations and **social privilege** – and reinforces global, national and local **inequalities**. On the **other hand**, security can be seen (in the vernacular) as an **entitlement of citizens** and more widely human beings to **social peace** and **protection from violence**, abuses of **rights** and **social injustice**, along with other **existential risks** such as **famine** or **disease**. It connects to the idea of ‘**positive peace’**, including **transformations** in the social conditions giving rise to violence and deepening the **relationships between states and** their **citizens**. The vernacular understandings, day-to-day experience, resilience and agency of the people and groups who are ‘secured’ and ‘developed’ are in this view the touchstone by which to evaluate security and violence reduction. Most people **fall back** upon their **social identities** – as women and men, members of families, clans, castes, ethnic groups, sects, religions and nationalities – to navigate their social worlds, to **respond to insecurity** and violence and (sometimes) to organise for violence. At the same time, these **identities** are **written into** the **structures of power and inequality**, being deployed to **establish hierarchies of citizenship** and **patterns of exclusion**. Ensuring that security is inclusive and not simply the security of particular groups or the property of the well-armed, powerful and wealthy, is fraught with difficulty and must be negotiated at multiple levels. ‘Security in the vernacular’ is the term used here rather than the interlinked but distinct concepts of ‘human security’ and of ‘citizen security’ popularised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank,31 which fit in the conceptual toolboxes of development practitioners, humanitarian agencies and intervention forces. Both human and citizen security have come under criticism for ‘securitising’ development by framing poverty, exclusion and vulnerability through security lenses, and thus paving the way for military interventions in the affairs of fragile states.32 ‘**Security in the vernacular’** paves the way for more precise and detailed empirical scrutiny of how security and plays out in particular local and national contexts. It highlights the experience and social agency of those who are ‘secured’. And it underscores the transformative potential of security as an **entitlement**, which can be **actively claimed** by those who **challenge** the **deeply rooted legacies** of **insecurity**, **exclusion** and **injustice**. Both these faces of security have their underside, most obviously the first. ‘Seeing like a state’ even with the best of intentions can lead to the interests of citizens being sacrificed to an unbending vision of national security or of top-down development (as even in Nyerere’s Tanzania).33 It is also open to abuse – for instance, to prop up authoritarian regimes; to advance the interests of predatory elites; to impose exclusionary economic and social policies; to justify state secrecy and surveillance of citizens; or to justify the hegemonies and military adventurism of major world powers. And it tends to be closely if complexly related to ‘seeing like a corporation’, most obviously in enclave economies, where privatised security arrangements in protected enclaves may indeed destabilise or weaken the state.34 The **deformations** of **security in the vernacular** tend to be more hidden, but no less damaging – for instance, the submission of minorities and refugees to campaigns of exclusion and violence by populist majorities; forms of **popular justice** that **violate the rights**, dignity and safety of supposed perpetrators; or grass roots endorsement of ‘traditional’ or customary institutions, which perpetuate gender and other inequities. Moreover, local-level insecurities can persist or even worsen, when a state, like India or Brazil, is considered to be stable, or a region or locality is considered to be secure. Neither face of security can be considered without the other. The relationship between them is utterly crucial. The capacity of states to protect their citizens is at the basis of the social contract.35 That is, the rights and security of citizens and people are the bedrock of state and international security – or at least they **should be**. But these entitlements cannot be protected without some kind of **social order**, however achieved. And how and by whom social order is assured are both **affairs of governance** and **vital concerns** for **everyone** who lives under the **leaky umbrella** of **political authority**. **Political stability**, **durable institutions**, the **rule of law**, and **effective and accountable security apparatuses** **are** not just **desirable attributes of states** but are also in many respects conditions of the security of people. However, they **come at a price**, not just in taxes, but also because of the need for **constant vigilance** to ensure that those charged with delivering security do not ignore or still worse violate the entitlements of those they are supposed to protect.

**2AC – Heg Bad**

**Pursuit’s inevitable**

**Mearsheimer 11** John J. Mearsheimer, the “R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago” Jan/Feb 2011 “Imperial By Design” http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/A0059.pdf

The downward spiral the United States has taken was anything but inevitable. Washington has always had a choice in how to approach grand strategy. One popular option among some libertarians is isolationism. This approach is based on the assumption that there is no region outside the Western Hemisphere that is strategically important enough to justify expending American blood and treasure. Isolationists believe that the United States is remarkably secure because it is separated from all of the world’s great powers by two giant moats—the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans— and on top of that it has had nuclear weapons—the ultimate deterrent—since 1945. But in truth, **there is really no chance that Washington will adopt this policy**, though the United States had strong isolationist tendencies until World War II. For since then, an internationalist activism, fostered by the likes of the Rockefeller Foundation, has thoroughly delegitimized this approach. American policy makers have come to believe the country should be militarily involved on the world stage. Yet though no mainstream politician would dare advocate isolationism at this point, the rationale for this grand strategy shows just how safe the United States is. This means, among other things, that it will always be a challenge to motivate the U.S. public to want to run the world and especially to fight wars of choice in distant places. Offshore balancing, which was America’s traditional grand strategy for most of its history, is but another option. Predicated on the belief that there are three regions of the world that are strategically important to the United States—Europe, Northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf—it sees the United States’ principle goal as making sure no country dominates any of these areas as it dominates the Western Hemisphere. This is to ensure that dangerous rivals in other regions are forced to concentrate their attention on great powers in their own backyards rather than be free to interfere in America’s. The best way to achieve that end is to rely on local powers to counter aspiring regional hegemons and otherwise keep U.S. military forces over the horizon. But if that proves impossible, American troops come from offshore to help do the job, and then leave once the potential hegemon is checked. Selective engagement also assumes that Europe, Northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf are the only areas of the world where the United States should be willing to deploy its military might. It is a more ambitious strategy than offshore balancing in that it calls for permanently stationing U.S. troops in those regions to help maintain peace. For selective engagers, it is not enough just to thwart aspiring hegemons. It is also necessary to prevent war in those key regions, either because upheaval will damage our economy or because we will eventually get dragged into the fight in any case. An American presence is also said to be valuable for limiting nuclear proliferation. But none of these strategies call for Washington to spread democracy around the globe—especially through war. The root cause of America’s troubles is that it adopted a flawed grand strategy after the Cold War. From the Clinton administration on, the United States rejected all these other avenues, instead pursuing global dominance, or what might alternatively be called global hegemony, which was not just doomed to fail, but likely to backfire in dangerous ways if it relied too heavily on military force to achieve its ambitious agenda. Global dominance has two broad objectives: maintaining American primacy, which means making sure that the United States remains the most powerful state in the international system; and spreading democracy across the globe, in effect, making the world over in America’s image. The underlying belief is that new liberal democracies will be peacefully inclined and pro-American, so the more the better. Of course, this means that Washington must care a lot about every country’s politics. With global dominance, no serious attempt is made to prioritize U.S. interests, because they are virtually limitless. This grand strategy is “imperial” at its core; its proponents believe that the United States has the right as well as the responsibility to interfere in the politics of other countries. One would think that such arrogance might alienate other states, but most American policy makers of the early nineties and beyond were confident that would not happen, instead believing that other countries—save for so-called rogue states like Iran and North Korea—would see the United States as a benign hegemon serving their own interests.

**transition causes more entanglement and lashout**

Michael **Beckley 15**, research fellow in the International Security Program at Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs., “The Myth of Entangling Alliances Michael Beckley Reassessing the Security Risks of U.S. Defense Pacts”, <http://live.belfercenter.org/files/IS3904_pp007-048.pdf>

The finding that U.S. entanglement is rare **has important implications for international relations scholarship** and U.S. foreign policy. For scholars, **it casts doubt on classic theories of imperial overstretch** in which great powers exhaust their resources by accumulating allies that free ride on their protection and embroil them in military quagmires.22 The U.S. experience instead suggests that **great powers can dictate the terms of their security commitments and that allies often help their great power protectors avoid strategic overextension.** For policy, the rarity of U.S. entanglement suggests that the United States’ current grand strategy of deep engagement, which is centered on a network of standing alliances, does not preclude, and may even facilitate, U.S. **military restraint**. Since 1945 the United States has been, by some measures, the most militarily active state in the world. The most egregious cases of U.S. overreach, however, **have stemmed not from entangling** alliances, but from the penchant of American leaders **to define national interests expansively**, to overestimate the magnitude of foreign threats, and to underestimate the costs of military intervention. Scrapping alliances will not correct these bad habits. In fact, disengaging from alliances may unleash the **U**nited **S**tates **to intervene recklessly** abroad while **leaving it without partners** to share the burden **when those interventions go awry**.

**Even if they win an epistemology DA—explaining the absence of war among great powers means making *relative* not *absolutist claims*—winning heg bad requires them to *defend an alternative***

William **Wohlforth 12**, Daniel Webster Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College, “Nuno Monteiro. “’Unrest Assured: Why Unipolarity is not Peaceful.’ Reviewed by William Wohlforth” October 31st, http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-AR17.pdf

Third, setting up the article as a claim that unipolarity is not peaceful runs into a problem: **Unipolarity is peaceful. The Most Peaceful. Ever. Period**. No one expects any imaginable anarchic inter-state system to be perfectly peaceful, with no war at all. In my 1999 paper, I stressed that “unipolarity **does not imply the end of all conflict**... It simply means the absence of two big problems” — hegemonic rivalry and counter-hegemonic balancing—that were present in all earlier systems. As a result “unipolarity favors the absence of war among the great powers.” Like any statement about the war-proneness of any international system, **this is a relative claim**. International relations scholarship does not have theories that make anything other than relative predictions about the war-proneness of systems. Monteiro tries but fails to escape this reality. He writes: “Rather than assess the relative peacefulness of unipolarity vis-à-vis bipolar or multipolar systems, I identify causal pathways to war that are characteristic of a unipolar system and that have not been developed in the extant literature (12). The latter portion of this sentence is exactly right, but the former bit is contradicted just a few pages later when Monteiro presents evidence that “Unipolarity is the most conflict prone of all systems .. .“ (18). While conflict researchers debate the causes, they are nearly united in agreeing that the post-1990 international system is **the least afflicted by war**.5 **There are many ways to measure** war

: the overall number that occur, the number of people killed, the probability that any state will be at war in any year, the size or cost of military forces compared to economic output or population, or, perhaps best, the probability that any individual will die as a result of organized inter-group violence. **By all those measures, we are living in the most peaceful period** since the modern inter-state system took shape in the seventeenth century. Indeed, Stephen Pinker assembles masses of evidence to suggest that **there has never been a less violent time in all of human history**.6 It is hard to think of any way to measure war that does not show the unipolar period as remarkably peaceful— except for the ones Monteiro uses: “the percentage of years that great powers spend at war, and the incidence of war involving great powers,” (18) with the United States defined as the only great power after 1990. That is a very convoluted way to say ‘Iraq and Afghanistan.’ **The fact that the United States ended up in two grinding counter-insurgency operations in no way contradicts the claim that unipolarity is unprecedentedly peaceful.** But that reaction concerns the framing rather than the substance of the article. One can dismiss as America-centric the claim that unipolarity is war-prone and still regard Monteiro’s carefully crafted arguments as promising advances. Further investment in refining and evaluating these arguments is warranted, for even if we agree that unipolarity has been pretty darned peaceful, it surely doesn’t seem that way to anyone in or around the U.S. military. Along with most security scholars, I’ve regarded the post-1991 military interventions as permitted **but not dictated by unipolarity**. That **at least leaves open the possibility of strategic learning**, as happened back in biplolarity. Even though the bipolar structure and U.S. grand strategy remained constant, bloody conflicts in **Korea and Vietnam** prompted Washington to get out of the direct military intervention business in favor of proxy wars and less costly covert operations. Similarly, the new “Iraq syndrome” might **tame interventionist impulses** even as unipolarity endures. But Monteiro’s message is gloomier. “The significant level of conflict the world has experienced over the last two decades,” he warns, “will continue as long as U.S. power remains preponderant.” (38). That’s a scary message even if that “significant level” is far lower than in any other known interstate system. So while I hope Monteiro is wrong, there is no doubt that his article has decisively altered the terms of the debate on this crucial issue.

**2AC – China Threat Con**

**Empirically disproven.**

Tenzin **Dorjee 21**. Senior researcher at Tibet Action Institute and a PhD candidate in the political science department at Columbia University. "Opinion: Anti-China is not anti-Asian". Washington Post. 4-6-2021. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/04/06/anti-china-is-not-anti-asian/

However, some commentators are arguing that the U.S. foreign policy establishment’s criticism of the Chinese government is to blame for the domestic problem of anti-Asian violence. This specious claim, which China’s state-run media quickly exploited, has been most prominently advanced in the mainstream Western media by distinguished novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen and political scientist Janelle Wong, who claim that “bipartisan political rhetoric about Asia” and successive administrations’ “critical takes” on China fuel anti-Asian violence. This narrative, which weaponizes Asian American vulnerability to shield Beijing from international criticism, is as dangerous as it is fraudulent.

First of all, let’s be clear that there is no bipartisan political rhetoric targeting Asia, a continent of nearly 50 nations. Conflating Asia with China is the geopolitical equivalent of assuming all Asians are Chinese, precisely the **kind of racial lumping that the writers themselves sensibly caution against**.

To be sure, criticism of the Chinese government by policymakers in Washington has escalated in recent years. But the overwhelming volume of the rhetoric targeting Beijing has been prompted not by abstract geopolitical competition but by tangible grievances, including China’s **genocide in Xinjiang**, intensifying **repression in Tibet, dismantling of democracy in Hong Kong and sweeping crackdown on Chinese civil society**. Some of Beijing’s harshest critics are Asian Americans. Uyghur refugees, Hong Kong democrats, Chinese dissidents and Tibetan exiles such as myself, whose communities back home reel under Beijing’s boot, are **urging Congress to censure China for its crimes**. Asking lawmakers of conscience to hold their tongue on Beijing’s genocide to supposedly prevent racial violence here is to set up a **false trade-off between Asian American safety and Uyghur lives**, both of which should be treated as **nonnegotiable**.

Moreover, **there is no research-based evidence that American lawmakers’ legitimate criticism of Beijing has a causal effect on violence against Asians**. In fact, Washington’s political rhetoric has been rising steadily over the past half decade, during which Beijing built the **Uyghur internment camps**, demolished **Hong Kong’s democracy** and chipped away at the **liberal international order**. **Anti-Asian attacks remained rare** during this whole period, soaring only when the pandemic hit. If China had contained covid-19 within its borders, or if the United States had succeeded in keeping it out, no amount of congressional criticism against Beijing would have made us afraid to ride the subway at night.

market reforms, the Chinese people **experienced the fastest increase so far in their standard of living.**

**Competition rhetoric doesn’t cause their impacts.**

David **Shim 14**. Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations and International Organization of the University of Groningen, Netherlands. 2014. “Visual Politics and North Korea: Seeing is Believing.” Routledge, pg. 25-26.

However, particular representations **do not automatically lead to particular responses** as, for instance, proponents of the so-called 'CNN effect' would argue (for an overview of the debates among academic, media and policy-making circles on the 'CNN effect', see Gilboa 2005; see also, Dauber 2001; Eisensee/Stromberg 2007; Livingston/Eachus 1995; O'Loughlin 2010; Perlmutter 1998. 2005; Robinson 1999, 2001). There is **no causal relationship** **between a specific image and a political intervention**, in which a dependent variable (the image) would explain the outcome of an independent one (the act). David Perlmutter (1998: l), for instance, explicitly challenges, as he calls it, the 'visual determinism' of images, which dominates political and public opinion. Referring to findings based on public surveys, he argues that the formation of opinions by individuals depends **not on images** but on their idiosyncratic predispositions and values (see also, Domke ct ah 2002; Perlmutter 2005). Yet, it should also be noted that visuals function as unquestioned referents in international politics when underlining the necessity of such specific policy practices as sanctions, deterrents and/or military cooperation. A good example of this is satellite imagery, which plays a pivotal role in the surveillance and assessment of missile or nuclear proliferation activities by so-called 'rogue states' like Iran and North Korea. Regarded as providing compelling evidence about the stage of development of nuclear facilities or about the collaboration between suspect states, satellite images point to a nexus between visuality, knowledge and international politics wherein this way of seeing consequently enables governments to make legitimate statements, draw conclusions and take informed political action. In sum, the visual provides the foundation for knowledge generation and. in doing so, bestows political responses with legitimacy (cf. Moller 2007). A now famous case-in-point is Colin Powell's PowerPoint presentation at the United Nations Security Council in February 2003. In the briefing, the then US Secretary of State showed satellite images that allegedly proved the existence of Iraqi 'Weapons of Mass Destruction'. What was remarkable about Powell's presentation was that the visual emerged as the primary referent for the US government's casus belli, which, in the words of MacDonald ef ai (2010: 7-8), disclosed the fact that the 'logic of geopolitical reason is now inseparable from its visual representation' (see also, Campbell 2007c; Der Derian 2001). The causal theory of the 'CNN effect', or what Perlmutter (1998: 1) has called above 'visual determinism', misconceives of how the visual recasts the political realm itself (Hansen 2011). Rather than asking whether an image caused an intervention, it should be asked instead how the visual has been involved in structuring the understandings of **legitimate action**, and how visual representations of different policy options affect particular security practices (Williams 2003: 527). For instance, many scholars have shown that images can provoke particularly emotive responses (Bleiker/Hutchison 2008; Crawford 2000; Hariman/Lucaites 2007; Mercer 2006; Ross 2006). Just one example of the (deliberate) evocation of an emotional reaction is the numerous fundraising campaigns that have been run by different humanitarian aid organizations over the years, in which imagery plays an essential role (Bell/Carens 2004; Dogra 2007; Manzo 2008).

**No mutual exclusivity---the perm solves because we can criticize the Chinese government AND combat racism.**

Josh **Rogin 21**. Columnist covering foreign policy and national security. George Washington University, BA in International Affairs 2001; Sophia University, Tokyo "Opinion: The United States must confront the Chinese Communist Party and racism at the same time". Washington Post. 3-25-2021. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-united-states-must-confront-the-chinese-communist-party-and-racism-at-the-same-time/2021/03/25/63fe8308-8d9c-11eb-9423-04079921c915\_story.html

The United States **must compete with China** and **confront the Chinese government** on a range of issues while simultaneously **combating the rise of anti-Asian racism** at home. These two missions are **not at odds with each other**, as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) would have you believe. In fact, they must go **hand in hand**. In Alaska last weekend, Chinese government leaders sought to stoke our country’s racial divisions, accusing the United States of having “slaughtered” African Americans, to deflect criticism over Beijing’s mass atrocities against its Uyghur Muslim population. Meanwhile, CCP propaganda outlets have been using the killing last week in the Atlanta area of eight innocent people (six of them Asian) to cast aspersions on those who are condemning the Chinese government’s atrocities. Beijing’s goal is to **conflate and confuse** two **related but distinct issues**: challenging the Chinese government and the need to fight racism in the United States. But their gambit amounts to **presenting a false choice** between doing one or the other. “It is part of a broader strategy that the Chinese Communist Party is enacting to **undermine our democracy**,” Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-Fla.) told me in an interview. “So when you see them creating that **false equivalency** . . . it is their way to **sow discord** in our society, because they understand when we are not united, we are weaker in leading the world in confronting their bad behavior.” Murphy, a former Pentagon official who came to the United States as a child refugee from Vietnam, said that the use of racist language by former president Donald Trump and other GOP officials plays into the CCP’s hands. Yet at the same she emphasized that U.S. leaders have to be able to **speak** honestly and **critically about the CCP’s negative behaviors**, including its mishandling of the covid-19 pandemic. The rise of racism against Asian Americans not only hurts the United States’ ability to deal with China, but also it harms efforts to make common cause with our regional allies and partners such as Japan, South Korea and Vietnam. Those governments’ ability to join the United States in confronting China is hurt when members of their diaspora communities are mistreated in the United States. “We have to be able to make a **very clear distinction** that our adversary and competitor is the **Chinese Communist Party, not the Chinese people**, and certainly **not** the **Asian Americans** who live here and who have contributed so much to this country,” Murphy said. “When we attack Americans of Asian descent, we attack ourselves.” Some American commentators argue that the effort to confront the Chinese government’s behavior has fueled the staggering rise in hate and violence directed at Asians and Asian Americans in the United States. It’s certainly true that Trump’s racist rhetoric regarding the coronavirus fueled hate and conflated the two issues, tragically. And U.S. government efforts to confront CCP influence operations in our country have at times unfairly targeted people of Chinese origins. Such targeting of Asians and Asian Americans makes us weaker at home and abroad. **We must** learn from, **not repeat, examples** from history when U.S. foreign policy negatively affected American minorities, including the mass internment of U.S. citizens and noncitizens of Japanese descent during World War II and the mistreatment of Arab and Muslim Americans after 9/11. Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), the son of Indian immigrants, told me that **the United States has to out-compete China without replicating the paradigms** of the Cold War. But, he said, we must also **stand up to the authoritarian and repressive model the Chinese government** is putting forward without ceding our moral authority. “That has to be the balance, enhance America’s strategic interest but **clearly reject provocative rhetoric** that’s intended to play to a base,” he said. “There’s a way to **frame our moral position as a liberal democracy** . . . without coming off as demonizing an entire civilization in a way that hurts Chinese or Chinese Americans.” Khanna and Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.) have co-sponsored a bill, the Endless Frontier Act, to revamp the National Science Foundation to **try to out-compete China through technological innovation**. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Sen. Todd C. Young (R-Ind.) are cooperating on companion legislation in the Senate. These efforts will be a major test of whether bipartisan cooperation on the China challenge is possible. **It’s not the drive to confront China that is fueling hate and racism** against Asians in America. Political opportunists are abusing that effort by fueling bigotry to score political points. This makes a unified strategy to confront the Chinese government only more difficult to achieve. In fact, addressing racism at home is crucial to winning the competition with China in the long run. “We have to be aggressive in our policies and working with our allies to combat the violations the Chinese are making, but at the same time, **we can hold the CCP accountable without scapegoating Asian Americans**,” Murphy said. “And we have a responsibility to do that.”

**Aff outweighs the link OR it’s non unique**

**Brands 22** (interviewed by Noah Smith) – an American scholar of U.S. foreign policy. He is the Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies and a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. (Hal, "Interview: Hal Brands, international relations professor and author," Noahpinion, 1-25-2022, https://noahpinion.substack.com/p/interview-hal-brands-international, Accessed 1-27-2022, LASA-SC)

N.S.: One question I have is, will there be **buy-in** from the American public for a Cold War style confrontation? Americans remember quite vividly how the Bush administration lied about WMDs in Iraq and pushed us into a pointless and horribly destructive war. On the other hand, negative opinions of China **are running quite high**, and a recent poll showed that for the first time, a majority of Americans **support using military force** to defend Taiwan. So where do you see public opinion going on this issue? Also, a follow-up question here. Some people are worried that a Cold War style confrontation with China will result in a **racist backlash** against Asian people in the U.S. That **seems plausible** given the recent wave of anti-Asian attacks, which seems to have been exacerbated by Trump's "**China virus**" language in 2020. And of course the memory of how the U.S. treated Japanese Americans during World War 2 looms large. What can we do at the policy level to ensure that there's no such backlash? H.B.: Let's side aside Iraq for a moment: I think the idea that Bush lied is an overstatement, but that's a separate debate (and the war was indeed destructive and counterproductive). There are certainly the makings of a **bipartisan consensus** on China in the United States. COVID turned Americans against China to a degree that Beijing building bases in the South China Sea **never did**: It showed how the CCP's cynicism and irresponsibility could cause concrete harm to Americans and their livelihoods. There is bipartisan support in Congress for measures to strengthen America's competitive posture. And, while we shouldn’t make too much of "would you want to defend X" sort of questions, Americans are clearly more concerned about the fate of Taiwan than they were before. For now, the consensus is still broader than it is deep--**politicians want to compete with China**, but not if it means doing something that would cause even a minor correction in the stock market--but I think this may change over time. As for the **racism issue**, this is something that **good leadership** can help with. We didn't have a massive **anti-Muslim backlash** after 9/11, in part because Bush, whatever his other failings, **modeled good behavior** in that regard. And while the Cold War left some ugly political legacies--red-baiting and the like--it also led the United States to invest in **domestic reform and rejuvenation**. The breaking down of segregation, the creation of the world's best university system, the building of our interstate highway system, and other constructive measures were all rooted, at least partly, in the imperative of making America more attractive and competitive in the Cold War. So hopefully our leaders will treat competition with China not as a reason to bring out our worst impulses, **but as an opportunity for America to become a better version of itself.**

**2AC – China War Securitization**

**No self-fulfilling prophesy---securitizing the danger of US-China war creates the caution and risk-aversion necessary to avoid it.**

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

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

**Attempting IR predictions about China is both possible and desirable---even if inaccurate---because giving up on bounding assessment of threats results in security dilemmas**

Joseph K. **Clifton 11**, Claremont McKenna College, “Disputed Theory and Security Policy: Responding to the "Rise of China”,” 4-25-2011, http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1164&context=cmc\_theses

First, motives can be known. Mearsheimer is correct in observing that assessing motives can be difficult, but this does **not** mean that the task is **impossible**. There clearly are ways of finding out information about the goals of states and the means with which they plan to achieve them. One of the most important roles of intelligence analysts, for example, is to determine state interests and expected behavior based on obtained information. The possibility that information may be flawed should **not** lead to a **rejection** of all information. People make decisions based on less than perfect knowledge all of the time. This ability to know motives extends to future motives, because an analyst can use information such as **historical trends** to observe **consistencies** or constant **evolutions** of motives. Prediction of the future is necessarily less certain in its accuracy, but the **prediction can still be made**.104 Second, even if there is still some uncertainty of motives, the rational response is not to assume absolute aggression. Assuming aggressive motive in a situation of uncertainty ignites the security dilemma, which could actually decrease a state’s security. Mearsheimer calls this tragic, but it is not necessary. An illustrative example is Mearsheimer’s analysis of the German security situation were the United States to withdraw its military protection. Mearsheimer argues that it would be rational for Germany to develop nuclear weapons, since these weapons would provide a deterrent, and it would also be rational for nuclear European powers to wage a preemptive war against Germany to prevent it from developing a nuclear deterrent. 105 This scenario is not rational for either side because it ignores motives. If Germany knows that other states will attack if it were to develop nuclear weapons, then it would not be rational for it to develop nuclear weapons. And if other states know that Germany’s development of nuclear weapons is only as a deterrent, then it would not be rational to prevent German nuclear development. The point is that **the security dilemma exists because of a lack of motivational knowledge, so the proper response is to try to enhance understanding of motives, not discard motivational knowledge altogether**. Misperception is certainly a problem in international politics, but reducing misperception would allow states to better conform to defensive realist logic, which results in preferable outcomes relative to offensive realism. 106 Assessing motives is **vital in the case of the rise of China**, because mutually preferable outcomes can be achieved if China is not an aggressive power, as offensive realism would have to assume, but is actually a status quo power with aims that have limited effect on the security of the U.S. and other potentially affected countries. I do not mean here to claim with certainty that China is and will always be a status quo power, and policymakers likely have access to more intentional information than what is publicly known. At the very least, valuing motivational assessments **empowers policymakers** to act on this knowledge, which is preferable because of the possibility of **reduc**ing **competition** and **conflict**.

**2AC – Realism/Perm**

**Perm do both – IR is reflexive, constantly changing and can be re-appropriated**

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

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

**Balance-of-power concerns structure state behavior, even if they can’t explain everything states do.**

**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.

**Even if it’s not perfect it’s best.**

**OğUzlu 20** – Professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Antalya Bilim University. (Tarik, "We are now living in world of structural realism," Daily Sabah, 10-21-2020, https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/we-are-now-living-in-world-of-structural-realism?gallery\_image=undefined#big, Accessed 11-3-2020, LASA-SC)

In today's emerging world order, the Cold War-like confrontation between the United States and China is not as rigid as it was between the U.S. and Russia. Neither the U.S. nor China is in any position to gather a group of committed warriors behind themselves willing to fight for unsaturated material benefits or noble ideological causes. Solid alliance structures based on common threat perceptions and unshakeable collective identities seem to have already given way to short-term pragmatic cooperation across rival camps. Compartmentalization has now become the buzzword defining frenemy-like relations between countries. Turkish-Russian relations of the last decade offer a textbook example in this regard. While the two countries are at odds with each other concerning many issues topping the geopolitical agenda of the wider Middle East, the South Caucasus and Eastern Mediterranean regions, they have simultaneously developed the ability to manage their crises lest they get out of control. All countries, irrespective of their material power capabilities, are now trying to improve their ability to resist the emerging tumultuous developments **by increasingly adopting a nationalistic approach to international relations.** Standing unyielding abroad while going through a restoration process at home is now the most feasible strategy that strategists recommended to national decision-makers to put into use. Speaking the language of populist nationalism and investing in material power capabilities are now common trends across the globe. What better evidence can one find than the European Union, the showcase of liberal understating of international politics, trying now to become a geopolitical power in order to survive in the world of carnivorous powers, such as the U.S., China and Russia? While we are going through a transitional process in global politics in which geopolitical cards are being reshuffled, no particular country, including the two behemoths, lays its cards on the table. Of all international relations theories, **it is structural realism that defines today's world order the best.** States do not trust each other. The anarchical nature of international relations impedes long-term cooperation. Trust is lacking. International organizations are mere tools used by states in order to gain an advantage at the expense of the other. Material power maximization is the key not only to mere survival but also to regional/global supremacy. States are extremely jealous of their sovereign rights to determine what is right or wrong for themselves. Conflict is the rule whereas cooperation the exemption. Concerns over cheating and relative gains prevent states from developing trust-based relations. Distribution of material power capabilities among states determine who would call the shots in global politics and who would be at the mercy of others; hard power is becoming more and more important than soft power to survive in this jungle. Self-help is the only strategy to rely on. Nationalism outbids internationalism in the competition among alternative ideologies. The nation-state is the most legitimate political community in which liberalism or democracy could survive. The most sacred identity that individuals might theoretically possess is the idea of citizenship. Peace and stability in the world can only be attained through the formation of a stable balance of power among great powers, which are the only actors that matter in international politics. **Any attempt to help build a global community of humankind thriving on a universal civilization or political and economic rights is futile.** Though states, middle and small powers, in particular, try to preserve their strategic autonomy, they cannot help but choose between balancing or bandwagoning in the mid- to long-term. So long as they can, many middle powers will try to avoid choosing one side at the expense of the other. Yet this will prove to be extremely difficult, as the stiff competition between Washington and Beijing turns out to become an abject enmity in the years ahead. **We are fast moving away from a rule-based international order in which liberal and constructivist accounts of international relations would have more explanatory power than the time-tested structural realism.**

**2AC – Threats Good**

**Threat scenario-analysis is good.**

**Mahnken & Junio ’13** (Thomas; September 2013; Ph.D. and M.A. in International Affairs from Johns Hopkins University, B.A. in International Relations and History from the University of Southern California, Chair of Economic Geography and National Security at the U.S. Naval War College and a Visiting Scholar at the Philip Merrill Center for Strategic Studies at The Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies; Ph.D. and M.A. in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania, M.A. in International Relations from Johns Hopkins University, B.A. in International Studies from Johns Hopkins Univeristy, Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University; International Studies Review, Vol. 15, Issue 3 “Conceiving of Future War: The Promise of Scenario Analysis for International Relations,” p. 374-395; RP)

This article introduces political scientists to scenarios—future counterfactuals—and demonstrates their value in tandem with other methodologies and across a wide range of research questions. The authors describe best practices regarding the scenario method and argue that scenarios contribute to **theory building** and development, identifying **new hypotheses**, analyzing data-poor research topics, articulating **“world views,”** setting new research agendas, **avoiding cognitive biases**, and teaching. The article also establishes the low rate at which scenarios are used in the international relations subfield and situates scenarios in the broader context of political science methods. The conclusion offers two detailed examples of the effective use of scenarios. In his classic work on scenario and Duncan 1993; Leufkens, Haaijer-Ruskamp, Bakker, and Dukes 1994; Baker, Hulse, Gregory, White, Van Sickle, Berger, Dole, and Schumaker 2004; Sanderson, Scherbov, O'Neill, and Lutz 2004). Scenarios also are a **common tool** employed by the policymakers whom political scientists study. This article seeks to elevate the status of scenarios in political science by demonstrating their usefulness for theory building and **pedagogy**. Rather than constitute mere speculation regarding an unpredictable future, as critics might suggest, scenarios assist scholars with developing testable **hypotheses**, gathering data, and identifying a theory's upper and lower bounds. Additionally, scenarios are an **effective way to teach students** to apply theory to policy. In the pages below, a “best practices” guide is offered to advise scholars, practitioners, and students, and an argument is developed in favor of the use of scenarios. The article concludes with two examples of how political scientists have invoked the scenario method to improve the specifications of their theories, propose **falsifiable hypotheses**, and design new **empirical research** programs. Scenarios in the Discipline What do counterfactual narratives about the future look like? Scenarios may range in length from a few sentences to many pages. One of the most common uses of the scenario method, which will be referenced throughout this article, is to study the conditions under which **high-consequence, low-probability** events may occur. Perhaps the best example of this is **nuclear warfare**, a circumstance that has never resulted, but has captivated generations of political scientists. For an introductory illustration, let us consider a very simple scenario regarding how a first use of a nuclear weapon might occur: During the year 2023, the US military is ordered to launch air and sea patrols of the Taiwan Strait to aid in a crisis. These highly visible patrols disrupt trade off China's coast, and result in skyrocketing insurance rates for shipping companies. Several days into the contingency, which involves over ten thousand US military personnel, an intelligence estimate concludes that a Chinese conventional strike against US air patrols and naval assets is imminent. The United States conducts a preemptive strike against anti-air and anti-sea systems on the Chinese mainland. The US strike is far more successful than Chinese military leaders thought possible; a new source of intelligence to the United States—unknown to Chinese leadership—allowed the US military to severely degrade Chinese targeting and situational awareness capabilities. Many of the weapons that China relied on to dissuade escalatory US military action are now reduced to single-digit-percentage readiness. Estimates for repairs and replenishments are stated in terms of weeks, and China's confidence in readily available, but “dumber,” weapons is low due to the dispersion and mobility of US forces. Word of the successful US strike spreads among the Chinese and Taiwanese publics. The Chinese Government concludes that for the sake of preserving its domestic strength, and to signal resolve to the US and Taiwanese Governments while minimizing further economic disruption, it should escalate dramatically with the use of an extremely small-yield nuclear device against a stationary US military asset in the Pacific region. This short story reflects a future event that, while unlikely to occur and far too vague to be used for military planning, contains many **dimensions of political science** theory. These include the following: what leaders perceive as “limited,” “proportional,” or “escalatory” uses of force; the importance of private information about capabilities and commitment; audience costs in international politics; the relationship between **military** expediency **and political objectives** during war; and the role of compressed timelines for decision making, among others. The purpose of this article is to explain to scholars how such stories, and more rigorously developed narratives that specify variables of interest and draw on extant data, may **improve the study of IR**. An important starting point is to explain how future counterfactuals fit into the methodological canon of the discipline.