

## PRAGMATISM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY AND RESEARCH

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### RESUMEN

Este artículo examina la literatura reciente sobre la intersección entre pragmatismo filosófico y relaciones internacionales (RI), incluyendo la teoría y la metodología de investigación de las RI. Se sostiene que uno de los obstáculos que motivan las teorías y metodologías pragmatistas de las RI es la dificultad de definir el pragmatismo, en particular si existe la necesidad de una definición más genérica de pragmatismo, o una más específica que se vincule con las metas de teóricos e investigadores de las relaciones internacionales. Aunque el pragmatismo filosófico no se ajusta fácilmente a ninguno de los marcos teóricos tradicionales en RI, aquí esbozo una teoría pragmatista de las RI que se inspira en los trabajos de John Dewey y Richard Rorty. Sobre la metodología de las RI, señalo de qué manera la combinación del pragmatismo filosófico y los métodos de investigación en RI se han beneficiado enormemente de las contribuciones de algunos pragmatistas líderes de las RI y que hay signos de esperanza en que dicha relación puede enriquecerse posteriormente.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

*Pragmatismo, relaciones internacionales, investigación, teoría, práctica, John Dewey, Richard Rorty.*

### ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper is examine the recent literature on the intersection between philosophical pragmatism and International Relations (IR), including IR theory and IR research methodology. One of the obstacles to motivating pragmatist IR theories and research methodologies, I contend, is the difficulty of defining pragmatism, particularly whether there is a need for a more generic definition of pragmatism or one narrowly tailored to the goals of IR theorists and researchers. Even though philosophical pragmatism does not fit nicely into any of the traditional theoretic frameworks in International Relations, I sketch of a philosophically-inspired pragmatist IR theory based on the writings of John Dewey and Richard Rorty. On the topic of IR research methodology, I show how the cross-pollination of philosophical pragmatism and IR research methods has benefited immensely from the contributions of several leading IR pragmatists, and there are hopeful signs that the relationship can be further enriched.

### KEY WORDS

*Pragmatism, international relations, research, theory, John Dewey, Richard Rorty.*

The goal of this paper is to examine the recent literature on the intersection between philosophical pragmatism and International Relations (IR), including IR theory and IR research methodology. One of the obstacles to motivating pragmatist IR theories and research methods, I contend, is the difficulty of defining pragmatism, particularly whether there is a need for a more generic definition of pragmatism or one narrowly tailored to the goals of IR theorists and researchers. If we are talking about philosophical pragmatism, then there is no generic definition, but rather a plurality of accounts old and new. Most of these philosophical pragmatisms do not fit nicely into any of the traditional theoretic frameworks in International Relations (realism, liberalism and constructivism). Nevertheless, I sketch of a philosophically inspired pragmatist IR theory, a flexible policy-making approach that floats freely between multiple theories, tailoring them to the specific conditions of the international situation and helping practitioners craft tools that resolve or ameliorate particular global problems. On the topic of IR research methodology, I show how the cross-pollination of philosophical pragmatism and IR research methods has benefited immensely from the contributions of several leading IR pragmatists, and there are hopeful signs that the relationship can be further enriched.

The paper is organized as follows. In the first section, I distinguish three kinds of pragmatism that philosophers typically invoke: generic, paleo-pragmatism and neo-pragmatism. The second section summarizes the three main IR theories and then sketches two novel IR theories, each inspired by John Dewey's and Richard Rorty's philosophies, respectively. The third section canvasses a series of writings by IR pragmatists on how philosophical pragmatism might improve IR research methods, followed by a series of suggestions for ways in which more progress might be made towards integrating the two. The paper concludes with some implications of wedding philosophical pragmatism and IR, including the hope for greater unity among philosophical pragmatists and IR pragmatists.

### THREE SENSES OF PRAGMATISM

Prior to speculating about the extent to which IR and philosophical pragmatism intersect, I would like to inquire into what the term ‘pragmatism’ means, generally. Is the concept theoretically sophisticated, tied to philosophical notions of experience, truth and language? Or is it an unsophisticated –that is, philosophically shallow– invocation of ‘what proves useful’, ‘that which expedites the process’ or ‘what ultimately works’? A general, though still incomplete, answer to these questions is that pragmatism is a contested concept. There exists extensive disagreement among scholars, and especially between philosophers, over how to define the term’s meaning. Indeed, disputes can be traced to at least three distinctly different usages.

#### GENERIC PRAGMATISM

In the first sense, ‘pragmatism’ denotes a naïve, everyday or vernacular usage –what Michael Eldridge calls “generic pragmatism”<sup>1</sup>. In the generic sense, pragmatism also signifies an American temperament or a widespread feature of the American way of life. Robert Westbrook (2005, p. ix) explains:

In ordinary speech, a ‘pragmatist’ is someone (often a politician) who is willing to settle for a glass half empty when standing on principle threatens to achieve less. Pragmatists are concerned above all about practical results; they have a “can do” attitude and are impatient with those of a “should do” disposition who never seem to get anything done. Americans are often said to be a particularly pragmatic people, and many Americans pride themselves on a sensibility others are inclined to label shallowly opportunistic.

<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, I have termed this sense of pragmatism ‘vulgar,’ which gives it a strongly negative connotation. See S. Ralston (2010). To avoid this negative connotation, I have decided instead to borrow Michael Eldridge’s (2009) more neutral adjective.

In this vulgar sense, pragmatic has multiple synonyms: practical, expedient, useful, and even entrepreneurial. Etymologically, the Greek root *Pragma* refers to “things, facts, deeds, affairs” and “action, from which our words ‘practice’ and ‘practical’ come” (Thayer, 1968, p. 5; James, 1981 [1907] p. 42).

### **PALEO-PRAGMATISM**

In the second sense, pragmatism is a sophisticated way of thinking about knowledge, existence and social-political affairs initiated by several American philosophers (classic or paleo pragmatists) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, Jane Addams and George Herbert Mead. Although the classic pragmatists were by no means doctrinaire in their assumptions, several key commitments can be distilled from their diverse writings. First, classic pragmatists placed immense importance on the idea that experience begins and ends in the middle of things, rather than from an initial position (e.g., John Locke or Thomas Hobbes’s state of nature) or terminating in a fixed and final end (e.g., Aristotle’s *telos*). Second, human experience is not simply a spectator-like event or a matter of grasping (knowing) the unique essences of objects in the world around us (Diggins, 1994, p. 219). Instead, experience is a series of active engagements or interactions between an organism and its environment. For Dewey, this interaction involves human adjustment, adaptation and growth. Through the use of various instrumentalities (tools, techniques, methods, approaches), humans manipulate conditions in their environment –whether by inquiring into problems, appreciating art or engaging in political action– and, in turn, their attitudes and habits are transformed by the interaction. Third, and lastly, classic pragmatists attempt to overcome dualisms or entrenched conceptual oppositions, for instance, between the individual and society, means and ends and theory and practice. Treating these dualisms as fixed features of reality can block effective inquiry (in Dewey’s parlance,

logic should be prior to ontology), since they artificially limit the extent to which inquirers can imagine possibilities over and above the dual alternatives. Indeed, pragmatism envisions an alternative to absolutist and relativist views of truth, knowledge and reality; it is in one pragmatist's account "a mediate view and like all compromise programs must fight on many fronts at once" (Hook, 1927, p. 9). Contemporary philosophers who identify themselves as classic pragmatists, such as David Hildebrand (2003), Larry Hickman (2007) and John Shook (2000), try to interpret pragmatist ideas consistent with the writings of their originators –in the case of Dewey (1996) that means familiarity with thirty-seven volumes of his collected works.

### NEO-PRAGMATISM

In the third sense, pragmatism is a relatively recent movement in philosophy termed 'neopragmatism' or 'new pragmatism'. New pragmatism revives features of classic pragmatism as well as ideas found in continental, postmodernist and analytic philosophy. Contemporary philosophers who consider themselves neopragmatists include Hilary Putnam, Nelson Goodman, Richard Rorty, Donald Davidson and Cornell West. Rorty's neopragmatism merges with Dewey's paleo-pragmatism in its rejection of epistemological theories that posit some objective reality (reason, sensations, clear and distinct ideas) as the ultimate ground for meaning (or the relationship between word and object). Rorty (1979, p. 159) writes:

we may think of knowledge as a relation to propositions [...] or we may think of both knowledge and justification as privileged relations to the objects [but either way] [...] to reach that point [i.e., thinking the word-object relation to be ultimate, real or really real] is to reach the foundations of knowledge.

Both are unacceptable avenues because knowledge is not a static relation between words and objects; rather it is the output

of a dynamic and experiential process of inquiry and discovery – that is, a process of coming to know. However, classical pragmatist and new pragmatists part ways on the issue of whether experience or language is a more primary resource for coming to know, as well as the extent to which science and scientific method are significant drivers of the process. In contrast to Rorty, Dewey sees scientific method and social inquiry as empowering members of a community to resolve their shared problems through consensus-directed inquiry. For Rorty and other similarly inclined neo-pragmatists, science is not a privileged method for accessing reality; rather, it is one of many plausible instruments and vocabularies for describing the world. The dominance of the scientific worldview for Rorty (1989, 2000) ought to give way to a multiplicity of theoretical, theological and philosophical perspectives, conversational networks, public expressions of solidarity and private quests for self-realization. It is in this way that philosophy, at least for Rorty (1982, p. xlii), becomes a rough-and-ready tool of cultural criticism, not an esteemed quest for truth and certainty.

### CAVEAT

It should be noted that these three senses of pragmatism do not exhaust the term's spectrum of meanings, whether in academic or popular usage. As we will see, there are multiple permutations of these three, as well as entirely novel versions, prevalent in the IR literature. Still, there is a tendency within the IR literature (by no means universal, but still there) to either equivocate between the generic sense of pragmatism and its more sophisticated cousins (pale- and neo-) or reduce pragmatism to one of either paleo- or neo-pragmatism's commitments, such as instrumentalism, cultural critique, experimentalism, empiricism, anti-foundationalism, anti-dualism and truth understood as the outcome of inquiry or discourse. The question is then: To what extent are these moves (equivocation and reductionism) necessary for making pragmatism useful for IR theorists and researchers?

## PRAGMATISM IN IR THEORY

In this section, I present the three dominant theories in the field of IR –realism, liberalism and constructivism– and trace their connections to an emerging pragmatist approach. These theories help explain how states interact on the international stage and what factors influence the outcome of international competition, cooperation and conflict<sup>2</sup>. Besides improving our understanding of affairs between and among nations, they also help country and area experts as well as diplomats and higher-level appointees in government frame a coherent and effective foreign policy agenda. In other words, IR theory enriches the practice of international diplomacy.

### THREE DOMINANT IR THEORIES

**Realism.** Reinhold Niebuhr is often credited with being an original IR realist (Wohlforth, 2008, p. 132). A notable theologian and philosopher of the twentieth century, Niebuhr insisted that the motivation to make wars and dominate others is innately human (De Vries, 2009; Walt, 1998, p. 31; Lovin, 2008). As contemporaries, he criticized Dewey for not taking seriously the “predatory self-interest” of human beings and for not seeing that

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<sup>2</sup> Banks (2006 [1984]) notes how IR theory involves competition between a plurality of ideas: “To seek an understanding of international relations, therefore, is to take part in a debate between competing sets of ideas.” Holsti (1976) compares IR theories to colored sunglasses, filtering out salient features of international events and interactions between nation-states that are relevant to the theories. Likewise, Jervis (2006 [1998], p. 193) states: “No one approach consistently maintains a leading position: each of them catches important elements of international politics, and many of our arguments are about the relative importance of and the interrelationships among various factors.” Weber (2001, p. 2) sees IR theories as exercises in descriptive and normative storytelling: “To try to make sense of international politics, we often turn to international relations theory. IR theory makes organizing generalizations about international politics. IR theory is a collection of stories about the world of international politics. And in telling stories about international politics, IR theory doesn’t just present what is going on in the world out there. IR theory also imposes its own vision of what the world out there looks like.”

power, not education, was the crucial weapon for confronting power (Niebuhr, 1948, pp. xiv-xv; Eldridge, 1998, p. 55). Another classical realist, Hans Morgenthau (1978, pp. 10-12) conceived realism in terms of power-based interest, but not in a fixed or acontextual manner; rather, interest is always relative to the social and political situation in which foreign policy is crafted –an admittedly pragmatist conception. However, the classical realism of Niebuhr and Morgenthau is far removed from the neorealism that IR scholars and practitioners embrace today<sup>3</sup>. Following Kenneth Waltz (1959, pp. 8-10; 1979, pp. 91-3), neo-realists portray the international stage as an anarchic space, roughly equivalent to a Hobbesian state of nature, in which agents compete for geo-political power and influence. Nation-states are unitary actors; some (offensive realists) see them as innately aggressive, while others (defensive realists) as preoccupied with security (Walker, 2006 [1994], p. 40, Jervis, 2006 [1998], p. 201). Finally, nation-states seek to balance their power relative to other states, both internally, by accumulating resources or military-economic capabilities, and externally, by forming alliances with other nation-states with compatible interests (Waltz, 1979, pp. 116-128). Although it is the dominant theoretical approach in IR, from a paleo-pragmatist standpoint, realism reflects a deep-seated absolutism: a fixed conception of state preferences (or human nature for classical realists), a static view of the international environment and a value hierarchy that affords far too much purchase to raw power, and far too little to experimentation, intelligent inquiry and educative growth<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Rather than start with a characterization of individual human nature, neo-realists and structural realists begin by considering the motivations of nationstates as international actors. Banks (2006 [1984], p. 80) explains the downfall of classical realism: “In the United States especially, the sober and prudent rules of international conduct as laid down by the general theory of classical realism came to be twisted and misused. Such basic notions as ‘order’, ‘stability’, ‘balance’ and ‘vital interest’ became self-serving justifications for intervention, for an East-West arms race and even for anti-communist dogma.”

<sup>4</sup> However, John Olafsson (2009, p. 216) calls “Dewey [...] a realist about vio-



**Liberalism.** In contrast to realism, liberalism makes preferences, not capabilities, the central determinants of state behavior; nation-states are plural not unitary actors; and preferences vary across different states depending on economic, cultural and governance factors. So, the scope of state interaction widens to include not only actions motivated by the desire to increase geo-political power and security, but also cultural and economic development. Moreover, liberalism considers the actions of various non-state agents (corporations, humanitarian organizations and individuals) as relevant to the process of foreign policy formation. For the liberal internationalist, the economic, social and political interdependence of intra-state actors becomes the model for a global order of inter-state relationships (Burchill, 1995, p. 63; Fukuyama, 1992; Rawls, 1999). Out of liberal theory emerges the thesis that “[d]emocratic capitalism leads to peace” (Doyle, 1997, p. 42, Kant, 1970 [1795]). Consequently, the international stage no longer resembles a Hobbesian war of all against all; instead, it represents an interdependent network of actors with bountiful opportunities, particularly for liberal states to peacefully coordinate actions, build global institutions and develop cultural and social capital (Milner 2006 [1991], pp. 233-235). In one way, liberalism’s orientation towards culture and economics defines it as an IR theory of common sense –and thus, it is in a very generic way an IR theory of pragmatism. Gone are many of the absolutist features of realism that pragmatists find repellent, such as fixed state motivations and a strict value hierarchy. Rather than enshrining specific ends such as power and security for all time, the pragmatist believes that our commitments should be to selecting intelligent means, such as tools for situational problem-solving, and cultivating common-sense approaches, such as consulting

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lence: It is to be expected, given our institutional arrangements, but this does not mean that there are circumstances which generally require or allow violence. Dewey held the same view in international affairs. He argued that advocating some kind of justified warfare missed the point of opposing warfare on the whole.”

best policy-making practices. While philosophical pragmatists have endorsed versions of liberalism –for instance, Dewey’s “renascent liberalism” or Rorty’s “ironic liberalism” –what they reject are any metaphysical foundations or strong epistemological claims associated with its Enlightenment heritage (Cochran, 1996, p. 42; 1999, p. 156).

**Constructivism.** Rather than geo-political power, security or cultural-economic factors, constructivists stress the value of ideas in crafting relationships, norms and institutions on the international stage. What constructivists label ‘ideas’ are threats, phobias, objectives, discourses, identities and other perceived, though not always real, factors affecting the behavior of states and non-state actors. According to Robert Jervis (2006 [1998], p. 195), the constructivist has a distinctly “normative agenda,” a “desire to see world politics transformed by the spread of appropriate norms, identities, and concepts of world politics”. Emanuel Adler (2002, p. 95) identifies the strongly hermeneutic underpinnings of constructivism, what he calls “constructivism’s *common ground*, the view that the material world does not come classified, and that, therefore, the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language”. Given the centrality of inquiry to John Dewey’s pragmatism, it is tempting to infer that paleo-pragmatists would endorse some version of constructivism. Inquiry accomplishes much the same work as thought, generates the connections between ideas and renders new relationships, norms and institutions, in much the same way as constructivists believe they operate in international politics. However, to group Dewey with IR constructivists would be a mistake, for this operation overlooks Dewey’s many writings about how experience is had, felt and undergone (MW, 3, pp. 158, 179; LW, 1, pp. 3-4, 114-117, 379). Ideas and discourses do not construct the totality of our experience; neither do they thoroughly construct our particular experience of international affairs. We just have these experiences, directly, yet mediated by the products –whether habits, ideas or norms– rendered by prior

inquiries. So, what are constructed are the tools or instruments employed as means to negotiate these experiences, not the experiences themselves (Prawat, 2000, pp. 830-831; Johnston, 2009, p. 88). Therefore, Dewey could not endorse a full-fledged version of constructivism. As we will see, Rorty's neo-pragmatism more closely aligns with the constructivist impulse to understand the world in predominantly normative and ideational terms.

### A PRAGMATIST IR THEORY

**Deweyan.** In the essay "Three Independent Factors in Morals", John Dewey expressed doubts about whether any single moral theory can be relied upon in ethical problem-solving to the exclusion of all others. To virtue theorists, he responds that the cultivation of a "scheme of virtues" is only one of "three independent variables" in moral philosophy, including the imposition of duties or "demands" (deontology) and the realization of ends or "goods" (consequentialism) (LW, 5, pp. 285-286). Instead of acknowledging the utility of all three, dependent upon the specific and unique demands of emergent situations, moral philosophers "postulate one single principle as an explanation" and solution of all morally problematic situations (LW, 5, p. 279). Their mistake lies in "reducing all the elements in moral situations to a single commensurable principle", when the qualities of these situations tend to be so diverse and irreducibly complex as to defy such "oversimplified" or reductionist accounts (LW, 5, p. 288). Instead, ethical inquiry demands a host of tools, an entire tool-kit of deontological, consequentialist and virtue-based instrumentalities to address the multitude of problematic conditions in any particular moral situation.

How, then, is Dewey's essay on ethics and moral theory relevant to modeling a pragmatist approach to IR? Simply put, effective problem-solving begs for a plurality of theoretical approaches, whether the scope of the problem is local or global, moral or prudential, domestic or international. According to Stephen M. Walt (1998, p. 44), "the 'complete diplomat' of the future should

remain cognizant of realism's emphasis on the inescapable role of power, keep liberalism's awareness of domestic forces in mind, and occasionally reflect on constructivism's vision of change." Likewise, Dewey scholar James Scott Johnston (2009, p. 33) notes that for the pragmatist, "different contexts, in which different subject-matter is under consideration, necessitate different techniques, different approaches, indeed, different use of (differing) abstract ideas". Besides an endorsement of methodological pluralism, a Deweyan IR theory would bring the rigorous methods of inquiry and experimentation to a panoply of international problems, from the unfair wages and factory conditions offered by multi-national corporations, to child soldiering and human trafficking, to illicit exchanges in arms and drugs and, perhaps most importantly, to situations where military force is exercised unilaterally, whether by state or non-state actors, and for the sake of achieving narrow goals (e.g. increase of geo-political power or exclusive control of scarce resources).

**Rortyan.** Constructivism is the IR theory most compatible with neo-pragmatism. The constructivist's normative and ideational focus roughly corresponds to Richard Rorty's (1989, 2000) endorsement of a plurality of theoretical, theological and philosophical perspectives, conversational networks, public expressions of solidarity and private quests for self-realization. Several IR scholars (e.g. Brown, 1994; Cochran, 1996) have argued that Rorty's philosophical writings are relevant to IR theory, particularly the normative debate between communitarians and cosmopolitans. However, Rorty's (1982, p. xl) approach might even be more radical than that of constructivists, since it unsettles our common-sense way of "encountering reality", asking us to select alternative vocabularies and metaphors to describe the international scene, rather than alternative methods for warranting our ideas and interpretations. Moreover, unlike constructivists, Rorty is not nearly so concerned with the institutional forms that do or should govern relations between international actors (Cochran, 1996, p. 52). Indeed, his argument for increased solidarity or the

extension of a 'we' feeling does not require respect for statist boundaries, and thus flies in face of our post-Westphalian political order. What Rorty (1989, p. xv) is more concerned with is the dreaded possibility that the meaning of political community could be widened beyond the moral relations of individuals to include all of humanity (the cosmopolitan view), thereby weakening the 'we' feeling, private-public split and ethnocentrism that he and his fellow liberal ironists endorse ('liberal' because they believe "cruelty is the worst thing", 'ironists' because they "face up to the contingency of [...] [their] own most central beliefs and desires")<sup>5</sup>.

Of interest to some IR scholars, especially liberals, is Rorty's (1998) short essay on global human rights discourse, entitled "Human Rights, Rationality and Sentimentality". Indeed, Molly Cochran (1996, pp. 46-48; 1999, pp. 160-162) thinks it is central to appreciating how pragmatism, and specifically neopragmatism, can be successfully integrated with the dominant international relations theories.<sup>6</sup> I prefer another paper of Rorty's, though, one that highlights not only the moral dimension, but also the economic dimension, of interactions between states and non-state actors on the world stage. In "Globalization, the Politics of Identity and Social Hope", Rorty (1999, p. 235) objects to what has been called, following Charles Taylor, the "politics of recognition", or the struggle by marginalized groups to find their voice in multicultural societies, because it is not "a new sort of politics". Instead, he prefers two long-standing (and hopeful) modes of thinking about the relationship between politics and economics; one, the Marxist dream of a class-less society brought about by a worker's revolution and the disappearance of capitalism; and two, the liberal technocrat's dream of "peace and technological progress [that] would make possible hitherto undreamt-

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<sup>5</sup> Rorty does not come down on the side of communitarians, as against cosmopolitans; rather, as Cochran (1996:46) points out, he undermines the intractable dimension of the debate, namely, the "either/or choice between universal and particular epistemological claims that has yielded few solutions".

<sup>6</sup> For an informative review of Cochran's (1999) book, see Gould (2000).

of economic prosperity within the framework of the free market” (p. 230). While radical democrats and agonistic political theorists conceive the globalization discourse as inevitably contestational, rather than cooperative, based on identity and difference, not deliberation and consensus, Rorty believes that this turn toward contestation is a sign of something far worse, namely, that we have lost, or are in the process of losing, our faith and capacity “to construct a plausible narrative of progress” akin to Marxist and Liberal utopias (p. 232). Thus, a Rortyan version of IR theory would rely heavily on the construction of alternative vocabularies and narratives, creative ways to reclaim our hope for a better political and economic future.

#### **PRAGMATISM IN IR RESEARCH**

In the wake of the Cold War, IR scholars began to reconsider their approach to research, not only how they theorized state and non-state actor relations, but also how they understood the basic assumptions guiding their inquiries. Most pre-Cold War research was strongly positivist in orientation. Despite the widespread faith in positivism, positivist researchers failed to predict one of the most important recent events in the history of international relations: the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, prediction is not the sole function of IR research –or for that matter, social science research generally. More commonly, especially among positivists and neo-positivists, research serves an explanatory function, following a highly rigorous and technical procedure, such as devising a research question, operationalizing concepts, constructing hypotheses, choosing theories to test, selecting a research design (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental and cross-sectional), employing various data collection techniques (surveys, interviews, random sampling, archival research) as well as appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical methods (e.g., correlation, Chi-square, analysis of variance, simple and multiple regression analysis, aggregated or time series data analysis) to

arrive at an answer to the research question<sup>7</sup>. Alternative approaches have also gained a foothold in the IR research community, some competing with positivist methodologies (often referred to as post-positivist) and others complementing (or supplementing) them: (i) exploratory research (tentative or working hypotheses, focus groups, field research, case studies, structured interviews and document analysis), (ii) descriptive research (surveys, content analysis, and simple descriptive statistics, such as mean, median, mode, percentages, t-statistic) and (iii) understanding (or *verstehen*) oriented research (appreciation of agent-dependent meanings, ideal-types, case studies, document analysis, structured interviews, deep, thick or phenomenological description). Though positivism still dominates IR research, methodological eclecticism (or pluralism) in the choice of research tools has gained greater acceptance, especially among IR constructivists and pragmatists, but not without an associated cost, namely, uncertainty and contestation at the margins about what constitutes *good* social scientific research.

Rather than outline an ambitious program for IR research in the pragmatist tradition, I pursue a more modest plan, canvassing some of the extant literature on pragmatism and IR research methods and then offering a short list of suggestions for how IR scholars might proceed to integrate the lessons of philosophical pragmatism, both classical and new, into their varied research approaches.

## EXTANT LITERATURE

**Cochran.** In “Deweyan Pragmatism and Post-Positivist Social Science in IR”, Molly Cochran (2002) argues that Deweyan pragmatism offers an alternative model of research for IR scholars disenchanted with positivism. According to Cochran, “an important part of the appeal of positivism within the discipline of International Relations (IR) is the belief that it represents the appli-

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Kenneth Waltz (1979, p. 6) contends that explanation, not prediction, should be the function of IR theory and research.

cation of science to the study of world politics” and “its promise of the steady accumulation of objective, and therefore reliable, knowledge about how world politics work” (p. 525). While positivism has come under attack for its many shortcomings –e.g. a strict fact-value dichotomy, an ontologically dubious covering-law model of explanation, and formal methods to establish causal inference (or covariance) that neglect social action’s agent-dependent meaning– it has still managed to remain dominant, providing many of the key assumptions guiding contemporary IR research. Even though post-positivist methodologies challenge the positivist orthodoxy, from ideal-type approaches (inspired by Max Weber’s social theory) to critical theory approaches (built on insights of members of the Frankfurt School and Jürgen Habermas), Cochran proposes another route: a research program modeled after John Dewey’s theory of social inquiry, for “a social science founded on Deweyan pragmatism would not be a positivist one” (p. 533). Of the many criteria for establishing a genuinely post-positivist research program, the three Cochran sees Deweyan pragmatism as satisfying are: (i) the ability to appreciate agents’ subjective meanings, (ii) the capacity to produce evaluations of social action that can be generalized beyond a particular situation or event, and (iii) the potential to accommodate the plural cultural perspectives that inevitably emerge within a global community of social scientists (p. 542). Since pragmatism preserves the better features of science (methodological rigor, testability, fallibility, etc.), it also avoids a common foible of post-positivist researchers, viz., their tendency to reject all claims to an objective, “scientific way of choosing one normative commitment over another”, with the result that (as Paul Feyerabend intoned) “anything goes” (p. 543).

**Kratochwil.** Friedrich Kratochwil (2009, p. 11) distills pragmatism into a series of “points” for constructivists to consider when undertaking “a pragmatic reorientation in theorizing the field [of IR]”. The first is an “*argument for a pluralism of methods and approaches*”, which relies on a close reading of the philosophy of science literature. With the rise of a Kuhnian sociology of



scientific revolutions as a description of scientific progress, as well as the decline of a Popperian model of theory falsification (theory testing resembles the valid deductive operation of *modus tollens*), the door is opened for researchers to consider a diversity of methods and approaches, especially in addressing anomalies in the dominant paradigm. Second, “[a]nalytical and methodological eclecticism”, Kratchowil insists, should be the norm in a pragmatist research program, combining multiple methods in sometimes opposed research traditions in order to address “the problem at hand” (p. 13). Another point is that pragmatism acknowledges that science constitutes a “social practice”, an activity whereby practitioners engage in inquiry, dialogue and a search for consensus, not apodictic certainty. Kratchowil concludes the piece by offering a rationale for making “a pragmatic turn” in IR research, particularly its consistency with the “trajectory” of current debates over epistemology in the social sciences, its compatibility with previous constructivist and historical turns and its turn away from theory-motivated research, which proves to be not only too “scholastic’ in nature but also frequently woefully inadequate in its conceptual development” (p. 25).

**Gould and Onuf.** Harry Gould and Nicholas Onuf’s (2009) essay “Pragmatism, Legal Realism and Constructivism” observes a significant area of overlap between pragmatism and constructivism, specifically in their mutual rejection of formalism and attention to the conditions of experience. Indeed, the authors claim that “some constructivists are beginning to realize they have been pragmatists all along” (p. 27). Both constructivists and pragmatists mount strong objections against philosophical realism, or the view that there exists a mind-independent reality, and the related correspondence theory of knowledge/truth, or that knowledge of what is true means that some mental representation (e.g. sense impression, idea, concept) mirrors some independent state of affairs. Gould and Onuf note that most paleo-pragmatists have been skeptical of the value of

rules in constructing our knowledge of the social world (p. 32)<sup>8</sup>. Looking to legal realism, or paleo-pragmatism applied to legal theory, the authors discover two tenets that suggest the source of pragmatists' rule-skepticism: (i) a functional and context-sensitive distinction between values (normative judgments) and facts (empirical observations) and (ii) an argument that action should always have more evidential weight than speech. Unfortunately, these tenets bring acting in alignment with facts and speaking with values, thereby privileging the former over the latter. Since the distinction between acting and doing is specious (proven by modern advances in speech-act theory, e.g. J. L. Austin's notion of performative utterances), pragmatists' rule-skepticism is faulty. The upshot is that constructivists can take a pragmatic turn in their research, remaining cognizant that while agents "may not decide on the basis of formally available rules, there are always rules underlying their decisions -- even when they claim no rules are relevant to the situation at hand (thus invoking a rule allowing such a claim)" (p 37). With rule-skepticism out of the way, Gould and Onuf are able to identify three types of rules (hegemonic, hierarchical and heteronomous) that govern authoritative decisions within world public orders – a model that captures the phenomena better than Harold Lasswell and Myres McDougal's two ideal types (minimum and optimum world orders) (38-39)<sup>9</sup>.

**Baert.** Patrick Baert's (2009, p. 47) article "A Neopragmatist Agenda for Social Research" explores how marrying neo-pragmatism to various strands of continental (European) philosophy "changes our priorities about social research". The author

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<sup>8</sup> Gregory Pappas (2008, p. 46) has suggested some reasons why Dewey was skeptical of the value of rules in directing our moral decisions: (i) "morals [or appeals to the letter of the moral rule, not its spirit] can become a device to sanction [...] amoral pursuits", (ii) strict adherence to moral rules "is a formalistic and legalistic view of conduct that usually centers on avoiding the punishment that comes from a failure to follow rules", and (iii) it "encourages a non-aesthetic moral life", a life divorced from creative pursuits and rigidly tied to the observance of external mandates.

<sup>9</sup> See also Walker (2006).

acknowledges that pragmatism's meaning is by no means settled, rather it "still is [...] a heterogenous entity" (p. 49). Indeed, the open-textured meaning of pragmatism ushers in opportunities for hybridized forms (beyond generic, old or new), particularly hybrids that reflect the insights of hermeneutic philosophy and phenomenology. However, these hybridized versions risk coming into direct conflict with two core commitments of traditional social science: (i) its representationalism and (ii) its methodological naturalism. By seeking to faithfully represent social reality, current research practice (what Baert calls the "social cartography model") encounters a difficulty already alluded to by Kratochwil, namely, inquiry merely affirm the theory that motivates the inquirer, rather than tests the theory's validity (p. 52). The second commitment of traditional social science research that Baert's hybrid cannot accommodate is methodological naturalism, or the belief that there is a universal method shared by the natural and social sciences. Given that a covering law model of scientific explanation can operate within both domains, methodological naturalists argue that social science inquiry should imitate inquiry in the natural sciences –a belief widely known as "scientism." What scientism ignores is that the functions of social science research have expanded beyond the traditional ones of prediction and explanation, as well as the extent to which "there are national and local traditions that culminate in distinct methodological practices to such an extent that it is no longer warranted to talk about a unifying method" (p. 54). Eschewing representationalism and methodological naturalism, Baert's account of pragmatist social research, or neopragmatism joined with the insights of Emmanuel Levinas and Georg Hans Gadamer, resembles a genuine hermeneutic activity, sensitive to alterity (Otherness) and valuing reflexive understanding as an outcome of inquiry.

**Isacoff.** In "Pragmatism, History and International Relations," Jonathan B. Isacoff (2009) looks to pragmatism as a resource for guiding developments in IR historical research. He opens with the observation that "most IR research is more interested in

models and explanations of why things happened, rather than the equally significant issue of how we know about past events” (p. 65). As a way of moving beyond the impasse between positivists and postists (or postmodern relativists) over whether there is an objectively true narrative of history, Isacoff turns to John Dewey’s theory of historical inquiry. Unfortunately, many IR scholars have presumptively (and to some extent, uncritically) deferred to positivist assumptions about historical epistemology: “[T]he ontological features of the world are of fundamental importance because it is fully possible to attain ‘objective’ or ‘true’ knowledge of those features” (p. 68). Indeed, the positivist understanding of historical knowledge is identical to the position of philosophical (epistemological/ontological) realists, who contend that the veridicality of historical claims depends on their correspondence with a mind-independent state of affairs (reality)<sup>10</sup>. Since the alternative, postmodernist view sinks historical knowledge into a relativist quagmire of competing discourses and narratives, Dewey’s theory offers a third way. For Dewey, humans inquire about the past in a way similar to how they inquire about present events, framing problems, deploying hypotheses, testing them and reaching tentative conclusions. The distinctive feature of Dewey’s theory is that the past becomes, in a sense, present-ized (in Dewey’s words “history is rewritten”), since historical inquirers construct narratives by selecting facts they deem relevant, thus bringing their present concerns and interests to bear in problematizing the past. Isacoff concludes with a demonstration of how Dewey’s theory helps advance our historical understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Rather than ask what actually occurred, the IR researcher identifies past events (e.g. the Hebron Massacre, the first Intifada or the Six-day War) as they are selectively filtered

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<sup>10</sup> David Hildebrand (2001, p. 183) identifies the error in taking the realist position: “Try as we might to make our investigation of a past as thorough and objective as possible, we cannot create an Archimedean point that replaces our living standpoint, nor can we re-create the complex factors which made that past event unique”.

by successive generations of Israeli and Arab historians, thereby revealing “why a conflict might persist despite both Israeli and Arab assertions of a desire for peace, and despite the obvious fallacy that ‘blame’ and suffering could ever be monopolized solely by one side or the other” (p. 78). In this way, how we know past events becomes as important as what we claim to know about those same events. Thus, alternate epistemological models of historical inquiry, such as Dewey’s, should inform IR research.

## SUGGESTIONS

### CONCEIVE PRAGMATISM AS A TOOL-KIT FOR IR RESEARCHERS

While some philosophical pragmatists might wish to preserve intact the core tenets of paleo-pragmatism (e.g. Dewey’s) or neo-pragmatism (e.g. Rorty’s), the usefulness of pragmatism for IR researchers will often depend on relaxing this sort of orthodoxy. The definition of pragmatism must remain open-textured enough, as Baert (2009) notes, to wed it to new methods and approaches, to fashion select tools in its tool-kit for the sake of resolving specific problems before the inquirer. For instance, in keeping with Dewey’s advice that logic has priority to ontology, pragmatist researchers might treat concepts, hypotheses and ideas as instruments endogenous to inquiry, rather than as exogenous constraints imposed upon all inquiries. However, rigid adherence to the logic-prior-to-ontology formula is not obligatory if one is to call oneself an IR pragmatist. This is not to concede that anything goes, but rather to acknowledge that flexibility, not orthodoxy, is central to pragmatism in IR research.

### EMBRACE A VIEW OF PRAGMATISM IN IR RESEARCH THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH METHODOLOGICAL ECLECTICISM/PLURALISM

One recurring theme throughout the literature on pragmatism and IR research methods (including articles not summarized above) is the need for methodological eclecticism or pluralism. In Bauer

and Brighi's (2009, p. 164) "'pragmatist manifesto' for IR," they call for IR pragmatists to "honour the diversity of methods and perspectives by exercising eclecticism in their research, not being afraid of 'trespassing' disciplinary boundaries". Furthermore, methodological eclecticism in IR research is not just a prescriptive (or normative) matter. It also has empirical content. Patrick Thaddeus Jackson (2011, p. 211) observes that even in the midst of disciplinary altercations about the choice of methods, "curious hybrids" have emerged "as each camp sought to (re-) incorporate methodological admonitions that it had started out rejecting, but to repurpose them in its own novel way". One of the most ambitious attempts to demonstrate how methodological eclecticism works in practice can be found in Jörg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratchowil's (2009) article "On Acting and Knowing: How Pragmatism Can Advance International Relations Research and Methodology". They contrast traditional research methods (such as theory-testing and the "gladiator style of analysis, where one perspective goes forth and slays all others") with a pragmatist approach that creatively deploys abductive reasoning, analytic eclecticism (or the combination of several analytical tools in a series applied to a single data-set) and theory synthesis in whatever combination (and to whatever degree of complexity) the research problem demands (pp. 720-724). Note that a commitment to methodological eclecticism weakens Cochran's thesis that a Deweyan approach to IR research is necessarily post-positivist. Trespassing on the positivist tradition, or borrowing some of its tools, is clearly an option for the methodological pluralist. In some ways, the core idea of methodological eclecticism (or pluralism) merely restates the lesson of Dewey's "Three Independent Factors in Morals" within the domain of social science research: Social inquiry demands a host of tools, an entire tool-kit for that matter, if inquirers are to address the multitude of problematic situations set before them.

UNDERSTAND PRAGMATISM AS A RESOURCE FOR  
EDUCATING A NEW GENERATION OF IR RESEARCHERS

Another way in which IR pragmatist researchers might exploit pragmatism as a resource is to employ it as a pedagogical tool. Why would Deweyan inquiry be relevant to teaching IR research methods? What advantages would there be in spending a class or two outlining how a philosopher conceives social inquiry? Dewey discloses a generic pattern underlying all inquiries, both practical and specialized: (i) felt difficulty, (ii) frame the problem, (iii) suggest solutions (hypotheses), (iv) work out the implications of those suggestions and (v) experiment (MW, 6, p. 236, LW, 12, pp. 73-75). Dewey's generic pattern to inquiry roughly resembles the pattern of social science research: (i) problem definition, (ii) hypothesis construction, (iii) research design, (iv) measurement, (v) data collection, analysis and generalization (adapted from Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 2000, pp. 18-19). Many, though not all, methods courses begin with what appears to be a relatively innocuous account of the scientific method. This account mirrors presentations in several research methods textbooks. For instance, in one, the authors begin by "show[ing] how and discuss[ing] why the social sciences are members of the family of science" (p. 2). The risk in making such a presentation is that it can give students the impression that social science research is merely a diminished form of research in the hard sciences. In other words, it suggests a version of scientism, or the belief that the social sciences should emulate the physical and natural sciences. A superior alternative would be to present Dewey's five generic steps of inquiry.

One of the most important phases in Dewey's five-step process of inquiry is the first: viz., the sense of doubt or difficulty that the inquirer feels at the onset of a problematic situation. In teaching research methods, instructors typically bypass this phase. Why? Sensing that there is a disruption to the situation is an affective (emotional), not a cognitive (thinking) response. It is often neglected because research is understood as a paradigmatically

cognitive activity. Dewey employs terminology such as “lost our heads,” “disturbed,” “troubled,” “ambiguous,” “confused” and “doubtful” to signify the “personal” or emotional dimension of this initial phase of inquiry (LW, 12, p. 109; cited by Shields, 1998, p. 205). So, the first stage of social science inquiry, i.e. posing an intellectually interesting question, is distinctly different than Dewey’s first stage of inquiry. It more closely resembles the second phase of Deweyan inquiry, i.e. location and definition of the problem, in its strongly cognitive, rather than affective, orientation. So, what is the connection between feeling doubt or confusion and teaching research methods? The research problem must become a genuine concern for the student. Indeed, we often say that the student must “take ownership” of it. The student’s concern for (or claim upon) the problem is intensified when inquiry begins with an emotional reaction to the difficulty or problematic character of the situation. Patricia Shields (1998, p. 206) warns that there is a danger lurking in the experience of a felt difficulty: “When students begin empirical inquiry, they may interpret the doubt stage as a signal that their efforts are misplaced.” So, a teacher’s move to pressure students to immediately define the research problem can be well-intentioned. For instance, she might wish to usher her students along a safe path toward greater confidence in the worthiness of their projects. However, the inadvertent consequences of doing so can prove devastating for student motivation, encouraging only passive interest in the research question, minimal concern for the research problem or outright alienation from the whole research process. Instead, Shields insists that “doubt should be embraced [by the instructor and students] as a sign [that] they [i.e. the students] are moving in the right direction” (*Ibid*).

Students typically have trouble differentiating theories, concepts, conceptual frameworks, conceptual definitions and operational definitions in the process of formulating their research design. Familiarity with Deweyan inquiry can help students distinguish them and gain a better appreciation for how they function in the research process. Theories for Dewey are tools of inquiry



that operate at a high level of generality, but serve particular purposes –in much the same way maps do: “It [the map] is constituted through the intermediation of the further operations it directs– whose consequences, moreover, provide the means by which the validity of the map is tested” (LW, 12, pp. 398-399). Theory mediates the problematic situation and the observed data. According to Shields (1998, p. 210), “[t]he theory can already exist (pick a tool for the tool box) or it may be improvised (make the tool). Defining theory to students as a pragmatically useful tool can prevent confusion which results when one notices the lack of consensus in the literature about what theory is”<sup>11</sup>. Once theory is conceived as a tool, then the “job as [a research methods] teacher is to help the student find the tool that enables them to address their research question and help them engage in data collection and analysis” (Shields, 2003, p. 9). To make theories more useful for conducting research, they must be organized, conceptualized and given more precision. Dewey discussed one important kind of organizing theory for the social science researcher, the conceptual framework, in the *Logic*: “There is same sort of advantage in having conceptual frameworks manufactured and on hand in advance of actual occasions for their use, as there is in having tools ready instead of improvising them when need arises” (LW, 12, p. 139; cited by Shields, 2003, p. 10). Concepts are abstractions that have functional value, allowing researchers to communicate more easily, to cultivate a perspective, to organize and generalize their experiences and to determine the content and characteristics of theories (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 2000, p. 24-26).

While students often grasp the relationship between theory and concepts, they tend to confuse the activities of defining a concept in terms of other concepts (i.e. conceptual definition) and describing the operations that would demonstrate the existence of

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<sup>11</sup> Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2000, p. 33) note that “[t]here is no simple definition of theory on which all social scientists would agree because there are many different kinds of theories, each serving a different purpose.”

the phenomenon indicated by the concept (operational definition). Dewey's approach proves helpful here because problem definition and hypothesis formation are related in inquiry. Conceptual definitions pick out the unique features of what is defined without being question-begging. Moreover, they must state the concept in positive and clear terms –e.g., the concept of power defined as the capacity of one agent to force another agent to do what they would not otherwise choose to (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 2000, pp. 27-28). Operational definitions formulate a set of procedures to prove the existence of the phenomenon that the concept describes. Once treated as points along an analytic-synthetic continuum, the difference between them comes into clear view. Analytic statements (often called tautologies) are true in virtue of their own terms, restating what is contained in the first in the second term, e.g.  $A=A$ . Synthetic statements (often termed empirical) can be confirmed or denied through scientific procedure, thereby augmenting our understanding of a phenomenon, e.g.  $A=B$  (where B tell us more than A about the phenomenon in question)<sup>12</sup>. Along the continuum, conceptual definitions are closer to the purely analytic end, since the two parts (conceptual *definiendum* and conceptual *definiens*) are roughly equivalent. Operational definitions, on the other hand, are closer to the purely synthetic end, extending our knowledge of what exists through observation and experimentation. Indeed, operational definitions are crucial to the formation of empirically testable hypotheses.

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<sup>12</sup> The analytic-synthetic distinction can be traced back to Immanuel Kant (1965 [1787]), but its clearest expression is made by Rudolf Carnap (1947, 1967) and A.J. Ayer (1936). According to Ayer and Carnap, linguistic statements ought to be divided into two types, (1) those the meaning of which is dependent on facts about the world, or the synthetic type, and (2) those the meaning of which is independent of such facts “come what may,” or the analytic type. Quine began his assault on the tenets of Logical positivism in the 1940s and 50s with the help of his colleague at Harvard, Morton G. White, and Nelson Goodman, at University of Pennsylvania. Willard V. O. Quine (1953, p. 22) criticizes the analytic-synthetic distinction as “a distinction without a difference.” See Shane Ralston (2004) for an argument that Dewey reconstructs the analytic-synthetic dichotomy as a continuum.

In Dewey's words, the "hypothesis concerns what is possible, and [...] [i]t then formulates a rule or method of experimental observation" (LW 12, p. 379; cited in Shields 1998, p. 217). If the IR research methods instructor articulates the difference between conceptual and operational definitions not as one of *kind*, but one of *degree* along an analytic-synthetic continuum, then students will have one more tool with which to effectively differentiate the two.

#### EXPLORE MORE OBSCURE TEXTS BY PHILOSOPHICAL PRAGMATISTS

According to Jörg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratochwil (2009, p. 702), "the time has come for a pragmatic turn in [IR] research and methodology." One way to distinguish scholarship constituting this turn is to draw pragmatist ideas from unique sources. For instance, within Dewey scholarship, the 1938 *Logic* has begun to receive exacting scholarly attention in the past ten years. Some IR pragmatists, such as Jackson (2011, p. 216), have taken this text seriously in reconstructing a clearer epistemological and ontological starting point for IR research. A text still largely unexplored, even by Dewey scholars, is Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley's 1949 *Knowing and the Known*. Also, Dewey's later essays on Charles Sanders Peirce could offer resources to IR pragmatists, such as Friedrichs and Kratochwil, interested in Dewey's gloss on Peirce's theory of signs and logical abduction.


#### CONCLUSION:

##### A CALL FOR UNITY AMONG PHILOSOPHICAL AND IR PRAGMATISTS

As scholars, we cannot help but notice that "local" networks operate with surprising effectiveness in our scholarly lives, sometimes insulating us from strikingly similar work done in other networks, both within and outside of our own disciplinary specialties. Researchers meet at different conferences and symposia, publish their own work in specialized journals and appear to have little need to mix or join with other networks of researchers. The confluence of scholarly work done by philosophers and IR

scholars on pragmatism and international relations is perhaps testimony to the fact that unification of these networks is possible. In environmental philosophy and ethics, Bryan Norton (1994, p. 240) has called for unity among the numerous factions of environmentalists, even arguing that their varied reasons for preserving the environment inevitably converge in the face of pressing environmental issues and a looming global catastrophe. I'd like to end by making a parallel call for unity among philosophical and IR pragmatists. Rather than defend an orthodox interpretation of the pragmatist tradition, it would be better if philosophical pragmatists, in the spirit of interdisciplinary tolerance and sharing, explored ways in which pragmatist tools can aid IR scholars in solving the problems before them (or even in re-framing those problems in novel ways). Moves by IR pragmatists to either equivocate between generic and philosophical forms of pragmatism or reduce pragmatism to one of its single commitments should not raise serious concerns for pragmatist philosophers. In a similar spirit, IR theorists and researchers might draw on the resources of the pragmatist tradition in order to refine existing frameworks, paying close attention to the emergent debates within contemporary pragmatism scholarship and the need to streamline philosophical pragmatism, where they see fit, in order to meet those specialized needs.

Echoing what many IR pragmatists and philosophical pragmatists have already said (and written), the importance of practically-grounded theory (or theoretically-grounded practice) should come to the fore in any attempt to hybridize philosophical pragmatism and IR, leading to the rigorous examination of continuities (and discontinuities) between IR theory and foreign policy practice. The separation between theory and practice is nicely captured in Bent Flyvbjerg's (2001, pp. 163-164) distinction between the phronetic inquirer, who is concerned with "political interventions" and "social betterment," and the epistemic inquirer, who is motivated solely by the desire to gain more knowledge through scholarly research and inquiry. It is unclear whether Dewey would be a role model for a scholar seeking to become

a mixed epistemic-phronetic inquirer. In his phronetic capacity (which might also be called that of a “public intellectual”), he wrote many articles tackling the social and political issues of his day, applying the pragmatic method in a manner that was accessible to average citizens and, more than likely, swayed public opinion.<sup>13</sup> In his epistemic capacity, Dewey wrote widely on a wide array of philosophical topics, including foreign policy and social science inquiry, but from what we can tell of his biography, he only once engaged in social scientific research.<sup>14</sup> A reason for this might have been that, as Dewey claimed in the *Logic*, he was more concerned to conduct “inquiry into inquiry,” tracing the generic pattern of problem solving that underlies all forms of inquiry, rather than identifying the individuated steps within specific inquiries. Still, he managed to undertake many inquiries, in politics, psychology, philosophy and various interdisciplinary endeavors, by himself and in collaboration with others –which is something I’d like to see philosophical and IR pragmatist do as well. 

<sup>13</sup> These include his involvement in the Outlawry of War Movement, chairing the Trotsky Commission and his authorship of a series of articles criticizing the policies of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and opposing his re-election, to name only a few. On the outlawry of war involvement, see Dewey (1996), “If Law Were Outlawed”, MW, 15, pp. 110-115, “What Outlawry of War Is Not,” MW, 15, p. 115-122, “War and a Code of Law”, MW, 15, p. 122-128. On the Trotsky affair, see Dewey (1996), “Significance of the Trotsky Inquiry”, LW, 11, p. 330-336 and Farrell (1950). On his opposition to F.D. Roosevelt, see Dewey (1996), “Democracy Joins the Unemployed”, LW 6:239-46, “Prospect for a Third Party”, LW, 6, p. 246-253 and “After the Election What?”, LW, 6, p. 253-257. For summaries and commentary of Dewey’s involvements in these matters, see Westbrook (1991), pp. 26-274, 480-482, 449, 451, 458, and Ryan (1995), pp. 212-215, 247-248, 292-294.

<sup>14</sup> Dewey led an empirical study of “The Polish Question”, the issue of whether political attitudes among certain segments of the Polish immigrant population prevented them from integrating within American society. Conceived as a test of Dewey’s theory of social inquiry and funded by the wealthy businessman Albert C. Barnes, the project involved Dewey’s students in surveying the attitudes of Polish immigrants in Philadelphia during the summer of 1918. The report based on the research, titled “Conditions Among the Poles in the United States: Confidential Report”, was eventually submitted to the Federal Government. For critical treatments of the report, see Karier (1977) and Feinberg (1972). For a sympathetic view, see Zerby (1975).

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