

The Continuing Failure of International Relations and the Challenges of Disciplinary Boundaries

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Introduction

In an article published in *Millennium* in 2001, Barry Buzan and Richard Little claim that other disciplines have not learned from IR. They write, 'If... we... ask what other disciplines have learned from IR... the cupboard is, if not quite bare, then certainly not well stocked.'¹ They continue to suggest that this absence of inter-disciplinary influence is all the more curious considering how IR's self-definition casts it as a discipline-sharing and discipline-connecting enterprise² Yet, other than comparing the work of Wallerstein with the absence of any such grand theory in IR, nowhere in their article do they substantiate their underlying claim: that IR has no intellectual impact on other disciplines.

Just over a decade has passed since they accused IR of failing. Considering the seriousness of their charge (and the fact that they provided no evidence to support their claim) it is worth revisiting their argument. Using a variety of methods, including a handsearch of bibliographic data from a selection of key texts by a variety of leading scholars who write on matters pertinent to IR but who are more readily located in other academic

¹ Barry Buzan and Richard Little, 'Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to Do About It,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30, no. 19 (2001), 19-39.

² *Ibid.*, 21.

fields, anecdotal evidence, and an analysis of the Thomson Citation Index, the evidence suggests that IR still ‘fails’ in the way suggested by Buzan and Little. While they were right in identifying this failure, they were wrong in their suggestion of its cause and a remedy. Rather, the failure is likely the result of how IR traditionally defines itself in regard to sovereignty and anarchy. Consequently, the solution will be in turning to alternative theoretical frameworks that do not adopt an uncritical acceptance of sovereign equality and international anarchy.

Explaining IR

The academic study of IR should, conceivably, have something unique to offer, something that scholars from outside the field who are interested in global political questions can turn to. IR research borrows from philosophy, sociology, history, law, geography, and anthropology. Yet, how often do these fields turn to IR’s theoretical paradigms for insight into understanding the nuances and complexities of global politics? This question matters for a few important reasons.

First, this state of affairs is noticeably different in the global justice literature, where there is greater inter-disciplinarity insofar as work in different disciplines influences each other. However, even within this literature it is exceedingly rare to find references to the bulk of key IR theories. Second, as a theoretical study that aims to provide insight into conditions of power relations that are not constrained by life within a sovereign state, IR theory is rarely if ever cited outside of IR. For example, one successful edited collection on power does not include any IR theorists.³ Neither Hans Morgenthau nor Joseph Nye make an appearance. It is not as if IR theory is never used outside of IR texts, although the professional divisions of

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³ Mark Haugaard, *Power: A Reader* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

labour in which scholars prioritize texts that come from their disciplinary peers hinders the kind of inter-disciplinary influence Buzan and Little write about. Nevertheless, surely it is odd that considering how much work is now concerned with global politics IR theory is rarely used outside of those who regularly attend the International Studies Association's (ISA) annual convention or publish in the main IR journals. Indeed, according to the Thomson Citation Index, out of the ISA's six journals none of them demonstrate any noticeable impact on non-IR periodicals.

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Part of the issue is what we mean by the academic field of IR, as different definitions of the field yield different understandings of its interdisciplinary potential and impact. Defining IR is difficult at the best of times,⁴ although there have been concerted efforts at trying to identify IR as a specific area of study with its own key texts, methods and paradigms.⁵ A turn to almost any IR theory textbook provides similar lists of different theories which are concerned with different issues, adopt different epistemologies and methods, and are sometimes incommensurable. The growth of IR theory was partly the product of the self-reflective challenges in the 1980s and 90s. During this time, the so-called third or fourth of the 'great debates,' IR's scope broadened with a considerable impact for how the subject was defined.⁶ Critical, feminist and post-structural theorists began to challenge the orthodoxy of IR, providing insights that aimed to improve a subject otherwise dominated by the universal claims of realism.⁷ New paradigms were introduced, notably constructivism. There was debate over method, subject diversity, publication patterns and

⁴ This paper addresses the Western framing of IR. For IR in the West to claim its position at the top level of social aggregation (see below) could be read as a representation of intellectual imperialism – but this is not an issue that I examine in this paper

⁵ Duncan Bell, 'Writing History: Disciplinary History and Beyond,' *International Affairs* 85, no. 1 (2009), 3-22.

⁶ Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Critical Perspectives on World Politics (Boulder, Colo.: L. Rienner, 1996).

⁷ Michael J. Shapiro and James Der Derian, *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989).

disciplinarity.⁸ This literature was concerned with challenging what the study of international relations should involve, how it could be done, and what defined IR as a distinct academic area of research.

This growth led Philip Tetlock to enquire into what benefits it has achieved, noting that it has not contributed to any greater predictive capabilities.⁹ Thus, even as IR has grown, this growth might not be contributing to the development of a sufficiently robust intellectual enterprise that others can turn to – at least insofar as predictive knowledge matters. A more damning indictment against IR, comes from Michael Nicholson who has questioned the merit of teaching IR as an independent subject, pointing out that IR does not necessarily train the mind any better than other more established disciplines. With such critiques directed from within, and considering the scope that IR now covers, it is unsurprising that IR has been described as ‘amorphous, fuzzy and rather ill-defined.’¹⁰ Indeed, it can be quite difficult to explain what exactly the systematic study of international politics, international studies, international affairs, international relations, global politics, and/or global politics is, and the ostensible differences between them.¹¹ If IR scholars are questioning its intellectual merits, is it any wonder that IR is not contributing in the manner suggested by Buzan and Little?

⁸ Ole Wæver, ‘The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations,’ *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998), 687-727.

⁹ Philip E. Tetlock, *Expert Political Judgement: How Good Is It, How Can We Know?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ N. J. Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order: Beyond International Relations Theory?* (London: Routledge, 2000), 2.

¹¹ Stefano Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold* (London: Routledge, 1998).

Further complicating definitions of IR are its different stories of origin which vary considerably in different countries.¹² In the United States, in an attempt to define the scope, content and method of international politics, Stanley Hoffman suggested in 1977 that International Relations is a distinct field of study, separate from Political Science,¹³ but in general it remains framed in North America as a sub-field of political science. In the USA the study of international relations has features specific to the unique experiences of American academic life and of living in a country that plays such a large role in international affairs;¹⁴ in the USA, IR has also been heavily influenced by economics and by the pursuit for a kind of theoretical certainty that some believe can only be found in a specific kind of ‘scientific’ study.¹⁵ A diversity of methods has not entered into the traditional American IR lexicon, and there rests an established shadow that frames history, rather insultingly, as ‘the great laboratory within which international action occurs.’¹⁶ Alternatively, in Japan, IR is not treated as a social science but part of the humanities and law, which impacts the significance and meaning of international anarchy, not to mention its methodologies more generally.¹⁷ In the United Kingdom the study of international relations also emerged out of history and law, even if it is now primarily framed as a social science. The first ever Department of International Politics was founded in 1919 (in Aberystwyth) in order to address normative concerns about how the world could sink into the horrors of the First World War and how

¹² See in particular, Wayne S. Cox and Kim Richard Nossal, ‘the Crimson World: The Anglo Core, the Post-Imperial Non-Core, and the Hegemony of American IR,’ in *International Relations Scholarship around the World*, ed. Arlene B. Tickner and Ole Waever (London: Routledge, 2009).

¹³ Stanley Hoffman, ‘An American Social Science: International Relations,’ in *Janus and Minerva: Essays in the Theory and Practice of International Relations* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1987), 3-24.

¹⁴ Cox and Nossal, ‘The ‘Crimson World’.’, Hoffman, ‘An American Social Science: International Relations.’

¹⁵ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

¹⁶ Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957), 3.

¹⁷ I would like to thank the participants of the International Relations Colloquium at the University of Tokyo, Komaba, for highlighting this point.

to avoid such a disaster in the future. The growth of the field in the UK owed much to a diverse group of scholars who came to be identified as the English School, with philosophy, law and history providing the main intellectual influences.¹⁸

To generalize, however, IR theory has at least two aims. One is to guide foreign policy, especially in the United States.¹⁹ A second aim is not about policy but about the development of theoretical insight, of research programs that are designed to help make sense out of global political landscapes, and are often more philosophical and/or sociological in character. This aim was historically more consistent with the work of the so-called English School (and of Raymond Aron) than with American IR. When the debates in the early 1990s were taking place, much of it was directed toward making this second aim more coherent. Some claim that the growth of constructivism demonstrates a considerable success emerging from these debates.²⁰

Yet, some 30 years later, the outcome of the critical debates in the 1990s has essentially been that while there are more IR theories, this growth seems to matter most to those within divided IR theoretical communities – divided essentially along the lines noted by Stephen Walt in an otherwise dated assessment of Security Studies.²¹ By IR theory I am referring to what in the field (or discipline) is described as its leading paradigms, are used to differentiate and define IR, and yet are not really falsifiable.²² Regardless of methodological

¹⁸ Cox and Nossal, 'The 'Crimson World'; Roy E. Jones, 'The English School of International Relations: A Case for Closure,' *Review of International Studies* 7, no. 1 (1981), 1-13; Andrew Linklater and Hidemi Suganami, *The English School of International Relations: A Contemporary Reassessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Cox and Nossal, 'the Crimson World'.

²⁰ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001), 391-416.

²¹ Stephen M. Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies,' *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (1991), 211-239.

²² Richard Rosecrance, 'The Failure of Static and the Need for Dynamic Approaches to International Relations,' in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

and other reasons for the various splits within IR theory, the point is that all this growth has not seemingly led to a sufficiently stronger theoretical enterprise that others can turn to. IR theorists still turn to anthropologists, geographers, economists, sociologists, lawyers, philosophers and historians, even to fiction and film,²³ but who outside of IR turns to IR theories, and why do so few?

IR's Hubris?

The construction of IR as a distinct subject has accompanied a hierarchical ordering of the relevant sites of inquiry that are usually identified as belonging to different levels of analysis. This ordering is important because it implies that IR should have a broad reach across the levels, since it either informs or is influenced by each of them. IR ostensibly rests at the very top of this ordering, at the top of any micro-to-macro formulation of human political structures and relations. Robert Keohane suggest as much,²⁴ but Richard Ned Lebow is clearer: 'International relations is at the apex of multiple levels of social aggregation, and is significantly influenced, if not shaped, by what happens at other levels.'²⁵ This location may be primarily methodological, and although it does not explain why IR fails to influence other disciplines or fields it does explain why this ongoing inability to influence interdisciplinary research matters.

To be fair, however, not all theories within the field are subject to this framing. Charles Beitz writes that, 'A ... satisfactory theory of international politics should include a

²³ A few examples involving fiction and film are Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2001), Daniel Drezner, *Theories of International Politics and Zombies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), Cynthia Weber, *International Relations Theory: A Critical Introduction*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2009).

²⁴ Robert O. Keohane, 'International Institutions: Two Approaches,' *International Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1988), 379-396.

²⁵ Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

notion of state autonomy explicitly connected with considerations of domestic social justice....²⁶ There are alternative accounts of IR that provide a different narrative than the one provided here. Nevertheless, IR's location at this apex is accepted by a range of scholars from different theoretical approaches. Hans Morgenthau claims that one key difference between international and domestic politics is that international politics are less stable than domestic politics because of the absence in international relations of a 'hierarchical political organization... to make the... society an integrated whole....'²⁷ Hedley Bull notes that international relations is constituted by the multiplicity of states that assert internal sovereignty over a particular territory and a particular population, that the state is supreme in its sovereignty over its particular territory and population and asserts an external sovereignty that is indicative of having independence from any outside authorities.²⁸ Both Bull and Morgenthau agree on little else, yet they both note that the unique feature of international relations is that it rests above the domestic or internal hierarchical dimensions of life under sovereignty. International relations is different.

Claiming that the subject is at an apex may be primarily a description or a methodological position, but it is suggestive of the field's importance, which Lebow affirms by describing IR as the 'the most interesting, case for any theory of political order.'²⁹ Lebow here echoes E.H. Carr who emphasized the importance of this subject by suggesting that serious thought about war and international relations is too great to be left solely to

²⁶ Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, 1999), 179. Other texts on Political Theory in International Relations are, Chris Brown, Terry Nardin, and N. J. Rengger, *International Relations in Political Thought: Texts from the Ancient Greeks to the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Howard Williams, *International Relations in Political Theory* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1992).

²⁷ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, ed. Kenneth W. Thompson and W. David Clinton, 7th ed. (London: McGraw Hill, 2006), 50.

²⁸ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977, 1995).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

diplomats.³⁰ Kenneth Waltz's, *Man, the State, and War* provides a complementary story by placing the subject matter of International Relations at the top of his three images, at the highest level.³¹

An explicit statement of the importance of the subject is from Keohane who writes that, 'Contemporary world politics is a matter of wealth and poverty, life and death. The members of [The International Studies Association] have chosen to study it because it is so important to our lives and those of other people....'³² Indeed, it is all too easy to view the issues in international relations as some of the most pressing problems facing humanity, war, peace, global justice, the environment, etc., and in the process to inflate IR's importance.

While it is true that some of the most pressing issues facing humanity are relevant to the study of international politics, assertions about IR's importance are close to intellectual hubris. Indeed, others have made related critiques of IR addressing its problematic character of simultaneous insularity and theoretical proliferation. For example, David Boucher writes that IR scholars 'cut themselves adrift from the mainstream of political theory in order to develop their own theories and concepts.'³³ In addition, Margaret Herman said in her 1998 Presidential Address to the International Studies Association that,

The field of international studies has become a little like the Tower of Babel, filled with a cacophony of different voices – or, as some have implied, a set of tribes that are very territorial, sniping at those who come too close and preferring to be with those like them. As a result, the field of international relations has become an

³⁰ Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 2nd ed. (London: Perennial, 1964, 2001).

³¹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, Revised ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

³² Keohane, 'International Institutions,' 379.

³³ David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 10.

administrative holding company rather than an intellectually coherent area of inquiry or a community of scholars.³⁴

Regardless of whether or not IR is an administrative holding company, it is a field that has defined itself according to the importance of its subject matter in relation to other subjects that exist at lower levels of analysis. A logical inference of this framing is that what IR has to say should have some influence outside of IR, to the ostensibly lower rungs on the levels of analysis ladder.

The Problem Revisited

Could scholars in other fields benefit from making greater use of IR theory? The answer should be yes, and indeed some IR work has much to offer other fields. Practically, however, there are limits to what any person can read and reference, and it is unreasonable to expect others to cite IR just because IR uses work from other fields. All fields by virtue of their respective disciplinary histories are insular to a point. However, IR's subject matter has historically mattered for longer than IR departments have existed and it is far from uncommon for foundational scholars in other fields, such as Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and others, to write on IR related topics, often explicitly. Moreover, there is no absence of excellent work in such fields as sociology, history, geography, political science and political philosophy on borders, war, and health and globalization. IR related research topics are clearly present in the other fields or disciplines.

Consequently, it is reasonable to expect some reciprocity when engaging in work relevant to global politics. For example, a recent anthropology book about security and the

³⁴ Margaret G. Hermann, 'One Field, Many Perspectives: Building the Foundations for Dialogue: 1998 ISA Presidential Address,' *International Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (1998): 606.

Israeli/Palestinian conflict engages briefly in its literature review with the non-anthropology literature of relevance, including work in security studies and post-structuralist IR scholarship.³⁵

The occasional exception aside, the inference in the Buzan and Little article is that IR does not carry sufficient intellectual weight to offer anything of substance to other fields or disciplines. Such an accusation could damn the entire subject's intellectual validity, which of course neither of them intended. Nevertheless, considering how serious the charge is, it is worth testing.

To test this charge I used mixed methods, making it possible to spread as wide a net as possible but to narrow the catch. In exploring the extent to which IR influences other fields, it is not my claim that IR never has interdisciplinary influence, since there will always be exceptions. However, the preponderance of evidence suggests that there is minimal influence. The combination of methods used allows an empirical assessment involving different types of data and possible guidance as to why this 'failure' continues. Three different methods are used, each of which highlights a different aspect of the insularity of IR research.

The first method used is handsearching, which is often used in medical research. This method is a form of literature survey that identifies material used within texts that data-sets or indexes do not list. It is used so that important references are not overlooked and to provide a qualitatively-informed awareness of what information is being prioritized or not. The handsearch focuses on 'non-IR' texts written by undisputed leading scholars in their respective fields who write on material of relevance to IR. In this case it serves as a qualitative basis on which to explore the extent that relevant and leading political theory and

³⁵ Juliana Ochs, *Security and Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

human/political geography texts incorporate IR literature into their research. The handsearch, because of its selectivity, also provides clues to what types of IR scholarship have crossed disciplinary divides and in the process contributes to addressing the disciplinary question of what counts as IR. Supporting the qualitative handsearch, the second method involves anecdotal evidence.

In line with increasing engagement toward reflexive methodologies within IR,³⁶ the anecdotal material is not just used here as a type of evidence, but also served as a cause for this research into IR's interdisciplinary influence. It was in conversations with colleagues about the character of IR, its strengths and weaknesses that I began to enquire into how far IR manages to contribute to knowledge in the social sciences and humanities more generally. What came out of these conversations were significant doubts about the main paradigmatic lenses through which IR is set up. For example, in a few cases, I was told how colleagues use IR's main research paradigms not for intellectual reasons but practical ones relating to the job market. I followed up these conversations with colleagues from other fields who also research on global politics. While the anecdotal materials plays a minor role here as evidence, it is useful because it does address the ideational influences that the other methods, and in particular the statistics from the third method, cannot address. It also contributes to raising awareness of concerns that I suspect many in the field share, but do not write about.

Handsearching is usually used as a supplement for quantitative research. In this case, neither the handsearch nor the anecdotal evidence can suggest how widespread the non-use

³⁶ Matthew Eagleton-Pierce, 'Advancing a Reflexive International Relations,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 39, no. 3 (2011); Stefano Guzzini, 'The Ends of International Relations Theory: Stages of Reflexivity and Modes of Theorizing' *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 521-41; Inanna Hamati-Ataya, 'Reflectivity, Reflexivity, Reflexivism: IR's 'Reflexive Turn' -- and Beyond,' *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 4 (2013): 669-94 ; Mark Neufeld, 'Reflexivity and International Relations Theory,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 22, no. 1 (1993).

of IR is in relevant literature, hence the need to pursue a mixed methodology. In order to address this question, the third component involves the use of explanatory statistics from the Thomson Citation Index. As this dataset is readily accessible, extensive, and for better or for worse its impact metrics are used by journals to highlight their reputational significance, it provides a cost-effective and logical source to use. Using a basic form of content analysis, a method widely used in both sociology and medical research, the Citation Index is used to compare levels of cross-disciplinary communication in order to ascertain the extent that research in IR influences work in other disciplines or academic fields. Using the Index also addresses the ‘disciplinary’ problem since the dataset offers a classification of different disciplines and thus mitigates the problem of how to define an IR publication. With definitions of IR regularly being contested (as addressed above), it is beneficial to provide some kind of control of this kind. Crucially, as will become evident, the evidence from the three methods is consistent with each other.

IR’s ongoing insularity and lack of cross- or inter-disciplinary influence is evident in a handsearch of leading monographs. A striking example of the absence of IR is in James Tully’s recent two-volume collection.³⁷ The second volume of Tully’s *Public Philosophy in a New Key* is of particular interest here, as it is in this volume that Tully addresses many IR issues, primarily ones pertaining to questions over justice and global governance, but there is hardly any turn towards the IR literature on this subject. He engages with the cosmopolitan literature, with David Held, Habermas and Foucault, but there is barely anything that engages in the theoretical language of IR – no realism of any kind, no IR versions of

³⁷ James Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Democracy and Civic Freedom*, vol. I, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), ———, *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Imperialism and Civic Freedom*, vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

liberalism, no significant discussion about constructivism or engagement with English School solidarism. The amount of IR theory used is almost zero.

Will Kymlicka's recent book on international relations and multiculturalism is another example.³⁸ In this book Kymlicka makes use of sociology, political philosophy, history, anthropology, international and domestic law, European Union publications, United Nations publications, nationalism studies, citizenship studies, and political economy, but hardly anything that would suggest an engagement with the main IR paradigms. This text is clearly important for understanding some important aspects of international relations including identity, ethics, and international law. Yet his engagement with what would generally count as IR scholarship is marginal. Of interest, however, are the few IR specific texts that Kymlicka does reference. They are largely from early 1990s. The most recent IR explicit text referenced is a chapter about securitization by Ole Wæver published in 1995. The sources he cites from the wider international political thought/theory or political theory of international relations literature are more recent, and include Adam Roberts, Richard Falk, and David Miller. He also cites Roland Paris. The only text on identity and IR which Kymlicka references is from 1993 by Daniel Moynihan. IR barely makes a dent in Kymlicka's research on multiculturalism in international politics.

Empirically, it is a difficult proposition to prove that IR theory does not travel beyond its disciplinary boundaries. There are always exceptions, and so much of what we read and cite is tied to who we know, where we work, and what interests us as individual scholars. Nevertheless, a few further examples should be sufficient to make an impression: Hardt and Negri's *Empire*,³⁹ a text blatantly concerned with an obvious IR topic, and yet is surprisingly

³⁸ Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³⁹ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000).

limited in its IR theory engagement; a recent collection of essays related to the work of Immanuel Wallerstein contains not one IR theorist as a contributor;⁴⁰ Nick Mansfield's recent book on war,⁴¹ Michael Shapiro's famous text *Violent Cartographies*,⁴² and Stuart Elden's *Terror and Territory*,⁴³ a book about the war on terror, international relations and sovereignty, are further examples. There is also an area of study called political geography that seems to be almost completely disinterested in IR even while it addresses global politics.

Anecdotally, through conversations (both in person and via email)⁴⁴ with academics writing on global politics in fields of political science, geography, health, sociology, history, and political theory, it became generally evident that IR theory occupied a surprisingly small amount of their research efforts. This information gathered is important because it helps assess any ideational influences across different disciplines that would not turn up in the other methods used. In addition, this project began because of conversations I had with colleagues who shared misgivings about the way IR frames itself and of the related challenges for interdisciplinary research. The anecdotal evidence suggests that concerns about IR's main paradigms may be shared by our colleagues down the hall or in other departments and is not based only on abstract empirical evidence that is unable to address what our peers think but do not write as part of their research processes.

⁴⁰ David Palumbo-Liu, Bruce Robbins, and Nirvana Tanoukhi, eds., *Immanuel Wallerstein and the Problem of the World: System, Scale, Culture*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

⁴¹ Nick Mansfield, *Theorizing War: From Hobbes to Badiou* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁴² Michael J. Shapiro, 'Violent Cartographies: Mapping Cultures of War,' (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

⁴³ Stuart Elden, *Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

⁴⁴ The anecdotal evidence was produced via informal qualitative survey methods with a sample size of approximately thirty individuals including a sizeable breadth of different scholars from diverse backgrounds and various levels of seniority. Three came from Geography, three from Anthropology, four from History. Approximately ten came from a seminar group made up of graduate students and faculty from a faculty of Arts and Sciences. Ten came from colleagues in Political Science departments, or an equivalent, whose research ranges from health to security to political theory and included IR scholars. Out of the IR scholars I contacted, all agreed that IR does not travel much into other fields. This material was gathered either in person or via email with colleagues from, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Israel and Japan between 2010 and 2013. All participants were promised anonymity. .

The scholars who participated were often familiar with the literature but chose a highly limited engagement with it, if at all. A common refrain was that it made better sense to go to the source. IR may use sociological insights, for example, but why then turn to IR as opposed to sociology? One political theorist dismissed IR's paradigmatic debates of being of any use (even though he acknowledged a sizable knowledge of the literature) and that IR theory texts tended to be the most useful when read as political theory. Others argued that IR theory was of little use in making sense out of global politics. In the words of one professor of human geography: 'IR theory is to international relations what econometrics is to economics.' The anecdotal evidence suggests that IR research is known across disciplines and fields, but it does not influence interdisciplinary research, usually because these scholars would rather turn to the source instead of IR-based secondary readings. While one of the participants suggested that other fields could benefit from IR, it was common to find a general lack of enthusiasm for IR's main theoretical categories or paradigms.

Exploring the Thomson Citation Index⁴⁵ further demonstrates that there is a one-way direction into IR and not much outwards. In *International Organization*, the highest impact factor journal, the non-IR journal that it cites most is the *Journal of International Economics* (total of 12 times) yet this journal did not cite *International Organization* once. *International Security's* 10th most citing journal (excluding newspapers) is the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, and the *Bulletin* reciprocates, but only with *International Security* and *Foreign Affairs*. According to the Index, there are 78 IR journals, and 141 Political Science journals, but none of them appear on the citing list of the *Bulletin*. *International Political Sociology* cites a total of 2504 journals in all years. Out of these, and excluding newspapers and IR/Political Science journals, the 9th most citing journal is *The American Journal of Sociology*. However, the *American*

⁴⁵ All the information gathered here was accurate as of April 17, 2012, and was accessed online at the Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports via ISI Web of Knowledge.

Journal of Sociology does not cite any International Relations journals, including *International Political Sociology*. *Alternatives*, one of the older interdisciplinary IR journals tells a similar story. Thomson lists, *Latin American Perspectives*, *The Journal of Democracy*, *Human Rights Law Review*, *New Left Review*, and *Public Culture* as the leading non-IR journals that *Alternatives*' cites; with the exception of *The Journal of Democracy*, IR journals, including *Alternatives*, are very scarcely referenced. One journal that demonstrates interdisciplinary communication with IR is *Political Geography*, which has cited IR journals a total of 63 times compared to it being cited 68 times in IR journals.

The situation is remarkably similar in regard to international law. International law plays an important part in some pivotal texts in IR, such as Friedrich Kratochwil's *Rules, Norms, and Decisions*.⁴⁶ The political theorist Michael Walzer's classic on Just War, which makes use of philosophy, history and international law begins with a philosophical legal discussion about the crime of aggression.⁴⁷ There exist introductory textbooks on international law for IR students. Nevertheless, the pattern is again one-directional.⁴⁸ The Special Issue of *International Organization* on 'Legalization and International Politics' (Vol. 45:3) helps demonstrate the point.

The introduction to this special issue highlights the importance of law in international practices by focusing on the conception of legalization.⁴⁹ While this article has been widely cited in IR journals, it has hardly appeared in any international law journals. This absence may be because the concept of legalization as articulated in the article is not relevant to a

⁴⁶ Friedrich Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁴⁷ Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

⁴⁸ David Armstrong, Theo Farrell, and Hélène Lambert, *International Law and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Çali BaŞak, ed. *International Law for International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁴⁹ Kenneth W. Abbott et al., 'The Concept of Legalization,' *International Organization*, no. 54 (2000): 402.

greater understanding of law or to the practice of international law. However, as is clearly evident from law texts,⁵⁰ international law is often understood largely as a result of state practice, and thus any text which seeks to frame international practice into a specific legal framework should be of relevance to international legal scholar.

One of the article's authors, Anne-Marie Slaughter is a renown international legal scholar, whose work does cross disciplinary lines. An article based on her book, *A New World Order*,⁵¹ was published in the *Stanford Journal of International Law*.⁵² The article has been widely cited in International Law journals. Yet, this example is the exception. As demonstrated above, in political research generally IR does not travel outside of IR, and the same is true in International Law.

A survey of the top five index ranked International Law journals demonstrates hardly any engagement with IR. The *Harvard International Law Journal* (HILJ), the *European Journal of International Law* (EJIL), The *American Journal of International Law* (AJIL), the *Stanford Journal of International Law* (SJIL), and the *Cornell International Law Journal* (CJIL) all offer minimal engagement with IR journals. Both the AJIL and especially the EJIL are cited in IR journals, but the relationship is one-sided. EJIL, the more cited law journal in IR journals, seems to pay almost no attention to IR journals, as the only two journals that come up in the Citation Index are *Human Rights Quarterly* (cited in EJIL 6 times in all years). Thus, it would appear that a journal that has a greater impact in IR actually pays less attention to IR. *Human Rights Quarterly* was the only IR journal that regularly appeared in the Law Journals, although minimally and at least in the HILJ came up the exact same number of times (6) as the *Journal*

⁵⁰ Yoram Dinstein, *War, Aggression and Self-Defence*, 4th ed. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁵¹ Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

⁵² ———, 'Sovereignty and Power in a Networked World Order,' *Stanford Journal of International Law* 40 (2004), 283-328.

of *Consumer Research*. Even *Foreign Affairs* appeared minimally, being cited in the CILJ only six times in all years. As for the highest impact factor IR journal, *International Organization*, it was cited a total of 7 times in the AJIL.

So What?

In some ways the work of IR thinkers and international legal scholars has played a significant role in informing others, and in the United States especially there has always existed a strong link between the IR academic community and policy makers, and so it is not entirely accurate to claim that IR theory is never heard outside of ISA conventions. In the academic context, disciplinary divides are regularly broken. Michael Doyle's⁵³ and Jack Levy's⁵⁴ work on war and peace are examples of an IR related theoretical debate that informs literature outside of IR, and John Rawls has referred to democratic peace theory.⁵⁵ There is considerable back-and-forth engagement between IR scholars, political theorists, historians and philosophers on the philosophy of war and in the ethics of war.⁵⁶ This literature is not

⁵³ Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace : Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York ; London: Norton, 1997), ———, 'Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs,' *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12, no. 2 (1983), 205-235.

⁵⁴ Jack S. Levy, 'The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 1, no. 139-165 (1998), 139-165, ———, 'Domestic Politics and War,' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18, no. 4 (1988), 653-673.

⁵⁵ John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples ; with, 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited'* (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 51-54. I would not consider democratic peace theory to be representative of a key IR paradigm that defines the discipline, and according to the TRIP Project, neither does the discipline itself.

⁵⁶ Only a few references should demonstrate this point: Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), Paul Christopher, *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction to Legal and Moral Issues*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2004), Coker, *War and the Illiberal Conscience*, A.J. Coates, *The Ethics of War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War: With a New Epilogue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), Michael Eliot Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, [New ed.]. ed. (London: Hurst, 2008), James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War: A Moral and Historical Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), Brian Orend, *War and International Justice: A Kantian Perspective* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), David Rodin, *War*

necessarily tied to the historiographical tradition of IR as a discipline and its core paradigms, which may explain the high degree of interdisciplinary exchange.⁵⁷ There are also significant exchanges between IR and foreign policy analysis, which will be addressed later. Nevertheless, it is curious that if we turn to sociology, for example, and the work of Anthony Giddens,⁵⁸ we can find within its core theoretical language conceptual tools that are applicable and are often applied to questions of a global political character – Brent Steele’s excellent work on ontological security being one example⁵⁹ – although sociologists rarely use IR’s conceptual material.

IR remains a subject that borrows but does not repay in kind and this matters for for at least three reasons. First, and most significantly, as demonstrated above, IR defines itself in terms that clearly emphasize it to be an especially important subject of study. IR as a subject not only exists at the top level of any socio-political aggregation, it also is concerned with some of the most pressing topics for the survival of humanity. As such, the issue is not so much whether other disciplines take the IR paradigms seriously, it is that IR claims that they should. The relevance of IR to other disciplines is a question that IR implicitly answers and thus if IR is not contributing to other fields on matters that it logically should, there is a problem either with the quality of IR scholarship or with how IR frames itself.

and Self-Defense (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), Michael Walzer, *Arguing About War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), Richard Norman, *Ethics, Killing and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁵⁷ It may be, and this is ultimately my view, although I do not make this case here, that IR is best understood as an inherently interdisciplinary exercise that combines the social sciences and the humanities and is best taught as a sub-field of Political Science. One text that poses a possibility of crossing academic divides and demonstrating how to read IR as a subject in the humanities is: Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

⁵⁸ Anthony Giddens, *Social Theory and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1987), ———, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity, 1984, 1986), ———, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

⁵⁹ Brent J. Steele, *Ontological Security in International Relations: Self-Identity and the IR State* (London: Routledge, 2008).

Second, to the extent that IR borrows from other fields, this begs the question of whether or not something is gained from using IR-based formulations instead of the originals? It is in this vein that we should understand Fred Halliday's lamentation how, 'After more than a decade teaching IR in a university department, I have come to the sorry conclusion that virtually everyone one meets in the world beyond, academic or other, believes that the academic study of international relations is a sub-field of news commentary.'⁶⁰ The point he makes is that IR does not make it clear enough what exactly it offers, and what the benefit is from turning to IR for knowledge instead of other sources.

In this regard, and third, we do not have a monopoly on scholarship that is concerned with global politics. There is considerable literature available that is of direct relevance to IR, but which rarely if ever seriously engages with what IR theories have to say. Note for example the literature on power and justice. Each of these areas of study is clearly related to global politics, but IR theory is, for the most part, not given much of a voice in the broader literature on these subjects. On power, IR has borrowed⁶¹ but this is only in one direction as a recent collection indicates.⁶² There is also a significant literature on justice and ethics in global politics that barely touches IR.⁶³ Is it because the stock IR theories are not relevant to questions about global justice or power, for example, that IR is not used in the global justice

⁶⁰ Fred Halliday, 'International Relations and Its Discontents,' *International Affairs* 71, no. 4 Special RIIA 75th Anniversary Issue (1995): 739.

⁶¹ Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, 'Power in International Politics,' *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005), 39-75.

⁶² Compare Felix Berenskoetter and Michael J. Williams, *Power in World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2007), Haugaard, *Power: A Reader*.

⁶³ Seyla Benhabib, Ian Shapiro, and Danilo Petranovic, eds., *Identities, Affiliations, and Allegiances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Will Kymlicka, 'Multicultural Odysseys,' *Ethnopolitics* 6, no. 4 (2007), Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller, Jr., and Jeffrey Paul, *Justice and Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Duncan Bell, *Ethics and World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Democracy and Civic Freedom*, ———, *Public Philosophy in a New Key* Vol. II.

literature⁶⁴ or the wider literature on power? We know this is not the case. There is an increasing amount of political theory literature that is concerned with global/international politics but again, this literature does not engage with the IR literature to a degree that would seem appropriate to the subject matter, unless, of course, the authors are already within both IR and political theory communities, such as Charles Beitz.

Contrary to Buzan's and Little's suggestion, a turn to the English School will not and has not 'saved' IR. Rather, the failure of IR is because of how IR defines itself and is set up as a distinct academic pursuit. The anecdotal evidence in particular suggests that there is something amiss with how IR presents the world that it studies and seeks to explain. It is also interesting that the handsearch identified that IR seemed to be at its greatest interdisciplinary influence in the 1990s, when IR was reacting to the end of the Cold War and was incorporating new methodologies and philosophies, many of which challenged the prevailing realist emphasis on anarchy. In this sense, it is plausible that part of the problem has to do with how sovereignty and anarchy have been used to define the parameters of the discipline of IR.⁶⁵

It is not so much the definition of sovereignty or anarchy that is significant here, but rather the role that sovereignty plays in setting up IR, and of the emphasis on anarchy as differentiating international relations from other political orders. In general, what counts as

⁶⁴ Compare, Bell, *Ethics and World Politics*, Thom Brooks, *The Global Justice Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), Christopher Coker, *War and the Illiberal Conscience* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1998).

⁶⁵ See: R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), ———, 'Lines of Insecurity: International, Imperial, Exceptional,' *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 1 (2006), 65-81, ———, 'State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 20, no. 3 (1991), 445-461, ———, *After the Globe, before the World* (London: Routledge, 2010). Different ways of framing the condition of anarchy are: Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy*, Robert O. Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), ———, *After Hegemony : Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984). Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).

IR theory are those theories that seek to explain, address, or understand the peculiarities of this condition (and textbooks reflect this focus). Moreover, this condition is also largely behind the ordering of IR that places it at the highest level of socio-political aggregation. Indeed, Waltz's *Man, the State and War*⁶⁶ philosophically sets up a vertical ordering of images or levels, and concludes by suggesting how IR is best understood by rejecting this ordering of political levels and by focusing instead on an a-hierarchical anarchical structure. What is of such interest in his text, but which he offers no comment on, is how this move from a hierarchical order that takes us up three levels can be transformed into the unique anarchical level that is the international. In other words, anarchy is at the top, but once we get there we dismiss the ontological arguments that brought us there. This move by Waltz is interesting because it implies a hierarchy of political orders but then proceeds to explain the top level as being devoid of hierarchical relations. This framing is problematic.

First, as others have pointed out,⁶⁷ to claim an absence of a world state or sovereign is not to explain anything but to postulate, possibly stipulate, a feature of something. In order for IR to emphasize the absence of a sovereign authority in the global political condition, there needs to already exist a theory that can point the path toward this observation, and this theory is usually related to theories of sovereignty.⁶⁸ This focus on sovereignty begs the question of how sovereignty is understood. R.B.J. Walker has pointed out that there are at least five different usages of the term.⁶⁹ Histories and theoretical critiques of sovereignty vary

⁶⁶ Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*.

⁶⁷ Richard K. Ashley, 'Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique,' 17, no. 2 (1988), 227-262; R. B. J. Walker, 'International/Inequality,' *International Studies Review* 4, no. 2 (2002), 7-24; ———, *Inside/Outside*; James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington Books, 1989).

⁶⁸ Walker, *Inside/Outside*.

⁶⁹ Walker, 'International/Inequality; *After the Globe, before the World* (London: Routledge, 2010).

considerably.⁷⁰ There are debates over the location, presence, character and even existence of sovereignty. Philip Cerny has argued that thinking in terms of multiple levels of authority instead of sovereignty is preferable than focusing on sovereignty.⁷¹ The confusion contained in the concept of sovereignty is not new. In 1967 Stanley Benn, a professor of philosophy at the Australian National University, argued that the concept of sovereignty means so many different things that we should give up the word entirely.⁷² Benn identified six different ‘senses in which ‘sovereignty’ might be meaningfully employed. His list focused on different legal ways that the term has currency. It would not be too difficult to add more explicitly political ‘senses’ thereby further complicating the concept. Interestingly, none of his six offers anything that on their own could explain sovereignty internationally. The international legal dynamics of sovereignty found, for example, in the even earlier debate between Hans Kelsen and Carl Schmitt⁷³ is not explored.

Second, the anarchical framing of international relations with independent but structurally equal sovereign states has meant that for most of IR’s disciplinary history, the account of power used was primarily Weberian, in his sense of power (*Macht*, not *Herrschaft*) being ‘the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance...’⁷⁴ This definition of power, which was later developed

⁷⁰ Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jenny Edkins, Nalini Persram, and Véronique Pin-Fat, *Sovereignty and Subjectivity* (Boulder: L. Rienner, 1999); Daniel Philpott, *Revolutions in Sovereignty: How Ideas Shaped Modern International Relations*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Hidemi Suganami, ‘Understanding Sovereignty Through Kelsen/Schmitt,’ *Review of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2007), 511-530; Walker, ‘State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time,’; Jonathan Havercroft, *Captives of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁷¹ Philip G. Cerny, *Rethinking World Politics : A Theory of Transnational Neopluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁷² Stanley I. Benn, ‘The Uses of ‘Sovereignty’,’ in *Political Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Quinton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 81.

⁷³ Suganami, ‘Understanding Sovereignty Through Kelsen/Schmitt.’

⁷⁴ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Vol. 1, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) 53.

by Robert Dahl⁷⁵ in a domestic political context and used by Morgenthau in his international relations theory, means that power between states pertains to the ability to, if necessary, force a state to act or not to act according to the demands of another state. The anarchical structure of international relations logically supports the idea that power in international relations has to pertain primarily to one state (or a group of states) changing the behaviour of another state (or other group of states). The strong linearity of this kind of power relation, along with a primarily military backed framing of power, is especially evident in John Mearsheimer's *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.⁷⁶ Most of IR's disciplinary history reflects such a linear account of power, one which did not change even as research on power shifted considerably in the social sciences, especially as the works of Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault became more widely read, with Steven Lukes' short book representing a pivotal moment in how thinking about power was changing under their influence.⁷⁷ While Luke's book was first published in 1974, it has only been in the past few years that IR has started to think differently about power.⁷⁸

Third, and perhaps most important, empirically speaking the anarchical framing most likely does not speak to how those who are not trained in the language of IR theory understand the world. The framing of IR as anarchical, a-hierarchical and removed from domestic politics does not speak to how a lot of international politics is experienced. Global politics can influence domestic political life, and there exist multiple hierarchies that significantly challenge anarchy. One recent example is the EU's decision on April 29, 2013 to ban neonicotinoid pesticides in order to help prevent the decline in bee populations, a

⁷⁵ Robert A. Dahl "The Concept of Power." *Behavioural Science* 2, no. 3 (1957): 201-15.

⁷⁶ John J. Mearsheimer *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001.

⁷⁷ Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁷⁸ Barnett and Raymond Duvall, 'Power in International Politics; Barnett, Michael N., and Raymond Duvall. *Power in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

decision that the UK government has to comply with even though it voted against it.⁷⁹ Environmental politics often feature as an arena of competing hierarchies that exist in both domestic and international spheres simultaneously.⁸⁰

The emphasis on sovereignty and anarchy ignores the extent that the world of states appears to be more hierarchical than anything else. There are states and regions that wield greater authority and influence than others, and do so in a variety of ways. The extent to which this view of international relations carries greater purchasing power is evident in the popular book, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, written by a professor of geography and physiology, about the development and ostensible success of Western states over others.⁸¹ Equally telling is the success of Hardt and Negri's, *Empire*. Their success, when compared to IR works is considerable:

Published in March, 2000, *Empire* has sold 52,865 copies (as of March 18, 2002) and was being translated into 10 languages; compare with Alexander Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), which has sold 5760 copies, and the Cambridge University Press International Relations Series (75 titles) approximately 160,000 copies, according to marketing staff at Harvard and Cambridge.⁸²

This text is further evidence that non-anarchic modes of framing the world carry greater intellectual force across the disciplines. Its success is no doubt attributable in part to the fact that this book provides a non-anarchical framework for understanding global politics. Non-anarchical models such as empire or hierarchy seem to be more reflective a descriptor for how others outside of strictly IR circles probably understand the world, which explains both

⁷⁹ *Bee Deaths: EU to Ban Neonicotinoid Pesticides*, April 29, 2013 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22335520>. Last accessed October 11, 2013.

⁸⁰ Warren Magnusson and Karena Shaw, *A Political Space : Reading the Global through Clayoquot Sound* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

⁸¹ Jared M. Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel : A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years* (London: Vintage, 2005).

⁸² Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002): 9, fn. 2.

the success of *Empire* but also the influence of David Lake's work that emphasizes the role of hierarchy in international relations instead of anarchy.⁸³

Conclusion

The Teaching and Research in International Politics survey (TRIP) targets those already within IR and as such is not relevant to the question of influencing other disciplines. However, TRIP does provide evidence about how IR is framed as a distinct subject and of the subsequent problems. Within the IR academic community, IR continues to be taught and defined according to the 'various 'isms' in IR theory' that represent its so-called leading paradigms.⁸⁴ Yet, whereas 'US scholars of IR today perceive a discipline that is largely defined by these major theoretical traditions and present this view of the field in the classroom,' they simultaneously 'bemoan the existence and reification of the major paradigms.'⁸⁵ Moreover, empirical evidence demonstrates that most research 'published in the scholarly journals does not support the perception that the major paradigms dominate the field, with most research being "non-paradigmatic," meaning that the author advances a theory... but does not fit neatly within the major theoretical traditions.'⁸⁶ The implication is that IR is presented as something that it may not actually be, which surely leads to a deeply confused framing and understanding of IR, and of the role of its paradigmatic 'isms.' In short, IR scholars seem to understand and define the subject in terms that they themselves

⁸³ David A. Lake, 'Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order,' *Review of International Studies* 35, no. S1 (2009), 35-58; ———, 'Beyond Anarchy: The Importance of Security Institutions,' *International Security* 26, no. 1 (2001), 129-160; ———, 'Escape from the State of Nature: Authority and Hierarchy in World Politics,' *International Security* 32, no. 1 (2007), 47-79; ———, 'Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations,' *International Organization* 50, no. 1 (1996), 1-33.

⁸⁴ Daniel Maliniak et al., 'International Relations in the US Academy,' *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (2011): 441.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 442.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 442

would not necessarily accept or even recognize. It may be that IR theories do not travel outside of IR because the majority of IR research does not even fit within its own definitional parameters of paradigmatic research. IR theory may not travel outside because those within IR appear confused about what research programs define IR the first place.

Hannah Arendt is known to have recommended that on international politics one should read the work of Hans Morgenthau.⁸⁷ Yet Arendt, presumably like today's bemoaning IR scholars, would probably have been suspicious of the extent to which IR theory is built on a paradigmatic duality of sovereignty and anarchy.⁸⁸ The challenge for IR is to engage a paradigm-shift away from the traditional framing of sovereigns competing in an anarchical political order.

Is there a way? We could further develop research into international hierarchy as opposed to anarchy, although this is not the only option. Post-structuralists, feminists, post-colonialists, political theorists, sociologists and historians all offer significant alternatives. Even the foreign policy literature offers an alternative. In their classic on the Cuban Missile Crisis, Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, suggest that:

Our conclusion will disappoint many scholars of foreign affairs whose research programs attempt to explain state behaviour by system-level or external factors alone. But their expectation that most of the important differences in whether states go to war, join alliances, or compete could be found exclusively in system-level variables was misguided.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ See also her comment about Thucydides: Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1965), 12.

⁸⁸ *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1965), 152. See also, Anthony F. Lang Jr. and John Williams, eds., *Hannah Arendt and International Relations: Reading Across the Lines* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁸⁹ Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. ed. (New York: Longman, 1999), 404.

In other words, forget anarchy. We need to redefine what research programs IR is concerned with.

There are undoubtedly many options to help strengthen IR. One would be to combine theory and empirical research along the lines of international political sociology as contemporary research on transnationalism and diasporas does.⁹⁰ Another is for theoretical work to develop accounts of international politics that do not begin by trying to define IR according to a political theory about the implications of the absence of sovereign authority. In this regard, scholars could further the linkages that frame IR theory and political theory as mutually constitutive, such as Jonathan Havercroft's work on sovereignty.⁹¹ Alternatively, using schools in political theory to challenge IR also serves a related purpose in opening up IR in potentially new and provocative directions, as Daniel Levine does.⁹² As he argues, the reifications of IR theory have hampered its development, which is a claim consistent with the argument advanced here against the role that anarchy and sovereignty play in setting up IR. In this vein, a more reflexive research program⁹³ could support greater communication across different disciplines and in the process open up IR in new ways could potentially make it of greater interest and use to others.

In closing, it should be clear that this paper is concerned with a very specific framing of what constitutes IR as a specific subject with clearly defined borders – a framing that can be taken from how the subject is introduced to those new to the field. The concern, however, that should attract the attention of those interested in IR is not so much *what* constitutes IR as a specific subject, but *how* IR is constituted as a specific subject – and how

Comment [IB3]: This note and the one it refers to have added considerably to the word count. I'm not sure how to address this because I've been asked to add references. I've tried to keep this to a minimum by using the same references repeatedly, as with the Havercroft reference. Walker's "Inside/Outside" is an obvious addition I could use to that note (note 100), but for the sake of word count and, as per the latest review, to use more reference material, I did not use it.

⁹⁰ See for example, Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁹¹ Havercroft, *Captives of Sovereignty*.

⁹² Daniel J. Levine, *Recovering International Relations: The Promise of Sustainable Critique* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁹³ See note 40.

it is then introduced to newcomers – and *why* it needs to be constituted as independent subject. IR should offer something that cannot be found elsewhere and while it may seem difficult for those of us trained in IR departments to accept, to train someone in the theoretical lexicon that populate IR textbooks is most likely to further the careers of IR theorists than it is to help students of the subject train their minds. As the late Fred Halliday implies in his work and had often stated in person, IR has something to offer, but it has yet to make its case sufficiently clearly.