

To have been found to be “degenerating” in terms of this particular vision of our field is not especially troubling. But neither is it particularly enlightening, which brings me to my second comment. Legro and Moravcsik missed the essential research design and basic findings of my work on the distribution of power and the Cold War. They discuss as my “theoretical innovation” the assertion that “perceptions [of power] are exogenous variables” (p. 39). In fact, the work of mine they mention is concerned primarily with examining national net assessment as a process that causally connects changes in the distribution of capabilities with changed behavior. My research did not find that assessments of power were exogenous to the distribution of material capabilities. On the contrary, decisionmakers’ assessments appear to capture real power relationships far better than the crude measures commonly used by political scientists. Indeed, it is Legro and Moravcsik’s “two-step” approach to research that insists on a rigid divide between actors’ beliefs and the distribution of power. I never wrote that “objective power shifts . . . ‘can account neither for the Cold War nor its sudden end’” (p. 39). Instead I showed that standard *measures* of the distribution of capabilities are inaccurate indicators of both national assessments and our best estimate of the real power balance.

Legro and Moravcsik are right that the absence of good measures of power is a major problem for many realist theories. They might have added that comparable measurement problems confront theories of preferences or beliefs. Legro and Moravcsik write as if there is some well-established, generalizable, and predictive “epistemic” theory that can explain the national assessments and associated state behavior that I found in my research better than the admittedly weak realist theories I did employ. Had such work existed, and had I artfully subsumed it under a “realist” rubric, Legro and Moravcsik would have something to write about. But they mention no examples of such a theory, for the simple reason that no such theory existed when I researched the Cold War, and none exists now.

One can defend the necessity of debating the merits of real schools of international relations scholarship. It is hard to see what value would be added by a new debate over imaginary ones.

—William C. Wohlforth
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Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik Respond:

In “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” we examine some of the subtlest and most sophisticated scholarly works in contemporary international relations, each of which is explicitly presented by its author as an application of “realist” theory.¹ Our point is simple. The category of “realist” theory has been broadened to the point that it signifies little more than a generic commitment to rational state behavior in anarchy—that is, “minimal

1. Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 5–55.

realism.” Recent realist writings, whether concrete empirical studies or abstract paradigmatic restatements, jettison distinctive assumptions about power, capabilities, conflict, and sometimes even rationality. Nothing distinguishes the recent innovations in realist theory from the liberal studies of Michael Doyle and Bruce Russett, the institutionalist approaches of Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, or epistemic analyses by Iain Johnston and Peter Katzenstein. If we can no longer say what causal processes the realist paradigm excludes, we cannot say what it includes. In sum, realists confront a fundamental tension: Define realism broadly and one subsumes all rationalist theories; define it precisely and one excludes much recent scholarship. We conclude that the latter, a reformulation, is in order. To demonstrate that a more distinctive paradigmatic foundation is feasible, we set forth one potential set of core assumptions, though there have been and will be others. “Let the discussion begin,” so we thought.

The response has been puzzling. Defenders of realism are numerous, vocal, and uncompromising, yet none of the five rejoinders printed here—and none of many unpublished communications, including those connected with a round table at the 1998 annual conference of the American Political Science Association—directly challenges our central claim about the lack of theoretical limits on the concrete midrange explanations that recent realists advance. To be sure, there are myriad complaints about our narrow paradigmatic standard, our disrespect for intellectual history, and our faulty philosophy of science—not to mention our purported intradisciplinary imperialism. We shall consider these below.² Far more striking, however, is what is missing.

Readers might have expected, at a minimum, that a serious defense against our criticism would contain at least two critical points: (1) a demonstration that recent midrange empirical propositions advanced by self-styled realists do differ systematically from midrange causal claims based on other paradigms—for example, claims about the centrality of the democratic peace, the mixed motives generated by economic interdependence, the consequences of credible commitments to international institutions, and the systematic influence of collective beliefs; and (2) a proposal of alternative core realist assumptions that do unambiguously distinguish realist empirical arguments from the liberal, institutionalist, and epistemic alternatives. These two points seem the very least required of any successful defense of contemporary realism.

Yet our five respondents hardly touch on either issue. Instead, they quickly concede that theoretical innovation in contemporary realism rests on concrete causal mechanisms largely identical to those of liberal, institutionalist, and epistemic theories, and that doing so violates the core assumptions of our reformulation of realism—a reformulation to which they offer no alternative. Indeed, insofar as our critics comment (if only in passing) on these concrete matters, it is generally to support our position. Leaving aside minor quibbles and the instructive but idiosyncratic exception of Gunther Hellmann, all five largely agree that paradigms are defined in terms of core assumptions

2. Our core claim is not that the paradigmatic borders of realism are *slightly* misplaced, but rather that contemporary realism subsumes nearly all rationalist arguments about world politics. We therefore do not address complaints about the precise borders or definition of alternative paradigms. Discussion of the narrow definitional issues of the alternatives, however interesting to our critics and ourselves, does not affect the basic thrust of our argument.

and that the three assumptions we set forth—rationality, scarcity, and the causal importance of the distribution of material capabilities—are appropriate core assumptions of realism.³

With our central claim essentially unanswered, we are tempted to stop right here. Yet a puzzle remains. If defenders of recent realism accept the basic thrust of our concrete critique, why so much heat? Why do critics who question the need for coherence in the definition of theoretical paradigms so vociferously defend current usage of the word “realism”? What is really at stake in this debate, according to them?

The answer is extraordinary. Despite their claim to be concerned above all with concrete implications and practical research, our five critics mount a defense on the most abstract possible terrain, namely intellectual history and philosophy of science. All five critics—with the (only partial) exception of Peter Feaver—explicitly assert that *it does not matter* if theoretical paradigms are indistinct and incoherent. This leads them to pose two challenges to our critique of realism: (1) Isn’t our paradigmatic reformulation of realism so narrow that it excludes nearly all international relations theorists, including noted “realists”? and (2) aren’t paradigms just arbitrary labels without coherent intellectual foundations, and therefore exempt from conceptual criticism? If these questions are answered affirmatively, wouldn’t it therefore be better to muddle through with incoherent but widely accepted paradigmatic labels, rather than to propose coherent and distinct, but necessarily more restrictive, core assumptions? After briefly responding to some important, if ultimately secondary, concerns advanced by Feaver, William Wohlforth, and Randall Schweller about our exegesis of specific realist works, we devote the bulk of our response to these underlying theoretical and philosophical issues.

DO WE MISSTATE SPECIFIC REALIST ARGUMENTS?

Both Schweller and Wohlforth take exception to our reading of their own work, and of realism more broadly. Each argues that his work meets our standard of realism, because any change in interests (Schweller) or perceptions (Wohlforth) is—contrary to our claim in the article—simply a reflection of underlying shifts in the distribution of power. Schweller asserts that he, like Hans Morgenthau, makes status quo or revisionist interests endogenous to power shifts, notably victory and defeat in war. Yet this is difficult to square with Schweller’s broad claim that “the most important determinant of alignment decisions is the compatibility of political goals, not imbalances of power

3. Peter Feaver stresses “the distribution of power.” Randall Schweller notes that “realists posit a world of constant competition among groups for scarce social and material resources.” William Wohlforth agrees that realist work “causally connects changes in the distribution of capabilities with changed behavior.” Jeffrey Taliaferro affirms that “all variants of contemporary realism hold that structural variables—anarchy, the relative distribution of power, and power trends—are the primary determinants of foreign policy and international outcomes.” Gunther Hellmann observes that there is substantial agreement on the premises of realism. One point of apparent disagreement is that some of our critics believe that an assumption of conflicting interests somehow prevents realism from discussing cooperation. Not so, as we discuss in “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” pp. 15–16.

or threat.”⁴ Schweller’s focus on interests and power would not be innovative unless interests were somehow independent of power. As we suggest in the article, moreover, Schweller neither proposes a consistent theoretical link between the outcome of war and state interests, nor consistently treats variation in state interests as a function of power.⁵ Wohlforth maintains that his work is realist because it is “concerned primarily with examining national net assessment as a process that causally connects changes in the distribution of capabilities with changed behavior.” He simply seeks to add that subjective assessments of top decisionmakers are better measures of “real power” than “the crude measures commonly used by political scientists.”⁶ True enough as far as it goes, but this claim raises a deeper and more critical paradigmatic question: What drives variation in decisionmaker perceptions? The reasons uncovered by Wohlforth’s admirably detailed and precise research, we argue, have less to do with a shift in material capabilities than in a number of other exogenous, essentially perceptual factors. Still, in both cases readers must be the final judges. If the variation in perceptions and interests documented by Schweller and Wohlforth is indeed driven overwhelmingly by variation in the distribution of power, rather than by exogenous variation in intervening domestic politics, collective beliefs, or institutions, these two scholars should be exempted from our criticism. The force of our general argument would not thereby be blunted.⁷

Feaver’s criticism is more fundamental. He maintains that we misrepresent realism by focusing on the determinants, rather than on the consequences, of state behavior.⁸

4. Randall L. Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 22.

5. In Schweller’s analysis (*ibid.*, pp. 23, 32, 35, 37, 94), victors became revisionist (Japan and Italy) or indifferent (United States); losers worked within the system (Weimar Germany) or opposed it (Hungary and the Soviet Union). State interests seem to vary for a variety of reasons such as dissatisfaction with institutional arrangements (Italy and Japan), the emergence of new leaders in domestic politics (Weimar vs. Hitler’s Germany) and/or the implementation of an entrenched conflictual worldview (Hitler as the heir to Bismarck and Wilhelm), and idiosyncratic collective understandings such as believing that victory (and status quo maintenance) was in fact a mistake (United States). There is no clear causal relation between power and interests, let alone an explicitly realist one. In his letter Schweller remains ambiguous: “revisionist states need not be predatory powers; they may oppose the status quo for defensive reasons.”

6. William C. Wohlforth, *The Elusive Balance: Power and Preferences during the Cold War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 10: “For statesmen, accurate assessments of power are impossible. For scholars, accurate assessments practically mean a correct rendering of the perceptions that inform decisions. Of course, real material balances are related to these perceptions, but we do not know how closely.” This logic also raises the question of how one would ever know that perceptions reflect power if power can never be accurately measured—except by inferring backward from outcomes.

7. It remains curiously contradictory, however, for Schweller and Wohlforth to insist that their arguments are consistent with our conception of realism, because they both go on to assert that our reformulation is so narrow that no interesting theory could possibly stay within its bounds.

8. This is not precisely correct. We point out that realism has much to say about the outcomes of bargaining. We simply point out that the anticipation of these outcomes should, according to realists, be the primary determinant of state behavior.

Feaver concedes (more readily than we would) that realist theories of state behavior are unpersuasive, because states act for a wide variety of reasons. Still, he insists, realists assert that if a state fails to act in an appropriate “realist” manner, the international “system” will punish it. Feaver notes that there are empirical and theoretical problems with this argument: We know that states do not consistently balance and, in part for this reason, the system does not always punish states. Still, this “consequentialist” conception of realism, Feaver concludes, is (or ought to be) shared by all realists, and provides a potentially fruitful research agenda for the future.

We agree that a research program about variation in the force of systemic constraints is an attractive one, and we applaud Feaver’s positive suggestions in this direction, but we believe that clarification of what is at stake theoretically requires that realists limit their paradigmatic claims. As Feaver suggests, “consequentialist” realism requires a formulation like the one we put forward—a “baseline” realist theory of behavior—to help us calculate whether states are responding “appropriately” to external circumstances and should be punished by the system if they are not. For punishment to be consistently imposed, moreover, most statesmen must share this view most of the time.⁹ They must think like realists—realists, that is, in our narrower “baseline” sense. Yet “consequentialist” realism also leaves unexplained, Feaver concedes, why some states choose initially to transgress “realist” norms—the primary focus of the recent realist writings we criticize. Jack Snyder’s Hobbesian theory of imperialism, Stephen Van Evera’s domestic explanation of aggression, Schweller’s “balance of interests,” and similar theoretical innovations say little about why the system responds in a certain way—the core of Feaver’s “realist” theory. The *theoretically innovative* part of their analysis concerns instead divergences from “baseline” state behavior, which involve domestic coalitions, international institutions, and collective beliefs. The clearest and most useful way conceptualize such work is to say that realism predicts balancing behavior and system punishment, and therefore the absence of these behaviors creates anomalies that must be explained by other theories. Ultimately, therefore, Feaver’s attractive research agenda is not an extension of realist theory, because regimes in his view can be punished or not punished for a variety of reasons both realist and nonrealist. Instead Feaver’s agenda creates an attractive opportunity for synthetic research involving a number of clearly defined paradigms.

We turn now to the two more fundamental theoretical and philosophical issues: the narrowness of our reformulation and our lack of fidelity to the intellectual tradition of realism.

IS OUR REFORMULATION OF REALISM SO NARROW AS TO BE MEANINGLESS?

All five critics complain that our reformulation of realist theory is restrictive.¹⁰ The basis for this objection, we have seen, is not that we misstate core realist assumptions. Instead

9. Realist theory also needs to explain why other states choose to use their capabilities to punish “bad states” in some instances but not others—that is, whether states balance. This is a critical question to which our formulation of realism offers clear predictions, whereas Feaver’s reformulation does not.

10. The critics exaggerate. Our formulation in no way blocks realism from illuminating a variety of topics (e.g., international institutions, ethnic conflict, state interests, and perceptions), as Schwel-

it is that realists should not be expected to conform consistently to paradigmatic assumptions. This must be true, our critics maintain, because our definition seems to exclude many arguments by many scholars often thought to be “realists.” Hellmann poses the challenge baldly: “Was anybody ever a coherent ‘paradigmatiser’ (i.e., a scholar adhering ‘firmly’ to a fixed set of unchanging, coherent, and distinct paradigmatic core assumptions)?”

Our critics are correct that few international relations theorists advance arguments drawn from only one paradigm, but this response misunderstands both our argument and the proper role of intellectual history in social science. On the first point, let us be clear: We do not criticize realists for combining causal factors drawn from disparate paradigms, as our critics suggest. Quite the opposite, we are advocates (and, in our empirical work, practitioners) of theoretical synthesis. We criticize realists for labeling the resulting synthesis as a progressive confirmation or extension of realist theory rather than as a demonstration of its limitations or as an evaluation of the relative weight of two theories.

There is a deeper issue here, which realists ignore at their peril. In our view, it is not individual theorists who are “realist” or “nonrealist”; instead individual arguments are “realist” or “nonrealist.”¹¹ Neither we nor any other proponent of theoretical coherence should be asked to demonstrate that leading theorists have been “pure” realists or anything else. The critical exegetical issue is instead whether leading theorists consistently distinguish—or, more precisely, *can* coherently distinguish—realist and nonrealist arguments. Of those whom our critics cite as leading examples of “hybrid” theory, nearly all—E.H. Carr, Raymond Aron, Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz, Robert Jervis, Robert Gilpin, and Robert Keohane—*distinguish explicitly between realist and nonrealist strands in their own thought*. Only a minority—Henry Kissinger, for example—consistently fails to do so.¹² Our argument is that contemporary realists fall increasingly into the latter category.

Still, each of the five critics asks: Shouldn’t scholars reject outright any reformulation—and therefore any critique—that seems to be so at odds with the received intellectual history of “realism”? This raises a more fundamental question: Should scholars employ intellectual history, rather than adherence to core assumptions, as the measure of paradigmatic fidelity? We now turn to this issue.

WHY NOT TREAT PARADIGMS AS ARBITRARY LABELS FOR INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS?

Despite a strong attachment to the “realist” label and acceptance of the conception of paradigms based on core assumptions (Hellmann again excepted), all five of our critics hint that paradigms are just arbitrary labels without coherent intellectual foundations, and should therefore be exempt from criticism. Wouldn’t it be better, our critics suggest,

ler contends, nor does it limit realism to “any behavior short of unilateral and unrestrained belligerence” as Taliaferro maintains. For detailed examples, see Legro and Moravcsik, “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” pp. 15–16, 52–53.

11. We plead guilty to muddying the waters by taking rhetorical advantage of references to individuals—for example, “Is *Anybody* Still a Realist?”

12. We believe that Kissinger’s concern with legitimacy and common values are only tangentially connected with realism, as reviewers of his most recent book have noted at length.

to muddle through with somewhat incoherent but widely accepted labels rather than to adopt a coherent and distinct set of assumptions? Wohlforth makes the point lucidly: Scholars, he asserts, should debate about “real” schools of international relations theory (i.e., schools that scholars currently recognize) rather than “imaginary” schools (i.e., schools that scholars like us reconstruct on the basis of core assumptions). Intellectual practice is, to this extent, its own justification. Schweller asserts that all we have done is to artificially expand the liberal, institutionalist, and epistemic paradigms—even, both he and Wohlforth charge, conjure them up out of thin air—and cut back the realist paradigm accordingly. Hellmann advances a philosophically more sophisticated variant of this argument. Paradigms, he argues, are no more than transient collective agreements among scholars that cannot be judged by any objective standards. Disparate individual worldviews and cognitive biases inherently prevent any deeper agreement on an independent measure of “coherence” or “distinctiveness.” Only naïve positivists could believe otherwise. For these reasons, all five critics conclude, our strict standard of a paradigm defined by core assumptions is more of a hindrance than a help.

We disagree, for three major reasons. First, intellectual history is a poor standard against which to judge paradigmatic consistency. We shall not belabor this point here, because we defend it at length in the article, and our critics do not address our arguments. Paradigms, we maintained, must be coherent to be useful, while appeals to traditional authorities insulate traditional authorities from criticism and thereby perpetuate internal contradictions within traditions.¹³

Second, reliance on the authority of intellectual history creates contradictions. Every one of the scholars we criticize in the article, and all but Hellmann among our present interlocutors, accept that core assumptions are the proper means to define a paradigm. Yet our critics want to have their cake and eat it, too. Realism, they maintain, is based on a coherent set of core assumptions, yet the realist tradition often legitimately diverts from those assumptions. This evades an inescapable choice: Either contradictions must be resolved in favor of coherence, as we recommend, or realists must somehow justify their use of social scientific concepts and language—paradigms, assumptions, theory testing, and so on. Anything less perpetuates confusion.

Alone among our five critics, Hellmann grasps the full import of our criticism, yet he boldly opts for tradition over coherence. One can (and inevitably must) work with indistinct, incoherent paradigms, he argues, but to do so one must abandon the twin illusions that paradigms are logically related to their core assumptions and that empirical propositions derived from paradigms can be objectively confirmed or disconfirmed. This relativistic (or, as he prefers, “pragmatist”) position, while not our own, is at least coherent and defensible—in contrast to a position that simultaneously invokes the need for coherent assumptions and the authority of an incoherent tradition. Yet Hellmann demonstrates the departure from a conventional understanding of social science theory required if our criticism is to be answered without a fundamental reformulation of

13. Accordingly all but the most relativist philosophies of science treat a theoretical paradigm as an *ex post* reconstruction (as does Imre Lakatos) rather than a subjectively apprehended intellectual tradition.

realist theory. Yet even Hellmann, as we are about to see, balks at consistently maintaining such a skeptical position.

Third, heavy reliance on intellectual history leaves our critics without a viable means of structuring academic debates. Consider the two positive alternatives they propose.

The first is offered by Schweller and Jeffrey Taliaferro. If an explanation is partially realist, both recommend, we should term any extension of it (whether constructed of baseline realist elements or not) a progressive improvement in realist theory. Specifically, Schweller argues that “realist” explanations may subsume unlimited “theoretical elements (e.g., variation in national goals, state mobilization capacity, domestic politics, and the offense-defense balance), provided that these auxiliary assumptions and causal factors are consistent with realism’s core assumptions and microfoundations.” Taliaferro proposes that nonrealist factors can influence state behavior within realist theory up to the point where “a state’s domestic politics and ideology” become the “primary determinants of its foreign policy.”

Is Schweller’s and Taliaferro’s alternative a more helpful way to structure theoretical debates than ours? We think not, for at least three reasons. First, their criteria are overtly biased. Why should all explanations that contain elements of realist theory be automatically designated “realist,” rather than liberal, institutionalist, or epistemic?¹⁴ Second, their criteria encourage the use of imprecise theoretical language. Where a number of disparate factors combine to explain an outcome, it is more helpful to report that “both realist and liberal factors explain some of the variation” (or perhaps that “realist factors seem to best explain this aspect, whereas institutionalist factors seem to best explain that aspect”), as we propose, rather than reporting that “realism has been improved and confirmed,” as Schweller and Taliaferro propose. Third, their criteria still exclude from the realist canon most of the works we examined in our article. Walt’s analysis of the Cold War, Joseph Grieco’s analysis of Economic and Monetary Union, Snyder’s analysis of imperialism, Van Evera’s analysis of aggression, and, not least, Schweller’s analysis of the interwar “balance of interest” all give preponderant causal weight to domestic, ideational, and institutional factors inconsistent with realist core assumptions.¹⁵

Even Hellmann’s seemingly relativistic philosophy of science, the second positive alternative to our proposal, cannot long evade the central dilemma of contemporary realism. Hellmann recommends that we renounce our faith in the objective content of paradigms, yet even he ultimately rejects his own counsel. He offers instead a new way forward, termed “paradigmatic pragmatism,” based on supposedly uncontroversial categories: “Few (if any) scholars would deny that different ‘schools of thought’ or ‘theoretical traditions’ can be usefully distinguished in international relations . . . (based on) ‘family resemblances’—characteristics that reveal that they somehow belong to-

14. For an elaboration of this critique, see Andrew Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics,” *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Autumn 1997), p. 542.

15. By mentioning other paradigms, we mean only to note that there are large bodies of explanation—for example, arguments about the democratic peace, transnational interdependence, international institutions, and collective beliefs—that are plausibly viewed (to judge from their cohesive core assumptions) as coherent theoretical alternatives to realism.

gether." So paradigms, initially rejected by Hellmann (as sets of coherent assumptions) on fundamental philosophical grounds, turn out to be helpful after all (in the form of intellectual traditions) and are "somehow," despite individual worldviews and cognitive biases, intersubjectively distinguishable. And, as we hope to have shown, the result is neither coherent nor uncontroversial. Admirable philosophical sophistication cannot avoid the familiar pitfall: ambiguous, ill-defined categories dictated solely by intellectual tradition.

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

We close with a reminder of why paradigmatic coherence matters. Our critics incorrectly believe that the primary stake in this debate is the future of realism.¹⁶ Yet our article makes clear, and we reiterate here, that we do not seek to "bury realism." Arguments about power, scarcity, and capabilities, whatever scholars choose to label them, are indispensable to a proper understanding of world politics. The more profound underlying issue is not the viability of the realist paradigm, but the viability of *all paradigms* based on "isms"—liberal, institutionalist, epistemic, or constructivist theory, and whatever else. There is, after all, another alternative to our proposal, namely, to dispense with such paradigmatic labels altogether—a view with which Wohlforth and Schweller flirt. Many contemporary international relations theorists prefer to speak of rationalist versus sociological approaches. Others dispense with all broader theoretical labels. Still others seek to reformulate international relations theory in terms of formal game theory. This, like Hellmann's initial rejection of coherent paradigms, is a respectable position. But why do those who hold it so virulently defend the term "realism"? What is puzzling among our critics is the simultaneous defense of the realist rubric and rejection of any clear standard of paradigmatic coherence. In defending current usage of the term "realism," despite its manifest incoherence, our critics ignore the growing threat to the language of paradigms itself.

We are ultimately agnostics concerning optimal divisions among theoretical positions in international relations theory.¹⁷ Yet an informed choice surely depends in part on whether more (if still not perfectly) coherent and distinct paradigms can be formulated, and whether they can then be synthesized in an empirically useful way. Accordingly, we have started by challenging theorists, including ourselves, to formulate such paradigms. None of these demands is specific to realism, but realist theories will play an essential role in any paradigmatic debate.¹⁸ To return full circle to our initial point, any

16. This is clear from our critics' speculations about our motives. Taliaferro warns: "Let us be clear: Legro and Moravcsik do not seek to revitalize realism; they seek to discredit it." Schweller adds: "Like foxes guarding the chicken coop, Legro and Moravcsik want us to believe that they are sincerely troubled by the current 'ill health' of realism." This sort of outright speculation about motives is neither relevant to scholarly debate nor, as it happens, correct.

17. We are heartened, however, to detect some signs of convergence that may make the choice less urgent. Recent writings by leading rational choice theorists, for example, offer a similar distinction between preferences and strategies, and multistage synthesis involving preference formation, interstate bargaining, and institutional construction, as suggested by our model. Cf. David Lake and Robert Powell, eds., *Strategic Choice and International Relations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

18. For our criticisms of the overextension of other paradigms, see Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 536–541; and Andrew Moravcsik, "Is Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?"

discussion of what realism can and cannot do necessarily must rest on a clear formulation of what realism is and what it is not—a task our five respondents have essentially avoided. The most useful step might therefore be for realists to accept the two challenges that opened this essay: Provide a defensible set of core realist assumptions, and explain precisely which midrange hypotheses they include and exclude. Wouldn't anyone see this as desirable? Shouldn't everyone care?

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Constructivism and European Integration," *Journal of European Public Policy*, Special Issue 2000, "The Social Construction of Europe," pp. 661–684.