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Methods in Constructivist Approaches to International Security

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Abstract:
Constructivists employ a characteristic set of mainly qualitative methods in their work on international security. Over time, they have come – theoretically – to focus centrally on process; this has put a premium on methods that can capture and measure it. In early constructivist work, methods were not a high priority – but this has changed for the better. Unfortunately for these scholars, the social science world around them has not stood still. A revolution in qualitative methods means that constructivists students of international security will – methodologically – need in the future 'to run harder simply to stay in place.'

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Methods in Constructivist Approaches to International Security

I. Introduction[1]

Methods follow from theory and theoretical choice. Constructivists have made a number of theoretical bets – on the constitutive power of language and practice, and on thinking of cause in terms of causal and social mechanisms – that then require the use of particular methods. Reading across constructivist scholarship, the methods most commonly referenced are process tracing and case studies (conventional constructivists) or discourse, ethnography and textual analysis (interpretive constructivists). Notably – given the significant epistemological and ontological differences among these scholars – they increasingly converge on a concern with process, in both theory and method.

This chapter is not about the choices constructivists make about methods. Rather, I take their methods at face value and instead explore how well they are used. Are the methods specified and operationalized? Are clear standards articulated? That is, are we given some metric for determining that an application of, say, discourse analysis, is *good* discourse analysis? Are the methods and their execution explicit and transparent, or implicit and vague?

This chapter's core argument is constructivists can and need to do better in their use of methods. Partly, such weaknesses are a function of constructivism's relative youth, with empirical explorations – which, of necessity, require methods – only really appearing since the mid-1990s. In addition, early empirical work was more concerned with showing that constructivism added value – norms matter, say. Over the past decade, though, researchers have sought to develop more fine grained arguments – when, under what conditions and through what mechanisms norms matter, say. And the latter requires a more systematic application of methods.

However, constructivists also need to do better with methods because the social-science world around them is changing. Our training in and expectations for the use of qualitative techniques – the ones typically employed by these scholars – are increasingly ambitious. This means future constructivist work on security will need to be much more explicit and transparent in its use of methods.

This chapter has four parts. I begin with some clarifications and delimitations, in particular, justifying my relatively broad-tent understanding of constructivism as well as international security. I then document my claim that constructivists have come to adopt – theoretically – a processual view of the social world. A third section – the essay's core – assesses how well constructivists apply methods. In the conclusion, I look to the future, arguing that these scholars must double down on method while never losing sight of the precept that method always follows from and is secondary to theory.

II. Constructivism and International Security

A fundamental criterion for the constructivism considered in this chapter is that it be empirical; otherwise, it would have no need for method(s). I consider constructivist scholarship on security that is both positivist (so-called conventional constructivism) and interpretive. The latter includes scholars whose work bridges these supposed epistemological divides within constructivism, but it excludes critical security studies as this research is covered elsewhere in the handbook (Salter and Mutlu, this volume).

Regarding international security, it has become a broad field, as reflected in the diverse themes in this volume – from arms control, to diasporas, to cyber security, to nuclear proliferation, to global health. My only addition will be to consider constructivist work on civil war. At first glance, internal conflict might seem to have little connection to *international* security. However, both scholarship (Checkel 2013b) and real-world events (the Syrian civil war that continues as I write in late 2016) demonstrate that civil wars have international and transnational dimensions that inevitably link them to regional and international security.

III. The Turn to Process

In an important sense, process has always been central to constructivism. At a foundational level, the ontological stance of mutual constitution favored by many constructivists – which highlights the interaction of agency and structure – is a processual view of the social world. In Wendt's (1999) path-breaking book, causal mechanisms – the process stuff connecting things – play a key role. Despite this, early empirical work exhibited a clear bias toward structure – be it discourses shaping policy (Doty 1993), or norms clashing with other norms (Checkel 1999).

Over the past 10 years, however, a broad cross-section of constructivists has shown growing interest in theorizing process – which mirrors similar moves in political science generally (Hall 2003; Bennett 2013) and in sociology (Hedstrom and Ylikoski 2010). The majority of conventional constructivists now theorize in terms of causal mechanisms (Kelley 2004a, b; Checkel 2007; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink 2013). Building upon the processual view inherent in mechanisms (Gerring 2007), Kathryn Sikkink – a leading conventional constructivist – advocates a theoretical agenda of agentic constructivism, which is 'concerned with the micro-foundations of creating and constituting new actors and new conditions of possibility. It looks at those parts of social processes where new actors take on and challenge (and sometimes change) existing logics of appropriateness' (Sikkink 2011, 9). Here, too, one sees process coming to the fore. Still other conventional constructivists have turned to agent-based modelling as a way to analyze the social processes through which norms emerge or identities change (Hoffmann 2005; Nome and Weidmann 2013).

Theorizing in this process-based way is not the exclusive preserve of constructivists with a positivist orientation. Prominent interpretive constructivists now theorize in terms of what they call social mechanisms, which – again – are all about process (Guzzini 2011; Pouliot 2015). Other interpretive constructivists devote considerable time to theorizing practices, which produce social effects and generate macro phenomena of interest. If this hints at a role for process, then Adler and Pouliot make the link crystal clear – highlighting 'the processual nature of practice ontology' (Adler and Pouliot 2015; see also Neumann 2002; Pouliot 2010).

If my analysis here is correct, one should expect to see several broad methodological trends in constructivist work on international security. For one, over time, this scholarship should become more methodologically self-conscious. However, equally important, it should increasingly turn to those methods best suited for measuring process. Whether or not the empirical record supports such claims is the subject of the next section.

IV. Constructivist Methods in Action

With constructivism and international security defined as in Section II, the data for my analysis come from a review of relevant work in the following journals, for the time period 1996-2016: *American Political Science Review*, *Civil Wars*, *Cooperation and Conflict*, *European Journal of International Relations*, *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Security Dialogue*, *Security Studies*, and *World Politics*. In addition, research monographs by constructivists from the major university and academic presses were consulted.

The picture that emerges from this survey is of a constructivist literature on security that is not terribly concerned with methods. Of course, methods do get mentioned and sometimes are done well. In fact, though, the best methods applications are by interpretive scholars and researchers working on the edges of constructivism. On the former, my claim may be somewhat surprising given the received wisdom – at least in North America – that conventional constructivists are more likely to get methods right because of their positivist orientation. By the latter, I refer to the work of several students of civil war who study key constructivist dynamics (emotions, norms, frames), but who would not self-identify as constructivists.

To document these findings, I begin by assessing five security monographs where the methods are done well. I then turn to articles, surveying nearly 100 published over a 20-year period and exploring what methods with what degree of rigour are employed.

Research Monographs

With more space than a journal article, one would expect a book to elaborate its methods more clearly. The manuscripts discussed here – in chronological order – were not chosen at

random. Among the constructivist books on security I reviewed, they stand out for the clear and operational way methods are employed – clear because readers understand what methods will be utilized and operational because one actually sees the methods at work in the empirics. Three of the five monographs are authored by interpretive constructivists; the other two were written by students of civil war.[2]

In this sense, the chosen books are the exception that proves the rule, with most other constructivist works leaving their methods to operate only implicitly in the empirics and case studies. This makes it more difficult for readers to judge how well they are used – for example, in Finnemore's (2003) and Gheciu's (2005) otherwise excellent studies. In making such a critique, however, it is important to remember that both books were written over a decade ago, when training in and expectations/standards for methods were different from today – a point to which I return in the concluding section.

Soviet and Russian Foreign Policy. Drawing upon a broad array of sources from sociology, social psychology and social theory, Ted Hopf (2002a) – in his study of Soviet and Russian foreign policy – seeks to recover the social origins of identity in constructivist theory. More important for my purposes, he tells us how – via what sources and methods – he will use this theory to recover inductively Russian understandings of their own identities. Hopf's (2002a, 23-38) careful discussion and justification of his sources and textual methods, of the dangers of pre-theorization, of reliability and the like are a must read. Writing in 2002, his transparency on and operational discussion about his methods would likely almost meet contemporary expectations and standards.

All is not perfect here, however, as the methods for the second part of his argument, where Hopf explores the influence of identity discourses on specific Soviet/Russian foreign-policy choices, are implicit. In particular, the process tracing in his case studies remains hidden in the narrative. However, with this latter weakness, the author is in very good company, as

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[2] If I had instead chosen six books to review, the sixth would have been Krebs (2015a), another study by an interpretive constructivist that stands out for its systematic and operational use of methods.

many contemporary constructivist studies of security continue to invoke process tracing more as a metaphor than as an analytic tool (Hopf 2012; Grynaviski 2014).

Civil War and Rebel Mobilization. In her book on the civil war in El Salvador, Elisabeth Wood (2003) argues that norms and emotions played a key role in the rebellion. She documents this through a rigorous combination of interviews (panel design), political ethnography, and inductive process tracing. She explicitly addresses the potential sources of bias in interview data (and how one deals with it) and devotes an entire chapter to operationalizing her interviews and ethnography (Wood 2003, ch.2). By operationalize, I mean that readers have a clear understanding of how the methods are used to gather data and draw inferences. And, as others have noted (Lyall 2015), her process tracing is systematic and clear. Writing in 2003, Wood was already adhering to many of the best practices for the method that were first fully articulated only a decade later (Bennett and Checkel 2015).

China and the World. In his study of China's relations with Asian regional and international organizations, Johnston (2008) sets a method-data standard for conventional constructivist studies of identity. In terms of data, he makes extensive use of interviews (over 120), while explicitly addressing the weaknesses (misremembering, strategic dissimulation) inherent in this particular data source (Johnston 2008, 41-43). He also does not stop with interviews, instead triangulating across multiple data streams, including public documents, Chinese academic literature, and private communications among Chinese bureaucrats.

Regarding methods, he takes seriously the challenge of measuring a process such as identity change, rigorously employing a form of process tracing. This means he first operationalizes his three causal mechanisms of identity change, asking (in the jargon) what would be the observable implications if they were at work in the Chinese case. He then presents carefully structured narratives, where readers get a real sense of what mechanisms were at work with what effects (Johnston 2008, ch.1 and *passim*).

Russia-NATO Relations. Applying practice theory to a study of post-Cold war security relations between Russia and NATO, Vincent Pouliot (2010) adds a missing processual dimension to work on security communities (Adler and Barnett 1998). He does so in a way that is both theoretically innovative and methodologically rigorous. On the former, interpretive

constructivists have for many years claimed that the best way to study language is through the examination of texts and discourse. In contrast, Pouliot argues that we must move beyond the mere study of texts to consider also what actors *do*, their practice.

Regarding methodology, Pouliot devotes an entire chapter to it (2010, ch.3; see also Pouliot 2007). And it is a must-read for interpretive constructivist students of security, setting a high (but entirely reachable) standard for an 'interpretive methodology' (2010, 61) that will uncover the process through which practices form. Pouliot thinks hard about how to measure practices, ideally through ethnography and participant observation. Since these were not feasible given his sensitive subject matter, Pouliot instead lays out and justifies a combination of interviewing, triangulation and an interpretive form of process tracing (see also Pouliot 2015) to recover practices in his case.

International Institutions and Post-Conflict Interventions. Severine Autesserre (2010) uses a focus on mechanism and process to explore post-conflict interventions by international organizations (IOs). Building upon earlier constructivist work on IOs as social entities (Barnett and Finnemore 2004), but in a much more methodologically self-conscious manner, Autesserre documents how a powerful framing mechanism shapes the understanding and actions of these intervening organizations. This is an argument about how process – framing dynamics first theorized by sociologists – shape what IOs do and the effects they have. To make the argument, Autesserre conducts multi-sited ethnography, semi-structured interviews (over 330) and document analysis, spending a total of 18 months in the field (Autesserre 2010, 31-37).

While she never explicitly cites process tracing, this is in fact a central technique she employs, and it is carefully executed. For example, while she does not use the language of observable implications, Autesserre does just this throughout the study's empirical chapters, exploring what she ought to see if the dominant frame and peacebuilding culture is at work (Autesserre 2010, chs.2-5). She measures these frame effects by carefully triangulating across multiple data streams. Thus, she examines UN documents, reports findings from field observations and – more ethnographically – engages in participant observation, all with the purpose of documenting both the frame's existence and its effects (Autesserre 2009, 261-63). This triangulation increases confidence in the validity of Autesserre's inferences.

A final point worth emphasizing is that both Autesserre (2010) and Wood (2003) carried out their process tracing in unstable, post-conflict situations, which raises additional challenges, including enhanced incentives for interviewees to lie, personal safety concerns, and ethical issues. It thus all the more remarkable that their methods are so clear and transparent.

Articles

Before turning to constructivist journal articles on international security, several preliminary comments are in order. Naturally, the length limitations of articles compared to books leave authors less space for discussion or operationalization of methods. Some publications – the *Journal of Peace Research*, for example – have addressed this technical obstacle by allowing qualitative methods and data discussions to be placed in on-line appendices that do not count against word limits.

In addition, journals clearly differ in the extent to which they expect empirical studies to engage with methods. A constructivist study in *International Organization* (*IO*) is more likely to have a detailed methods discussion than one published in *Cooperation and Conflict*. Finally, these differences in editorial profile and readership mean certain journals are over-represented in my sample. Many more constructivist security articles are published in the *European Journal of International Relations* than, say, in *World Politics*.

With these comments in mind, there is a striking fact about the majority of the articles I surveyed. While they usually mention methods at some point, little effort is made to operationalize them. This finding holds independent of journal or time period, and prompts five observations.

First, and to start on a positive note, overall, constructivists working on security have come to devote more attention to methods in their articles. In some cases, this may be general discussions – how to operationalize particular methods, or the techniques required by constructivism (Hopf 2007; Pouliot 2007, 2008, 2015). However, in many instances, empirical studies are now clear about the methods that stand behind their findings (Krebs 2015b; Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2016). This is a notable change from 10-15 years ago, when it was common to mention methods only in passing (Checkel 2001; Berg and Ehin 2006).

Second and more critically, readers are often told that the research uses a particular method, but the article's empirical material does not show how. The author may know the work the methods are doing and whether or not they are doing it well; for the reader, it is much more difficult to tell. Process tracing, for example, is typically invoked in this manner (Hegghammer 2010; Bettiza and Dionigi 2015; Mitzen 2015; Lantis 2016).

Put differently, the method is not operationalized; it is not clear how an author will employ it to gather data and draw explanatory inferences. Operationalization would also make clear that the author is aware of a given method's limitations – and how he/she might compensate or control for them. Absent this, one has the 'method as metaphor' problem, where a method is invoked with no elaboration. This particular weakness remains – unfortunately – widespread in the constructivist literature on security (Mattern 2001; Widmaier 2007; Agius 2013; Dolan 2013; Ben-Josef Hirsch 2014; Fiaz 2014 – among many others).

Third, there are of course exceptions to my assessment here, and these are often articles by interpretive constructivists. One example is Hopf's (2002b) study of legitimization dynamics in the post-Soviet space, where he employs a combination of discourse analysis and focus-group methods to reconstruct how people understand the transition from communism. However, he does much more than state his methods. Instead, Hopf justifies their choice, explicitly considers their limitations, and thinks operationally, asking what are the testable implications that his methods seek to uncover.[3]

Fourth, articles by students of civil war that invoke-theorize-document constructivist dynamics are typically very well executed, providing a clear and operational use of their methods. Thus, in her study of peacebuilding failures after civil wars, Autesserre (2009) utilizes a carefully specified ethnography as well as interviewing to document convincingly the role played by frames. In her research on socialization in post-civil war Guatemala, Bateson (2017) employs process tracing in such a way that readers see how it allows her to gather data and

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[3] Other interpretive constructivist work on security where the methods are both explicit and operationalized includes Price 1995 (genealogy); Deitelhoff 2009 (discourse; content analysis); Krebs 2015b (narrative methods); and Shepherd 2015 (discourse methods).

advance specific causal claims. Fujii (2017b) explores how broader social processes shape socialization dynamics in the Bosnian civil war, with her methods being a combination of textual analysis and an interpretive form of interviewing where readers understand what she is able to infer from the interviews and why (Fujii 2010, 2017a). For all three authors, methodologically speaking, it is anything but 'method as metaphor.'

Fifth and as a direct consequence of the growing theoretical interest in process among constructivist students of security (Section III above), one sees increased attention to methods that seek to measure it. Thus, one sees process tracing employed by conventional constructivists (Kelley 2004b; Hegghammer 2010; Bettiza and Dionigi 2015; Lantis 2016). Interpretive constructivists also increasingly turn to process tracing in their empirical studies – albeit in a slightly modified form given their epistemological differences (Guzzini 2012, ch.11; Pouliot 2015; see also Norman 2016).

Scholars who highlight practices have also devoted considerable attention to developing methodological tools appropriate for capturing their processual nature (Pouliot 2007). More recently, Krebs (2015b, 2015c) has sought to develop an account of legitimation dynamics in the national security arena where process-based methods play a key role. These include process tracing, narrative analysis and the use of rhetorical modes. And the latter are operationalized as either arguing or storytelling, both of which add a process dimension to the study of language.

V. Taking Constructivist Methods Seriously: Opportunities and Dangers

In this final section, I begin by contextualizing my critique of constructivists and their use of methods. I then point to two trends – the revolution in qualitative methods and the new emphasis on research transparency – to argue that these scholars must do better methodologically. The section concludes with a warning – to keep methods in their (proper, secondary) place.

Guess What? Constructivists Have Good Company

My review of constructivists working on international security agrees wholeheartedly with Pouliot's (2010, 52) comment that constructivism 'would certainly benefit from engaging

more systematically and coherently with pressing methodological issues … making its standards of validity more explicit and amenable to non-constructivist ways of doing research.' And the rub for constructivists is in the last part of Pouliot's critique – making their methodological standards more explicit.

Throughout this chapter, I have used the term operationalization, but my concern is the same. It is simply not good enough to state 'In this article, I use a combination of ethnography, interviews and process tracing to …' Readers also need some sense – to continue the example – for how the three methods were used to gather the data and advance explanatory-causal-narrative inferences. In turn, the latter requires an author to address explicitly the biases and weaknesses in their methods. Put differently, operationalization forces one to the applied level, and application can only be based on some sense of 'this is how we do it well' – standards, in other words.

Invoking standards, however, pushes me to nuance and contextualize my critique of constructivist security work in two ways. First, while I have not systematically surveyed empirical work on international security by other schools and groups of scholars – realists or students of critical security studies, say – my very strong sense is the identical critique regarding poorly operationalized methods would be applicable to their work. Constructivists, in other words, are in good company.

Consider one example. For the better part of 20 years, empirically oriented international security scholars have been debating how one explains the peaceful end to the Cold War. Was it ideas? Material power? A combination of the two? The disagreement is, of course, to some extent rooted in a particular scholar's theoretical priors. However, in a review of the relevant literature, Evangelista (2015) persuasively argues that the indeterminacy of the debate is also explained by method – more precisely, by poorly operationalized process methods. This has made it more difficult for others to evaluate the rigor and quality of the evidence advanced by researchers with competing theoretical explanations.

Second, when I critique constructivists for coming up short on methods, I am implicitly applying some standard. But whose standard and based on what? If constructivists used primarily quantitative methods, these questions would be easier to answer. Quantitative researchers do have certain community expectations of how to present and operationalize their methods – from

reporting confidence intervals, to making their data available for replication. Qualitative researchers currently have no similar community standards – although this is changing (see below).

Thus, the methodological standard I impose here – to be both explicit and operational – is my own. However, it is not pulled out of thin air, but emerges from my own work on methodology (Checkel 2008a, b; Bennett and Checkel 2015; Checkel 2015), professional engagement with methodological issues (through the Organized Section on Qualitative and Multi-Method Research of the American Political Science Association [APSA]), service on journal editorial boards (*International Organization*, *European Journal of Political Research*), and lecturing and graduate workshops on methods throughout Europe and the Americas.

Social Science Is Changing

Methodologically, the biggest challenge for constructivists studying international security arises not internally, from the choice of particular methods or data problems; instead, it comes the outside – by which I mean the rapidly evolving expectations for the use of qualitative methods in political science.

Two trends are driving these expectations. Most important, the period since the turn of the millennium has witnessed nothing short of a revolution in qualitative methods. It is seen in the publication of numerous books and edited volumes devoted not just to method A, but – crucially – also how to do method A well. This includes work on case studies (George and Bennett 2005; Gerring 2006), discourse analysis (Hansen 2006; Neumann 2008), interpretive interviewing (Fujii 2017a), and process tracing (Beach and Pedersen 2013; Bennett and Checkel 2015) – to name just a few.

This revolution is also seen in the significant improvement in graduate training, mainly through the availability of qualitative methods courses outside university departments. This includes the 'short courses' held in conjunction with APSA's annual convention; the winter and summer methods schools offered by the European Consortium for Political Research; and the two-week long Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research at Syracuse University.

The second trend that is raising expectations for users of qualitative methods is the DA-RT initiative, or data access and research transparency (Symposium 2014, 2015, 2016). In 2011-2012, this started as an initiative of APSA, with a focus on incorporating DA-RT principles into the Association's ethics guidelines. However, beginning in late 2014, a number of political-science journal editors sought to bring these principles more broadly into professional publishing norms. This led to the promulgation of a Journal Editors' Transparency Statement (JETS), which – as of early 2017 – has been adopted by over 27 leading American and European political science journals.[4]

JETS and DA-RT have clear implications for constructivist work on international security. Specifically, there is now a requirement (for publication in the 27 journals) and expectation (in the discipline) that authors demonstrate both production transparency and analytic transparency with regards to their methods and data. The former requires digital archiving – that is, making publicly available your qualitative data (field notes, interview protocols, *etc*). The latter requires authors to specify clearly the analytic procedures upon which their published claims rely.

Both requirements may sound innocuous, but they are not. They contain significant – and unresolved – tensions along ethical, epistemological and practical dimensions (see, especially, Symposium 2016). Consider one example. Implementing analytic transparency may involve authors creating a so-called transparency index, where the reader of a journal article can follow links to the actual source material (say, full interview protocol or full archival document) used to make specific inferential claims. What, though, if that source material – as will often be the case – is in a foreign language? Is the author required to translate it? If so, how do we know she will not cheat – only translating in a way that confirms her argument? Amazingly, JETS/DA-RT do not even address this issue.

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[4] Specifically on JETS, see http://www.dartstatement.org/2014-journal-editors-statement-jets (accessed 14 January 2017).

While there is significant debate and pushback against both DA-RT and JETS,[5] my own sense is these innovations are here to stay – eventually perhaps in some modified form. This means constructivist students of international security will need to work even harder at their methods. Indeed, *not a single book or article reviewed in this chapter* meets the methods/data expectations of DA-RT/JETS.

Keeping Methods Where They Belong

My final set of comments may come as a surprise, especially given the message of this chapter so far, which might be summarized as 'more methods, yes, and better too.' Simply put, one can have too much focus on methods.

I opened the chapter with a truism: 'Methods follow from theory and theoretical choice.' One of the great things about constructivism – including its work on international security – is the theoretical fresh air it has brought to the field. Arguments about practices (Pouliot 2010), socialization (Johnston 2008), and the role of language in structuring politics – discourse, yes, but also theory on arguing and persuasion (Deitelhoff 2009) – have helped us create a set of social theories of international security. It would thus be a pity if such bold theorizing were now overshadowed by method.

And there are legitimate grounds to worry. Among quantitative IR scholars, it has been noted (Mearsheimer and Walt 2013), that the heavy focus on methods has reduced theory to 'simplistic hypothesis testing.' From this perspective, there is a clear villain to the story: 'The quants made us do it!' While there is an element of truth to such a claim, it is only one small part of the story. Indeed, for many qualitative IR scholars – including some constructvists surveyed here – theory is now little more than a list of mechanisms that do not travel or generalize in any meaningful way (Checkel 2013a, 2015, 2016).

At a deeper level, we socialize graduate students to get their work published fast and in the best IR journals. Of course, writing articles is important, but their length limitations, the nature of the review process and the need to write oneself into the current debates and literature

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[5] Two websites are especially helpful for tracking the debate: Dialogue on DA-RT (http://dialogueondart.org/); and Qualitative Transparency Deliberations (https://www.qualtd.net/). Accessed 14 January 2017.

encourage a pull-theory-off-the-shelf approach. The debates over DA-RT and the JETS policy will further incentive younger scholars to think in such theoretically small ways.

To paraphrase that renowned IR scholar Austin Powers, we would appear to have lost our theoretical mojo. So, yes, constructivist students of international security do need to work harder at their methods, especially at the operational level. At the same time, they should not relegate theory to the back seat, but instead be ambitious about their theoretical aims and terms. Here, we would all benefit from Rosenau's ideas about creative theorizing. Written over 35 years ago, his words still ring true today: 'To think theoretically one must be playful about international phenomena … to allow one's mind to run freely … to toy around' (Rosenau 1980, 35). The implication is to think outside the box, to get outside your comfort zone – and to keep methods in their proper, secondary place.

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