### 2ac --- Russia

#### Action to prevent war with Russia is good in the context of Cuba --- empirics prove --- prefer action over inaction because there is always a risk in IR

**Harvard Nuclear Study Group 83** (Living with Nuclear Weapons, p.16-7)

When President John F. Kennedy was shown irrefutable evidence of the Soviet missile emplacement – U-2 photographs of the missile bases in Cube – he and his advisors discussed the matter for six days before deciding on an American response to the challenge. The decision, to place a naval blockade around the island, was not a risk-free response. This, Kennedy honestly admitted to the nation the night of October 22, 1962: My fellow citizens, let no one doubt this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take… But the great danger of all would be to do nothing. Why did the president believe that “to do nothing” about the missiles in Cuba would be an even greater danger than accepting the “difficult and dangerous” course of the blockade? He accepted some risk of war in the long run, by discouraging future Soviet aggressive behavior. Inaction might have led to an even more dangerous future. This the president also explained that night in his address to the nation: [This] sudden, clandestine decision to station weapons for the first time outside Soviet soil – is a deliberate provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted by either friend or foe. The 1930’s taught us a clear lesson: Aggressive conduct, if allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. The American government managed the 1962 crisis with skill and restraint – offering a compromise to the Soviets and giving them sufficient time to call back their missile-laden ships, for example – and the missiles were withdrawn from Cuba. The president carefully supervised American military actions to ensure that his orders were not misunderstood. He did not push his success too far or ignore the real risks of war. The point here is not, to make the blockade a model for American action in the future: different circumstances may call for different policies. Rather the point is to underline the persistence of risk in international affairs. Every proposed response to the Soviet action – doing nothing, enforcing the blockade, or invading Cuba – entailed some risk of nuclear war. Kennedy’s task – and we think his success – was to weigh accurately the risks entailed in each course and decide on policy accordingly.

### 2ac --- Acting

#### Vote aff despite prior questions—impact timeframe means you default to specific scenarios

Kratochwil 08, professor of international relations – European University Institute, 2008 (Friedrich, “The Puzzles of Politics,” pg. 200-213)

The lesson seems clear. Even at the danger of “fuzzy boundaries”, when we deal with “practice” ( just as with the “pragmatic turn”), we would be well advised to rely on the use of the term rather than on its reference (pointing to some property of the object under study), in order to draw the bounds of sense and understand the meaning of the concept. My argument for the fruitful character of a pragmatic approach in IR, therefore, does not depend on a comprehensive mapping of the varieties of research in this area, nor on an arbitrary appropriation or exegesis of any specific and self-absorbed theoretical orientation. For this reason, in what follows, I will not provide a rigidly specified definition, nor will I refer exclusively to some prepackaged theoretical approach. Instead, I will sketch out the reasons for which a pragmatic orientation in social analysis seems to hold particular promise. These reasons pertain both to the more general area of knowledge appropriate for praxis and to the more specific types of investigation in the field. The follow- ing ten points are – without a claim to completeness – intended to engender some critical reflection on both areas. Firstly, a pragmatic approach does not begin with objects or “things” (ontology), or with reason and method (epistemology), but with “acting” (prattein), thereby preventing some false starts. Since, **as historical beings placed in a** specific situations**, we do not have the luxury** of deferring decisions **until we have** found the “truth”, **we have to act and must do so always under time pressures and in the face of incomplete information.** Pre- cisely because the social world is characterised by strategic interactions, what a situation “is”, is hardly ever clear ex ante, because it is being “produced” by the actors and their interactions, and the multiple possibilities are rife with incentives for (dis)information. This puts a premium on quick diagnostic and cognitive shortcuts informing actors about the relevant features of the situ- ation, and on leaving an alternative open (“plan B”) in case of unexpected difficulties. Instead of relying on certainty and universal validity gained through abstraction and controlled experiments, we know that completeness and attentiveness to detail, rather than to generality, matter. To that extent, likening practical choices to simple “discoveries” of an already independently existing “reality” which discloses itself to an “observer” – or relying on optimal strategies – is somewhat heroic. These points have been made vividly by “realists” such as Clausewitz in his controversy with von Bülow, in which he criticised the latter’s obsession with a strategic “science” (Paret et al. 1986). While Clausewitz has become an icon for realists, only a few of them (usually dubbed “old” realists) have taken seriously his warnings against the misplaced belief in the reliability and use- fulness of a “scientific” study of strategy. Instead, most of them, especially “neorealists” of various stripes, have embraced the “theory”-building based on the epistemological project as the via regia to the creation of knowledge. A pragmatist orientation would most certainly not endorse such a position. Secondly, since acting in the social world often involves acting “for” someone, special responsibilities arise that aggravate both the incompleteness of knowledge as well as its generality problem. Since we owe special care to those entrusted to us, for example, as teachers, doctors or lawyers, we cannot just rely on what is generally true, but have to pay special attention to the particular case. Aside from avoiding the foreclosure of options, we cannot refuse to act on the basis of incomplete information or insufficient know- ledge, and the necessary diagnostic will involve typification and comparison, reasoning by analogy rather than generalization or deduction. Leaving out the particularities of a case, be it a legal or medical one, in a mistaken effort to become “scientific” would be a fatal flaw. Moreover, **there still remains the crucial element of “timing” –** of knowing when to act. Students of crises have always pointed out the importance of this factor but, in attempts at building a general “theory” of international politics analogously to the natural sci- ences, such elements are neglected on the basis of the “continuity of nature” and the “large number” assumptions. Besides, “timing” seems to be quite recalcitrant to analytical treatment.

#### Extinction outweighs --- only focusing on the individual dooms future generations

Bostrom 12 - Professor of Philosophy at Oxford

(Nick, directs Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, Interview with Ross Andersen, correspondent at The Atlantic, 3/6, “We're Underestimating the Risk of Human Extinction”, http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/03/were-underestimating-the-risk-of-human-extinction/253821/)//BB

Bostrom, who directs Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, has argued over the course of several papers that human extinction risks are poorly understood and, worse still, severely **underestimated** by society. Some of these existential risks are fairly well known, especially the natural ones. But others are obscure or even exotic. Most worrying to Bostrom is the subset of existential risks that arise from human technology, a subset that he expects to grow in number and potency over the next century.¶ Despite his concerns about the risks posed to humans by technological progress, Bostrom is no luddite. In fact, he is a longtime advocate of transhumanism---the effort to improve the human condition, and even human nature itself, through technological means. In the long run he sees technology as a bridge, a bridge we humans must cross with great care, in order to reach new and better modes of being. In his work, Bostrom uses the tools of philosophy and mathematics, in particular probability theory, to try and determine how we as a species might achieve this safe passage. What follows is my conversation with Bostrom about some of the most interesting and worrying existential risks that humanity might encounter in the decades and centuries to come, and about what we can do to make sure we outlast them.¶ Some have argued that we ought to be directing our resources toward humanity's existing problems, rather than future existential risks, because many of the latter are highly improbable. You have responded by suggesting that existential risk mitigation may in fact be a **dominant moral priority** over the alleviation of present suffering. Can you explain why? ¶ Bostrom: Well suppose you have a moral view that counts future people as being worth as much as present people. You might say that fundamentally it doesn't matter whether someone exists at the current time or at some future time, just as many people think that from a fundamental moral point of view, it doesn't matter where somebody is spatially---somebody isn't automatically worth less because you move them to the moon or to Africa or something. A human life is a human life. If you have that moral point of view that future generations matter in proportion to their population numbers, then you get this very stark implication that existential risk mitigation has a **much higher utility than** pretty much **anything else** that you could do. There are so many people that could come into existence in the future if humanity survives this critical period of time---we might live for billions of years, our descendants might colonize billions of solar systems, and there could be billions and billions times more people than exist currently. Therefore, even a very small reduction in the probability of realizing this enormous good **will** tend to **outweigh** even immense benefits like eliminating poverty or curing malaria, which would be tremendous under ordinary standards.

### 2ac --- Social Science

#### Scientific knowledge is best because it subjects itself to constant refinement based on empirical evidence

**Hutcheon** **93**—former prof of sociology of education at U Regina and U British Columbia. Former research advisor to the Health Promotion Branch of the Canadian Department of Health and Welfare and as a director of the Vanier Institute of the Family. Phd in sociology, began at Yale and finished at U Queensland. (Pat, A Critique of "Biology as Ideology: The Doctrine of DNA", http://www.humanists.net/pdhutcheon/humanist%20articles/lewontn.htm)

The introductory lecture in this series articulated the increasingly popular "postmodernist" claim that all science is ideology. Lewontin then proceeded to justify this by stating the obvious: that scientists are human like the rest of us and subject to the same biases and socio-cultural imperatives. Although he did not actually say it, his comments seemed to imply that the enterprise of scientific research and knowledge building could therefore be no different and no more reliable as a guide to action than any other set of opinions. The trouble is that, in order to reach such an conclusion, one would have to ignore all those aspects of the scientific endeavor that do in fact distinguish it from other types and sources of belief formation.¶ Indeed, if the integrity of the scientific endeavor depended only on the wisdom and objectivity of the individuals engaged in it we would be in trouble. North American agriculture would today be in the state of that in Russia today. In fact it would be much worse, for the Soviets threw out Lysenko's ideology-masquerading-as-science decades ago. Precisely because an alternative scientific model was available (thanks to the disparaged Darwinian theory) the former Eastern bloc countries have been partially successful in overcoming the destructive chain of consequences which blind faith in ideology had set in motion. This is what Lewontin's old Russian dissident professor meant when he said that the truth must be spoken, even at great personal cost. How sad that Lewontin has apparently failed to understand the fact that while scientific knowledge -- with the power it gives us -- can and does allow humanity to change the world, ideological beliefs have consequences too. By rendering their proponents politically powerful but rationally and instrumentally impotent, they throw up insurmountable barriers to reasoned and value-guided social change.¶ What are the crucial differences between ideology and science that Lewonton has ignored? Both Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn have spelled these out with great care -- the former throughout a long lifetime of scholarship devoted to that precise objective. Stephen Jay Gould has also done a sound job in this area. How strange that someone with the status of Lewontin, in a series of lectures supposedly covering the same subject, would not at least have dealt with their arguments!¶ Science has to do with the search for regularities in what humans experience of their physical and social environments, beginning with the most simple units discernible, and gradually moving towards the more complex. It has to do with expressing these regularities in the clearest and most precise language possible, so that cause-and-effect relations among the parts of the system under study can be publicly and rigorously tested. And it has to do with devising explanations of those empirical regularities which have survived all attempts to falsify them. These explanations, once phrased in the form of testable hypotheses, become predictors of future events. In other words, they lead to further conjectures of additional relationships which, in their turn, must survive repeated public attempts to prove them wanting -- if the set of related explanations (or theory) is to continue to operate as a fruitful guide for subsequent research.¶ This means that science, unlike mythology and ideology, has a self-correcting mechanism at its very heart. A conjecture, to be classed as scientific, must be amenable to empirical test. It must, above all, be open to refutation by experience. There is a rigorous set of rules according to which hypotheses are formulated and research findings are arrived at, reported and replicated. It is this process -- not the lack of prejudice of the particular scientist, or his negotiating ability, or even his political power within the relevant university department -- that ensures the reliability of scientific knowledge. The conditions established by the community of science is one of precisely defined and regulated "intersubjectivity". Under these conditions the theory that wins out, and subsequently prevails, does so not because of its agreement with conventional wisdom or because of the political power of its proponents, as is often the case with ideology. The survival of a scientific theory such as Darwin's is due, instead, to its power to explain and predict observable regularities in human experience, while withstanding worldwide attempts to refute it -- and proving itself open to elaboration and expansion in the process. In this sense only is scientific knowledge objective and universal. All this has little relationship to the claim of an absolute universality of objective "truth" apart from human strivings that Lewontin has attributed to scientists.¶ Because ideologies, on the other hand, do claim to represent truth, they are incapable of generating a means by which they can be corrected as circumstances change. Legitimate science makes no such claims. Scientific tests are not tests of verisimilitude. Science does not aim for "true" theories purporting to reflect an accurate picture of the "essence" of reality. It leaves such claims of infallibility to ideology. The tests of science, therefore, are in terms of workability and falsifiability, and its propositions are accordingly tentative in nature. A successful scientific theory is one which, while guiding the research in a particular problem area, is continuously elaborated, revised and refined, until it is eventually superseded by that very hypothesis-making and testing process that it helped to define and sharpen. An ideology, on the other hand, would be considered to have failed under those conditions, for the "truth" must be for all time. More than anything, it is this difference that confuses those ideological thinkers who are compelled to attack Darwin's theory of evolution precisely because of its success as a scientific theory. For them, and the world of desired and imagined certainty in which they live, that very success in contributing to a continuously evolving body of increasingly reliable -- albeit inevitably tentative -- knowledge can only mean failure, in that the theory itself has altered in the process.

### 2ac --- Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis ignores behaviors of large groups which disproves the link, cedes the political, and means the alt can’t solve**.**

**Volkan 3** (Vamik D. — M.D., Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry University of Virginia, “PSYCHOANALYSIS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS”, http://www.vamikvolkan.com/Psychoanalysis-and-International-Relations-and-International-Relations-in-Psychoanalysis.php, ken)

Other difficulties that complicate collaboration between psychoanalysts and practitioners and scholars of politics and international relations come from psychoanalysis itself. I sensed these difficulties myself as I became more and more involved in collaborative work with scholars and practitioners of other disciplines. I noted that the difficulties within psychoanalytic discipline that hindered collaboration between psychoanalysis and diplomacy could be divided into various inter-related categories. As expected, at first it was difficult for me to realize these obstacles and define them. But slowly I was able to “free” myself from some established psychoanalytic assumptions. Politics and diplomacy necessarily deal with the psychology of large groups, the psychology of leader-followers, and the psychology of relationships between enemy groups and their leaders. Sigmund Freud was interested in these topics, but he also left a legacy that discouraged his followers from pursuing them. In his letter to Albert Einstein, Freud (1932) was pessimistic about human nature and the role of psychoanalysis in preventing wars or war-like situations. Although Jacob Arlow (1973) later suggested some optimism in some of Freud’s writings on this subject, Freud’s pessimism, I believe, played a role in the limited psychoanalytic contributions to the fields of politics and diplomacy. There were, of course, exceptions (Glower, 1947 and Fornari, 1966). However, those exceptions followed Freud’s lead in another area, and this too blocked the potential influence of psychoanalysis on politics and diplomacy: these writers, like Freud, focused on individuals’ unconscious perceptions of what the image of political leaders and the mental representations of a large group symbolically stand for, instead of on large-group psychology and leader-follower relations in their own right. Psychoanalysis remained primarily an investigative tool of an individual’s internal world and massive human movements were examined according to individual psychology that brings people together and not according to the psychology of large-group rituals and interactions. It was all right to study the internal motivations of political leaders as they influence their followers, but psychoanalysis largely failed to consider how mental representations of societal processes influenced the personality development of individuals belonging to the same large group and changed that group’s historical or political movements. Only relatively recently a handful of historians with psychoanalytic training are focusing on this phenomenon. For example, Peter Loewenberg (1991, 1995) described the history of the Weimer Republic, its humiliation and its economic collapse as a major factor in creating shared personality characteristics among the German youth and their welcoming the Nazi ideology. Freud’s (1921) well-known theory of large-group psychology reflects a theme that mainly focuses on the understanding of the individual: the members of the group sublimate their aggression toward the leader and turn it into loyalty in a process that is similar to that of a son turning his negative feelings toward his Oedipal father. In turn, the members of a large group idealize the leader, identify with each other, and rally around the leader. Freud’s theory is based on a “male-oriented” psychological process. More importantly, as Waelder (1971) noted, Freud was speaking only of regressed groups. Given such shortcomings, some psychoanalysts who study large groups and their leaders shifted their approach in the last decade or so from emphasizing the image of the leader to focusing on the mental representation of the large group itself as experienced by the individual. For example, Didier Anzieu (1971, 1984) Janine Chassequet-Smirgel (1984), and Otto Kernberg (1980, 1989) wrote about shared fantasies of members of a large group. They suggested that large groups represent idealized mothers (breast mothers) who repair all narcissistic injuries. I, (Volkan, 2004) added that idealized but unintegrated self images accompany idealized mother images in members’ experience of the large group in which they belong. But, again, these theories primarily focus on individuals’ perceptions. It is assumed that external processes that threaten the group members’ image of an idealized mother can initiate political processes and influence international affairs. Nevertheless, an approach that focuses on individuals’ perceptions does not offer specificity concerning a political or diplomatic process. Thus, it does not excite practitioners of politics and diplomacy or receive much attention from political scientists. I came to realize that what the psychoanalytic tradition lacks is the study of both large-group psychology in its own right and the specific elements of various mass movements.

#### Permutation do both

#### Cognitive science means their focus on the psyche is non-falsifiable

**O'Brien & Jureidini 02**

Gerard O'Brien 2, BA (Hons), DPhil (Oxon), is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Adelaide. His primary interests are philosophy of mind, cognitive science, and philosophy of psychiatry. AND JonJureidini, MB, BS, FRANZCP, PhD (Flinders) is a child psychiatrist who has completed a doctorate in philosophy of mind. He works in a pediatric consultation-liaison service. Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology 9.2 (2002)

IT IS THE PRIMARY TENET of psychoanalysis that there is a subterranean region of our minds inhabited by mental entities—such as thoughts, feelings, and motives—that are actively prevented from entering consciousness because of their painful or otherwise unacceptable content. These mental entities, in spite of being consciously inaccessible, are assumed to have a profound impact on our conscious mental life and behavior, and in so doing are thought to be responsible for many of the psychopathologies, both major and minor, to which we are subject. This conjectured subterranean region of our minds is nowadays known as the dynamic unconscious, and there is no more important explanatory concept in all of psychoanalytic theory. Yet, despite its importance to psychoanalytic thought and practice, and despite almost a century of research effort since its first systematic articulation, the dynamic unconscious is in deep trouble. The methodologic difficulties associated with theorizing about this putative mental underworld are legion (Grunbaum 1984), and recent years have seen a growing skepticism about the very notion of a dynamic unconscious and with it the whole apparatus of psychoanalysis (see, for example, Crews 1996). In the face of these difficulties, a number of proponents of psychoanalysis have turned to contemporary cognitive science for assistance (see, for example, Epstein 1994; Erdelyi 1985; Shevrin 1992; and Westen 1998). Their aim has been to show that psychoanalytic conjectures about the dynamic unconscious receive a great deal of support from the empirical evidence in favor of the cognitive unconscious. By variously integrating the dynamic unconscious with the cognitive unconscious (Epstein 1994) or extending the cognitive unconscious to cover psychical entities and processes traditionally associated with the dynamic unconscious (Westen 1998), the hope is that the struggling psychoanalytic concept will be buttressed by its healthier counterpart in cognitive science. It is our contention, however, that this hope is misplaced. Far from supporting the dynamic unconscious, recent work in the cognitive science suggests that the time has come to dispense with this concept altogether. We will defend this claim in two ways. First, we will argue that any attempt to shore up the dynamic unconscious with the cognitive unconscious is bound to fail, simply because the latter, as it is understood in contemporary cognitive science, is incompatible with the former as it is traditionally conceived by psychoanalytic theory. Second, we will show how psychological phenomena traditionally cited as evidence for the operation of a dynamic unconscious can be accommodated more parsimoniously by other means. But before we do either of these things, and to set the scene for our subsequent discussion, we will offer a very brief recapitulation of the dynamic unconscious, especially as it was originally conceived by Sigmund Freud. (141-2)

#### That means their method leads to extinction

**Coyne, 06** – Author and Writer for the Times (Jerry A., “A plea for empiricism”, FOLLIES OF THE WISE, Dissenting essays, 405pp. Emeryville, CA: Shoemaker and Hoard, 1 59376 101 5)

Supernatural forces and events, essential aspects of most religions, play no role in science, not because we exclude them deliberately, but because they have never been a useful way to understand nature. Scientific “truths” are empirically supported observations agreed on by different observers. Religious “truths,” on the other hand, are personal, unverifiable and contested by those of different faiths. Science is nonsectarian: those who disagree on scientific issues do not blow each other up. Science encourages doubt; most religions quash it. But religion is not completely separable from science. Virtually all religions make improbable claims that are in principle empirically testable, and thus within the domain of science: Mary, in Catholic teaching, was bodily taken to heaven, while Muhammad rode up on a white horse; and Jesus (born of a virgin) came back from the dead. None of these claims has been corroborated, and while science would never accept them as true without evidence, religion does. A mind that accepts both science and religion is thus a mind in conflict. Yet scientists, especially beleaguered American evolutionists, need the support of the many faithful who respect science. It is not politically or tactically useful to point out the fundamental and unbreachable gaps between science and theology. Indeed, scientists and philosophers have written many books (equivalents of Leibnizian theodicy) desperately trying to show how these areas can happily cohabit. In his essay, “Darwin goes to Sunday School”, Crews reviews several of these works, pointing out with brio the intellectual contortions and dishonesties involved in harmonizing religion and science. Assessing work by the evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould, the philosopher Michael Ruse, the theologian John Haught and others, Crews concludes, “When coldly examined . . . these productions invariably prove to have adulterated scientific doctrine or to have emptied religious dogma of its commonly accepted meaning”. Rather than suggesting any solution (indeed, there is none save adopting a form of “religion” that makes no untenable empirical claims), Crews points out the dangers to the survival of our planet arising from a rejection of Darwinism. Such rejection promotes apathy towards overpopulation, pollution, deforestation and other environmental crimes: “So long as we regard ourselves as creatures apart who need only repent of our personal sins to retain heaven’s blessing, we won’t take the full measure of our species-wise responsibility for these calamities”. Crews includes three final essays on deconstruction and other misguided movements in literary theory. These also show “follies of the wise” in that they involve interpretations of texts that are unanchored by evidence. Fortunately, the harm inflicted by Lacan and his epigones is limited to the good judgement of professors of literature. Follies of the Wise is one of the most refreshing and edifying collections of essays in recent years. Much like Christopher Hitchens in the UK, Crews serves a vital function as National Sceptic. He ends on a ringing note: “The human race has produced only one successfully validated epistemology, characterizing all scrupulous inquiry into the real world, from quarks to poems. It is, simply, empiricism, or the submitting of propositions to the arbitration of evidence that is acknowledged to be such by all of the contending parties. Ideas that claim immunity from such review, whether because of mystical faith or privileged “clinical insight” or the say-so of eminent authorities, are not to be countenanced until they can pass the same skeptical ordeal to which all other contenders are subjected.” As science in America becomes ever more harried and debased by politics and religion, we desperately need to heed Crews’s plea for empiricism.

#### Permutation do the plan and the alternative in other instances

#### Realism’s inevitable – interdisciplinary research proves

**Wohlforth 09** (William professor of government at Dartmouth College) 2009 “ Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War”Project Muse

Mainstream theories generally posit that states come to blows over an international status quo only when it has implications for their security or material well-being. The guiding assumption is that a state’s satisfaction [End Page 34] with its place in the existing order is a function of the material costs and benefits implied by that status.24 By that assumption, once a state’s status in an international order ceases to affect its material wellbeing, its relative standing will have no bearing on decisions for war or peace. But the assumption is undermined by cumulative research in disciplines ranging from neuroscience and evolutionary biology to economics, anthropology, sociology, and psychology that human beings are powerfully motivated by the desire for favorable social status comparisons. This research suggests that the preference for status is a basic disposition rather than merely a strategy for attaining other goals.25 People often seek tangibles not so much because of the welfare or security they bring but because of the social status they confer. Under certain conditions, the search for status will cause people to behave in ways that directly contradict their material interest in security and/or prosperity.

#### State action is key

**Mack 86** (John; MD, psychiatry professor at Harvard; “Epilogue: Aggression and Its Alternatives in the Conduct of International Relations”, 1986; <http://www.johnemackinstitute.org/ejournal/article.asp?id=282> MCLOON)

Freud and those who have followed him, working with individual patients, have identified the unconscious psychological forces that limit the possibilities of human well-being and fulfillment. Collective human phenomena, such as international conflict, represent a different kind of challenge, one to which psychoanalysts can contribute usefully only if they collaborate with colleagues who bear a more direct responsibility for the policies and decisions of political life.It is important, however, that we do make this a central professional concern and bring what new approaches we can to the understanding and better management of the destructive forces that often dominate the relations between nations. If we fail to do so, it may come about that the dark elements in the human soul will, before long, lead to the extinction of life altogether.

#### Lacanian criticism is theoretically radical but can’t produce political change

**Robinson 5** (PhD Political Theory, University of Nottingham) 05 (Theory and Event, Andrew, 8:1, The Political Theory of Constitutive Lack: A Critique).

There is more than an accidental relationship between the mythical operation of the concept of "constitutive lack" and Lacanians' conservative and pragmatist politics.  Myth is a way of reducing thought to the present: the isolated signs which are included in the mythical gesture are thereby attached to extra-historical abstractions.  On an analytical level, Lacanian theory can be very "radical", unscrupulously exposing the underlying relations and assumptions concealed beneath officially-sanctioned discourse.  This radicalism, however, never translates into political conclusions: as shown above, a radical rejection of anti-"crime" rhetoric turns into an endorsement of punishment, and a radical critique of neo-liberalism turns into a pragmatist endorsement of structural adjustment.  It is as if there is a magical barrier between theory and politics which insulates the latter from the former.  One should recall a remark once made by Wilhelm Reich: 'You plead for happiness in life, but security means more to you'[133](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_and_event/v008/8.1robinson.html#_edn133).  Lacanians have a "radical" theory oriented towards happiness, but politically, their primary concern is security.  As long as they are engaged in politically ineffectual critique, Lacanians will denounce and criticize the social system, but once it comes to practical problems, the "order not to think" becomes operative. This "magic" barrier is the alibi function of myth.  The short-circuit between specific instances and high-level abstractions is politically consequential.

#### Psychoanalysis can’t explain international politics

**Sharpe 10**, lecturer, philosophy and psychoanalytic studies, and Goucher, senior lecturer, literary and psychoanalytic studies – Deakin University, ’10 (Matthew and Geoff, Žižek and Politics: An Introduction, p. 182 – 185, Figure 1.5 not included)

Can we bring some order to this host of criticisms? It is remarkable that, for all the criticisms of Žižek’s political Romanticism, no one has argued that the ultra- extremism of Žižek’s political position might reflect his untenable attempt to shape his model for political action on the curative final moment in clinical psychoanalysis. The differences between these two realms, listed in Figure 5.1, are nearly too many and too great to restate – which has perhaps caused the theoretical oversight. The key thing is this. Lacan’s notion of traversing the fantasy involves the radical transformation of people’s subjective structure: a refounding of their most elementary beliefs about themselves, the world, and sexual difference. This is undertaken in the security of the clinic, on the basis of the analysands’ voluntary desire to overcome their inhibitions, symptoms and anxieties. As a clinical and existential process, it has its own independent importance and authenticity. The analysands, in transforming their subjective world, change the way they regard the objective, shared social reality outside the clinic. But they do not transform the world. The political relevance of the clinic can only be (a) as a supporting moment in ideology critique or (b) as a fully- fl edged model of politics, provided that the political subject and its social object are ultimately identical. Option (*b*), Žižek’s option, rests on the idea, not only of a subject who becomes who he is only through his (mis) recognition of the objective sociopolitical order, but whose ‘traversal of the fantasy’ is immediately identical with his transformation of the socio- political system or Other. Hence, according to Žižek, we can analyse the institutional embodiments of this Other using psychoanalytic categories. In Chapter 4, we saw Žižek’s resulting elision of the distinction between the (subjective) Ego Ideal and the (objective) Symbolic Order. This leads him to analyse our entire culture as a single subject–object, whose perverse (or perhaps even psychotic) structure is expressed in every manifestation of contemporary life. Žižek’s decisive political- theoretic errors, one substantive and the other methodological, are different (see Figure 5.1) The substantive problem is to equate any political change worth the name with the total change of the subject–object that is, today, global capitalism. This is a type of change that can only mean equating politics with violent regime change, and ultimately embracing dictatorial government, as Žižek now frankly avows (*IDLC* 412–19). We have seen that the ultra- political form of Žižek’s criticism of everyone else, the theoretical Left and the wider politics, is that no one is sufficiently radical for him – even, we will discover, Chairman Mao. We now see that this is because Žižek’s model of politics proper is modelled on a pre- critical analogy with the total transformation of a subject’s entire subjective structure, at the end of the talking cure. For what could the concrete consequences of this governing analogy be? We have seen that Žižek equates the individual fantasy with the collective identity of an entire people. The social fantasy, he says, structures the regime’s ‘inherent transgressions’: at once subjects’ habitual ways of living the letter of the law, and the regime’s myths of origin and of identity. If political action is modelled on the Lacanian cure, it must involve the complete ‘traversal’ – in Hegel’s terms, the abstract versus the determinate negation – of all these lived myths, practices and habits. Politics must involve the periodic founding of entire new subject–objects. Providing the model for this set of ideas, the fi rst Žižekian political subject was Schelling’s divided God, who gave birth to the entire Symbolic Order before the beginning of time (*IDLC* 153; *OB* 144–8). But can the political theorist reasonably hope or expect that subjects will simply give up on all their inherited ways, myths and beliefs, all in one world- creating moment? And can they be legitimately asked or expected to, on the basis of a set of ideals whose legitimacy they will only retrospectively see, after they have acceded to the Great Leap Forward? And if they do not – for Žižek laments that today subjects are politically disengaged in unprecedented ways – what means can the theorist and his allies use to move them to do so?

#### Proximate causes o/w – no root causes

**Thompson 3**

William, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for the Study of International Relations at Indiana University, “A Streetcar Named Sarajevo: Catalysts, Multiple Causation Chains, and Rivalry Structures,” International Studies Quarterly, 47(3), AD: 7-10-9

Richard Ned Lebow (2000–2001) has recently invoked what might be called a streetcar interpretation of systemic war and change. According to him, all our structural theories in world politics both overdetermine and underdetermine the explanation of the most important events such as World War I, World War II, or the end of the Cold War. Not only do structural theories tend to fixate on one cause or stream of causation, they are inherently incomplete because the influence of structural causes cannot be known without also identifying the necessary role of catalysts. As long as we ignore the precipitants that actually encourage actors to act, we cannot make accurate generalizations about the relationships between more remote causation and the outcomes that we are trying to explain. Nor can we test the accuracy of such generalizations without accompanying data on the presence or absence of catalysts. In the absence of an appropriate catalyst (or a ‘‘streetcar’’ that failed to arrive), wars might never have happened. Concrete information on their presence (‘‘streetcars’’ that did arrive) might alter our understanding of the explanatory significance of other variables. But since catalysts and contingencies are so difficult to handle theoretically and empirically, perhaps we should focus instead on probing the theoretical role of contingencies via the development of ‘‘what if ’’ scenarios.

#### threats are real yo

**Ravenal ‘9**

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Quite expectedly, the more doctrinaire of the non-interventionists take pains to deny any straightforward, and thereforelegitimate, security motive in American foreign and military policy. In fact, this denial leads to a more sweeping rejection of any recognizably rational basis for American foreign policy, and, even, sometimes (among the more theoretical of the non-interventionists), a preference for non-rational accounts, or “models,” of virtually any nation’s foreign policy-making.4 One could call this tendency among anti-imperialists “motive displacement.” More specifically, in the cases under review here, one notes a receptivity to any reworking of history, and any current analysis of geopolitics, that denigrates “the threat”; and, along with this,a positing of “imperialism” (the almost self-referential and primitive impulse) as a sufficient explanation for the often strenuous and risky actions of great powers such as the United States. Thus, not only is “empire” taken to be a sufficient and, in some cases, a necessary condition in bringing about foreign “threats”; but, by minimizing the extent and seriousness of these threats, the anti-imperialists put themselves into the position of lacking a rational explanation for the derivation of the (pointless at best, counter-productive at worst) policies that they designate as imperialistic. A pungent example of this threat denigration and motive displacement is Eland’s account of American intervention in the Korean and Vietnam wars: After North Korea invaded, the Truman administration intervened merely for the purpose of a demonstration to friends and foes alike. Likewise, according to eminent cold war historians, the United States did not inter- vene in Vietnam because it feared communism, which was fragmented, or the Soviet Union, which wanted détente with the West, or China, which was weak, but because it did not want to appear timid to the world. The behavior of the United States in both Korea and Vietnam is typical of imperial powers, which are always concerned about their reputation, pres- tige, and perceived resolve. (Eland 2004, 64) Of course, the motive of “reputation,” to the extent that it exists in any particular instance, is a part of the complex of motives that characterize a great power that is drawn toward the role of hegemon (not the same thing as “empire”). Reputation is also a component of the power projec- tion that is designed to serve the interest of national security. Rummaging through the concomitants of “imperialism,” Eland (2004, 65)discovers the thesis of “threat inflation” (in this case, virtual threat invention): Obviously, much higher spending for the military, homeland security, and foreign aid are required for a policy of global intervention than for a policy of merely defending the republic. For example, after the cold war, the security bureaucracies began looking for new enemies to justify keeping defense and intelligence budgets high. Similarly, Eland (ibid., 183), in a section entitled “Imperial Wars Spike Corporate Welfare,” attributes a large portion of the U.S. defense budget—particularly the procurement of major weapons systems, such as “Virginia-class submarines . . . aircraft carriers . . . F-22 fighters . . . [and] Osprey tilt-rotor transport aircraft”—not to the systemically derived requirement for certain kinds of military capabilities, but, rather, to the imperatives of corporate pork. He opines that such weapons have no stra- tegic or operational justification; that “the American empire, militarily more dominant than any empire in world history, can fight brushfire wars against terrorists and their ‘rogue’ state sponsors without those gold- plated white elephants.” The underlying notion of “the security bureaucracies . . . looking for new enemies” is a threadbare concept that has somehow taken hold across the political spectrum, from the radical left (viz. Michael Klare [1981], who refers to a “threat bank”), to the liberal center (viz. Robert H. Johnson [1997], who dismisses most alleged “threats” as “improbable dangers”), to libertarians (viz. Ted Galen Carpenter [1992], Vice President for Foreign and Defense Policy of the Cato Institute, who wrote a book entitled A Search for Enemies). What is missing from most analysts’ claims of “threat inflation,” however, is a convincing theory of why, say, the American government significantly(not merely in excusable rhetoric) might magnify and even invent threats (and, more seriously, act on such inflated threat estimates). In a few places, Eland (2004, 185) suggests that such behavior might stem from military or national security bureaucrats’ attempts to enhance their personal status and organizational budgets, or even from the influence and dominance of “the military-industrial complex”; viz.: “Maintaining the empire and retaliating for the blowback from that empire keeps what President Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex fat and happy.” Or, in the same section: In the nation’s capital, vested interests, such as the law enforcement bureaucracies . . . routinely take advantage of “crises”to satisfy parochial desires. Similarly, many corporations use crises to get pet projects— a.k.a. pork—funded by the government. And national security crises, because of people’s fears, are especially ripe opportunities to grab largesse. (Ibid., 182) Thus, “bureaucratic-politics” theory, which once made several reputa- tions (such as those of Richard Neustadt, Morton Halperin, and Graham Allison) in defense-intellectual circles, and spawned an entire sub-industry within the field of international relations,5 is put into the service of dismissing putative security threats as imaginary. So, too, can a surprisingly cognate theory, “public choice,”6 which can be considered the right-wing analog of the “bureaucratic-politics” model, and is a preferred interpretation of governmental decision- making among libertarian observers. As Eland (2004, 203) summarizes: Public-choice theory argues [that] the government itself can develop sepa- rate interests from its citizens. The government reflects the interests of powerful pressure groups and the interests of the bureaucracies and the bureaucrats in them. Although this problem occurs in both foreign and domestic policy, it may be more severe in foreign policy because citizens pay less attention to policies that affect them less directly. There is, in this statement of public-choice theory, a certain ambiguity, and a certain degree of contradiction: Bureaucrats are supposedly, at the same time, subservient to societal interest groups and autonomous from society in general. This journal has pioneered the argument that state autonomy is a likely consequence of the public’s ignorance of most areas of state activity (e.g., Somin 1998; DeCanio 2000a, 2000b, 2006, 2007; Ravenal 2000a). But state autonomy does not necessarily mean that bureaucrats substitute their own interests for those of what could be called the “national society” that they ostensibly serve. I have argued (Ravenal 2000a) that, precisely because of the public-ignorance and elite-expertise factors, and especially because the opportunities—at least for bureaucrats (a few notable post-government lobbyist cases nonwithstanding)—for lucrative self-dealing are stringently fewer in the defense and diplomatic areas of government than they are in some of the contract-dispensing and more under-the-radar-screen agencies of government, the “public-choice” imputation of self-dealing, rather than working toward the national interest (which, however may not be synonymous with the interests, perceived or expressed, of citizens!) is less likely to hold. In short, state autonomy is likely to mean, in the derivation of foreign policy, that “state elites” are using rational judgment, in insulation from self-promoting interest groups—about what strategies, forces, and weapons are required for national defense. Ironically, “public choice”—not even a species of economics, but rather a kind of political interpretation—is not even about “public” choice, since, like the bureaucratic-politics model, it repudiates the very notion that bureaucrats make truly “public” choices; rather, they are held, axiomatically, to exhibit “rent-seeking” behavior, wherein they abuse their public positions in order to amass private gains, or at least to build personal empires within their ostensibly official niches. Such sub- rational models actually explain very little of what they purport to observe. Of course, there is some truth in them, regarding the “behavior” of some people, at some times, in some circumstances, under some conditions of incentive and motivation. But the factors that they posit operate mostly as constraints on the otherwise rational optimization of objectives that, if for no other reason than the playing out of official roles, transcends merely personal or parochial imperatives. My treatment of “role” differs from that of the bureaucratic-politics theorists, whose model of the derivation of foreign policy depends heavily, and acknowledgedly, on a narrow and specific identification of the role- playing of organizationally situated individuals in a partly conflictual “pulling and hauling” process that “results in” some policy outcome. Even here, bureaucratic-politics theorists Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow (1999, 311) allow that “some players are not able to articulate [sic] the governmental politics game because their conception of their job does not legitimate such activity.” This is a crucial admission, and one that points— empirically—to the need for a broader and generic treatment of role. Roles (all theorists state) give rise to “expectations” of performance. My point is that virtually every governmental role, and especially national-security roles, and particularly the roles of the uniformed mili- tary, embody expectations of devotion to the “national interest”; rational- ity in the derivation of policy at every functional level; and objectivity in the treatment of parameters, especially external parameters such as “threats” and the power and capabilities of other nations. Sub-rational models (such as “public choice”) fail to take into account even a partial dedication to the “national” interest (or even the possibility that the national interest may be honestly misconceived in more paro- chial terms). In contrast, an official’s role connects the individual to the (state-level) process, and moderates the (perhaps otherwise) self-seeking impulses of the individual. Role-derived behavior tends to be formalized and codified; relatively transparent and at least peer-reviewed, so as to be consistent with expectations; surviving the particular individual and trans- mitted to successors and ancillaries; measured against a standard and thus corrigible; defined in terms of the performed function and therefore derived from the state function; and uncorrrupt, because personal cheating and even egregious aggrandizement are conspicuously discouraged. My own direct observation suggests that defense decision-makers attempt to “frame” the structure of the problems that they try to solve on the basis of the most accurate intelligence. They make it their business to know where the threats come from. Thus, threats are not “socially constructed” (even though, of course, some values are). A major reason for the rationality, and the objectivity, of the process is that much security planning is done, not in vaguely undefined circum- stances that offer scope for idiosyncratic, subjective behavior, but rather in structured and reviewed organizational frameworks. Non-rationalities (which are bad for understanding and prediction) tend to get filtered out. People are fired for presenting skewed analysis and for making bad predictions. This is because something important is riding on the causal analysis and the contingent prediction. For these reasons, “public choice” does not have the “feel” of reality to many critics who have participated in the structure of defense decision-making. In that structure, obvious, and even not-so-obvious,“rent-seeking” would not only be shameful; it would present a severe risk of career termination. And, as mentioned, the defense bureaucracy is hardly a productive place for truly talented rent-seekers to operatecompared to opportunities for personal profit in the commercial world. A bureaucrat’s very self-placement in these reaches of government testi- fies either to a sincere commitment to the national interest or to a lack of sufficient imagination to exploit opportunities for personal profit.