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Introduction by **Catherine Lu,** McGill University

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Introduction by Catherine Lu, McGill University

How does peace between states become an established social fact or part of the unquestioned order of things? This question drives Vincent Pouliot's *International Security in Practice*, an innovative and provocative contribution to the theoretical literature on international security, with an empirical focus on post-Cold War Russian-Atlantic security relations. While the challenge of theorizing the causes and conditions of war and peace between states is 'ancient' in the discipline of International Relations (IR), the challenge of enacting transatlantic peace became a novel and urgent practical concern in world politics following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the U.S.-USSR superpower rivalry, a set of events which opened up a rare opportunity for the pacification of relations between former enemies. Although there were initial promising signs in the early 1990s of great transformations in security relations between Russia and the West, transatlantic peace has materialized only as a fragile and somewhat fleeting achievement. Why was the hope of a robust and enduring post-Cold War transatlantic peace stillborn (p. 191)?

International Security in Practice begins with a theoretical investigation into the concept of interstate peace understood as the enactment of a specific social practice. Interstate peace, according to Pouliot, needs to be reconceptualized with a greater focus on the everyday practices, or "socially meaningful patterns of action" (Adler and Pouliot, 2011), that constitute peaceful relations between states. He proposes reorienting the concept of "security community" (see Deutsch et al., 1957, and Adler and Barnett, 1998), so that it is not just defined negatively by the systematic exclusion of violence and threats of violence from the means of dispute resolution between states. Peace "is more than simply non-war; it is self-evident diplomacy" (p. 42). Disputes, disagreements and conflicts over ideological commitments, over values themselves (or their interpretation or prioritization), or over interests, are endemic to practically all political relationships. Interstate peace in practice rests on states engaging with each other about these disputes and conflicts with diplomacy, as a matter of course. To the extent that diplomacy is self-evident, becoming second nature to its practitioners or commonsensical among a group of states, their relations approach the social fact of peace.

Pouliot employs sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's practice theory to develop an account of "the logic of practicality," "the inarticulate sense that allows agents to perform social activities" (p. 13). Practical sense is not the same as a sense of appropriateness because it is what people do unthinkingly and commonsensically. Whereas I might decide to wear a modest black outfit because I think it appropriate for attending a funeral (logic of appropriateness), I may never consider the question of whether or not it is appropriate to go to the funeral of a loved one, because doing so is "the done thing ... because one cannot do otherwise" (quoted in Pouliot, p. 35). The logic of practicality focuses on the background knowledge that shapes social action. The logics of consequences, appropriateness and arguing are complementary to the logic of practicality, but the latter is ontologically prior to the other logics of social action: it is through practical sense "that agents feel whether a given social context calls for instrumental rationality, norm compliance or communicative action" (p.

36). It is the logic of practicality that organizes when and how agents operationalize the other logics of action in any given decision or circumstance.

Pouliot's 'practice turn' challenges how IR constructivists typically theorize social action and international security in world politics. The standard constructivist account of security community development requires the cultivation of collective identity, or a sense of 'we-ness,' entailing enlarged and mutually inclusive conceptions of self or national interest. Constructivists consider this mutual identification or blurring of the Self-Other distinction to be vital for the development of political trust, a constitutive foundation of security communities. Instead of viewing identity as the shaper of interests and the driver of action, Pouliot proposes to reverse the arrow, viewing action or practice – what we do, often unreflexively – as the determinant of identity (p. 39). It is not a sense of 'we-ness' that drives interstate peace in practice; rather, it is the self-evidence of diplomacy as "the practical starting point of any and all interaction" (p. 232) that constitutes the practice of mature security communities, and *produces* collective identity (p. 237).

Furthermore, Pouliot's Bourdieu-inspired theoretical framework leads him to conclude that for diplomacy to be self-evident, it must be part of a social pattern of domination that rests on matching agents' ingrained dispositions and their positions in the field of international security (p. 50). When disjunctures occur between practitioners' dispositions and their positions, interstate peace as practice can be undermined by "symbolic power struggles over the very terms of interaction" (p. 2). A practice-based theory of interstate peace thus brings struggles over symbolic power to the fore of understanding the dynamics of security community development. Against liberal accounts of peace as the result of a "win-win compromise," Pouliot's theory understands peace to be the result of "the imposition of meanings through power relations, as barely perceptible as they may be" (p. 45).

In the second half of his book, Pouliot uses the case of post-Cold War Russian-Atlantic security relations to provide a practical illustration of his theory of practice of security communities. Although he argues that constructivist reasoning does not require new methods, Pouliot develops a "sobjective" constructivist methodology that "aims at overcoming the epistemological duality of subjectivism and objectivism by restoring the practical logic of social life and casting it under the analytical light of its intersubjective context and history" (p. 64). This methodology is rigorously demonstrated in the empirical investigation of Russian-Atlantic security relations that forms the latter half of the book. In Chapter 4, to uncover the practical logics at work at the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), Pouliot conducted sixty-nine interviews with "security officials and experts" in both Western countries and Moscow between February 2006 and May 2007 (p. 84). Chapters 5 and 6 continue the "sobjective" analysis by contextualizing and historicizing the symbolic power struggles in post-Cold War NATO-Russia diplomacy that intensified as misalignments evolved between players' dispositions and their respective positions in the field of international security.

One implication of analyzing peace in and through practice is that it allows Pouliot to construct a typology of qualitatively different kinds of security relations based on how

states engage in the practice of diplomacy (p. 43). Relations that constitute a state of war are defined by conditions in which the use of force or the threat of force is always on the table as a means to try to get one's way in a dispute with other states. In a "war community," the use of force or the threat of force is not only on the table, but often used or threatened in conjunction with diplomatic practices. In an "insecurity community," states may practice diplomacy, but still "under the shadow of organized violence" (p. 43). When diplomacy is normalized between states to a reliable degree, a "non-war community" exists. This condition, however, falls short of a "security community," in which diplomacy is self-evident or second nature, and the use or threat of violence is systematically expelled from the toolkit of mechanisms available to states to pursue their interests or settle their disputes. Disputes between states may linger on indefinitely in a mature security community, but there is no fear that irresolution or settlements that are adverse to one state's preferences might lead to the use of force in their relations.

According to this typology of war and peace based on the degree of embodiment of diplomatic practice in interstate relations (p. 43), Pouliot finds that the quality of Russian-Atlantic security relations changed quite dramatically with the end of the Cold War. Not even the most conservative Russians in the post-Cold War era really fear that NATO will attack Russia, and NATO has no expectation of Russia invading Europe or using force to settle disputes with NATO. Despite the post-Cold War establishment of greater diplomatic ties and cooperative security institutions, however, contemporary Russian-Atlantic security relations, according to Pouliot, still do not constitute a security community, where diplomacy is a self-evident practice in resolving all disputes, but approaches a "non-war community" characterized by normal diplomacy (p. 234). The end of the Cold War has produced a 'non-war' era rather than an era of peace in Russia-NATO security relations.

To arrive at this conclusion, Pouliot examines in detail several positive and negative factors affecting the limited pacification of Russian-Atlantic relations. On the positive side, Atlantic-Russian security relations are characterized by the "disappearance of the possibility of using force," the "normalization of disputes" through the normalization of diplomacy as the mechanism through which to raise, discuss and settle disputes, and by increased and institutionalized "daily cooperation on the ground" between Russian and NATO security practitioners through venues such as the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). On the negative side, a "latent mistrust of mutual intentions" (p. 104), problems in the "larger political relationship between Moscow and the West" (p. 119), and "clashing organizational cultures" (p. 131) combined to limit the development of the Russian-Atlantic relationship into a security community in and through practice. In terms of critical junctures, Pouliot faults NATO's double enlargement policy in late 1994 for breaking the rules of the new symbolic order of international security and reviving Russia's Great Power habitus; "with two masters and no apprentice in the relationship" the development of diplomatic doxa was undermined (p. 192).

The following reviews grapple with diverse aspects of this rich theoretical and empirical study of international security. The first three reviewers focus more on the book's theoretical arguments, whereas the latter three reviewers engage more with the empirical case of Russian-NATO security relations.

Peter Jackson endorses Pouliot's theoretical project of developing a practice-based framework for understanding the dynamics of international peace and security, and considers *International Security in Practice* "the most thorough and successful effort so far to introduce 'practice theory' into the discipline of International Relations." Jackson praises the book for making three noteworthy contributions: (1) the focus on non-representational knowledge, in the form of social actors' practical sense or ingrained dispositions, improves our ability to understand the sources of cultural and institutional reflexes, as well as develop more sophisticated accounts of 'interests'; (2) the attention to the symbolic dimension of international politics produces an original perspective on the nature of the rivalry between NATO and Russia over the meaning of international security; and (3) the assertion of the priority of symbolic domination over collective identity formation as the foundation of enduring peace provides a strong critique of mainstream constructivist accounts of security community development.

Jackson's critiques focus on methodological and theoretical issues. Methodologically, he finds some of Pouliot's interpretation of his interview data unpersuasive. To reveal better the connection between the practical logics of security professionals and their effects on the policy-making process, Jackson calls for a more detailed analysis of the day-to-day experiences of such professionals and their role "within the machinery of foreign and security policy-making." In terms of theory, while Jackson is also a Bourdieu-inspired scholar, he wonders if the disagreement between Russia and NATO over the very field of international security poses a potential limit on the applicability of a Bourdieusian framework of analysis. Jackson also takes issue with Pouliot's assertion that the Cold War and post-Cold War security fields can be easily distinguished by the different kinds of capital ("material/institutional" or "cultural/symbolic") that were elevated in each period. Instead, Jackson posits the continued relevance of both forms of capital in explaining the course of Russia-NATO security relations.

Ole Jacob Sending also engages with the theoretical innovations in Pouliot's book. He raises the question of the relationship between the logic of practicality, understood in non-representational terms, and representational knowledge, and he challenges the claim that practical knowledge is "primary." For example, he sees a disconnect between Pouliot's analysis uncovering the logic of practicality of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) set out in Chapter 4, and the analysis of conflict resolution in Russia-NATO relations since the end of the Cold War (in Chapters 5 and 6), which seems to focus on representational knowledge. Sending thus seeks a more robust defence of the "exclusion of representational knowledge in the logic of practicality." In addition, Sending points to the practical problem of how to get at non-representational knowledge, and wonders whether Pouliot's methodology of interviews and discourse analysis does not make it difficult to separate representational from non-representational knowledge.

While Jackson (and Sending) praise *International Security in Practice* for establishing "practice theory as an approach that holds out exciting possibilities for the study of international relations," Jennifer Sterling-Folker and Robert Jervis express more ambivalent and negative assessments of Pouliot's Bourdieu-inspired practice theory of

security community. Sterling-Folker raises questions about the unreflective nature of practices, and the dynamics of political and social change. She observes Pouliot's normative assessment of contemporary NATO-Russian relations as "something of a tragedy," but notes that implicit in this assessment is that both NATO and Russia could have enacted better practices that would have been more conducive to the development of a security community between them. This normative critique, however, seems puzzling to Sterling-Folker if practices are understood as "common sense." Pouliot directs advice at "people who, as Pouliot has convincingly argued, are engaged in a particular type of common sense practice and for whom there is no material or ideational capacity to behave as if there were a rationally and normatively more desirable goal beyond or outside those practices." If practitioners can only engage in practices from the 'inside', how and why do shifts in practices occur? Sterling-Folker suspects that practice theory is incoherent when it criticizes practices normatively and offers prescriptions to practitioners because, she claims, the tasks of normative criticism and prescription must posit an 'outside' to practice, such as a normative desire for peace.

Robert Jervis praises Pouliot for providing an improved, more articulate, and accessible account of a Bourdieu-inspired theory of practice, but finds himself "only marginally more impressed by its utility." In his assessment of both the theoretical innovations and the empirical analysis, Jervis raises a skeptical challenge that Pouliot's new theoretical framework can take us much further than more "traditional approaches" in analyzing the general causes and conditions of interstate war and peace, or explaining the particular vexed course of post-Cold War Russia-NATO security relations.

Both Andrei Tsygankov and James Goldgeier do not engage with the theoretical contributions of Pouliot's book, but focus on the empirical case of Russian-NATO relations since the end of the Cold War. Why have security relations between NATO and Russia been so rocky and what accounts for their deterioriation? Tsygankov argues that leadership was crucial to the relative stability of NATO-Russian relations, not everyday practices of diplomacy, all of which were upset in two periods of crisis (Kosovo in 1999 and the Georgian war in 2008). In this sense, although he seems to agree with Pouliot's theoretical argument that a potential exists for the development of a security community between Russia and NATO, he also thinks that such a development will not come about through the operation of everyday practices but will require dedicated political leadership.

Goldgeier takes on Pouliot's argument that an opportunity was missed in the 1990s "to bring Russia into the European security community." What possibilities were there for 'true partnership' with Russia, if NATO's double enlargement did not proceed? What alternative policies were there for NATO other than double enlargement for increasing European integration into a collective security alliance? What consequences for the integration of central and eastern European states would have followed from not pursuing their inclusion in NATO? Goldgeier ultimately thinks, along with Jervis, that the quality (less democratic and more authoritarian) of Russia's domestic politics is the main reason for the souring of NATO-Russian relations in the post-Cold War world. He also seems to believe that a "true security community" will only result from a shared community of values based on democracy and human rights.

In his response to these reviews, Pouliot focuses on clarifying his main theoretical arguments, and answering some of the most important criticisms raised in the areas of theory, causality, methodology/research design, and empirics. In the area of theory, he clarifies, in response to a criticism raised by Sending, that practices are both reflective and inarticulate. He also confirms, in response to Sterling-Folker, that within a practice ontology, "there is no 'outside' to practice," but he argues that there is still room for endogenously generated change through reflection about "sobjective" knowledge. Against Jervis, Pouliot mounts a robust defence of his theoretical innovations by questioning how "traditional approaches" such as realism – "a materialist theory focused on structure" – could have produced "an analytical narrative that is primarily centered on process, meaning and agency." The dispute between Jervis and Pouliot over how much practice-based theoretical innovations may improve upon traditional approaches perhaps points us towards a Machiavellian truth. In *The Prince,* a text that deals with new political foundings, Machiavelli wrote that "nothing is more difficult to handle, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than to put oneself at the head of introducing new orders" (1998: 23). The forthright critiques that Jervis levels against Pouliot's book suggest that Machiavelli's observation or admonition can be applied to anyone who sets himself the formidable task of introducing new modes and orders in international relations theory, especially in the high-stakes field of research in international security.

Pouliot's response to challenges raised about his analysis of the empirical case demonstrates the importance of historical inquiry for practice theory and his "sobjectivist" methodology. Pouliot responds to Goldgeier's claim that there was no missed opportunity for transatlantic peace because NATO's double-enlargement was necessary to avoid creating a security vacuum in Eastern Europe, and because granting Russia a veto over alliance decisions was out of the question, by drawing on historian Mary Sarotte's award-winning book, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (2009), to confirm his own conclusion that several different policy options were available to practitioners in the early 1990s to construct the post-Cold War peace in Europe. As Pouliot writes in his own book, "the end of the Cold War was one of those rare historical instances when the world found itself at an intersection where several paths were available […] including the one toward a security community" in Russian-Atlantic relations (p. 192). In focusing on process, meaning and agency, practice theory may not only share common ground with some existing IR theories, but also open "new avenues for dialogue and cross-fertilization" (p. 8) between political scientists and historians of international relations.

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Review by James Goldgeier, George Washington University

When states form a security community, it means that they simply do not consider using force with one another when settling interstate disputes. How do these relationships form? Are common values, such as democracy and respect for human rights, the root cause? Or can the ways in which states manage their mutual affairs lead to the creation of such communities?

Vincent Pouliot seeks to address this set of questions by examining the relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Russia through the diplomatic mechanism created by both sides – namely, the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), which was itself preceded by the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). Sadly, both of these bodies failed precisely at the moment when they were needed the most to manage war and peace issues. Russia walked out of the PJC when NATO bombed Serbia in 1999; the West froze contacts with Moscow at the NRC after the outbreak of the Russia-Georgia war nearly a decade later.

Thus, although the first four chapters of the book point toward the possible creation of a security community between the West and Russia, chapters five and six (on NATO enlargement, Kosovo, and the Russia-Georgia war) lead to despair. Pouliot concludes that by 2008, "as they powerlessly witnessed Russia's ruthless actions in South Ossetia, Alliance members reaped what they had sown. Moscow's defiant assertiveness and its new deafness to Western criticism are testimony to the fact that one generation after the end of the Cold War, the NATO-Russia relationship is plagued with so much hysteresis that security community development now seems remote." (pp. 194-95)

Pouliot provides a familiar explanation for the crisis that developed over time in NATO-Russia relations: NATO's "double enlargement." NATO enlarged the types of missions it would engage in, going beyond territorial defense to humanitarian intervention in Bosnia and later in Kosovo, thereby confronting Russia with a more offensive alliance. It also began the process of enlarging its membership in the mid-1990s, taking a first group of countries into the alliance in March 1999 and continuing over the next ten years until much of Europe is now included in NATO, thereby marching the alliance up to Russia's borders.

"NATO's fault," writes Pouliot, "rests with its failure to realize that Russia would not, and in fact could not, understand the double enlargement in the same way as Westerners. As much as expansion made sense from the NATO point of view, it made no sense to Moscow: exclusionary and delusionary, the policy fitted better with the old realpolitik of Cold War containment than with the new rules of security-from-the-inside-out professed by the Alliance." (p. 229)

There is no question that the West underestimated Russia's enduring antagonism toward NATO no matter what the alliance tried to do to placate those sentiments. But that doesn't mean leading Western officials did not try to address the problem. United States President Bill Clinton and his top Russia adviser Strobe Talbott, who presided over NATO's initial "double enlargement," knew full well that it was hard for Russia at the time. That's why

Clinton, Talbott, and Secretary of Defense William Perry worked so hard to bring Russia into the Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia and to create the PJC. It's why Clinton wanted to bring Russia into what became the Group of Eight (G-8) advanced industrialized countries despite his Treasury department's objections that Russia was not ready. Clinton realized Russia was having a hard time understanding the double enlargement, but hoped that over time that would change. What he and others in the West underestimated was the difficulty in changing Russian attitudes toward NATO over the long run.

A core issue in the NATO-Russia relationship is that NATO has not wanted Russia to have a veto over alliance decisions, whereas Russia seeks a full voice in European security affairs. For most of the post-Cold War period, the West's power position allowed it to go forward with its plans, while Russia could do little but fume. But in 2008, the United States pushed too hard, promoting membership action plans (MAPs) for Ukraine and Georgia without laying the groundwork within NATO. France and Germany feared Russia's reaction, thus shelving any concrete plans to develop MAPs, but at the NATO summit in 2008 the alliance agreed that Ukraine and Georgia would become NATO members someday. After the 2008 war, those prospects look dim, and NATO's enlargement across Europe has essentially halted. And despite the successful "reset" in U.S relations with Russia since the inauguration of Barack Obama, the fundamental institutional problem remains: how to provide Russia the full voice in European security it craves without undermining NATO's goals of creating peace and security throughout the region.

Those who criticize the West for missing an opportunity to bring Russia into the European security community fail to answer two fundamental questions. First, had the West taken a different approach on European security and not gone forward with NATO's "double enlargement," what were the possibilities for a true partnership with Russia? Second, had NATO not enlarged due to its desire to avoid inflaming Russian sentiment, what would have happened to the Central and Eastern Europeans, who in the meantime have become integrated into the West?

Although there were high hopes for Russian democracy after the collapse of the Soviet Union, those hopes have diminished considerably in the intervening years, and it is hard to blame NATO for the trends in Russian domestic politics. Pouliot believes that practice can create new possibilities, and thus if we had just followed better practices in NATO-Russia relations we might have created new opportunities. Back in 1995, William Perry similarly believed that this could be the legacy of IFOR, and he worked tirelessly on cooperation. Today, joint training and exercises and even collaboration on missile defense might promote closer relations. But the gulf between NATO and Russia on democracy and human rights is so large that it is difficult to see how a true security community can result.

We can never know what would have happened in Central and Eastern Europe had NATO not enlarged. Perhaps those countries would have continued on the path of political and economic reform and joined the European Union (EU). But it is also possible that a West that did not use NATO membership as leverage to encourage reform would have lost a chance to join Europe's East with Europe's West. EU membership was even more important in the long run, but could the EU have enlarged to the East absent the NATO

assurance that these countries were now firmly ensconced in the zone of security and stability that the alliance provides? It would have been a lot more difficult.

Pouliot develops a theory of practice of security community and applies it to Europe by examining the NATO-Russia Council. But the NRC was just a small part of the relationship between the West and Russia during these years. Much of the diplomatic action lay elsewhere. And while I applaud the author for conducting a significant number of interviews, nowhere is there a list of interviewees. None appears to have spoken on the record. It's very difficult to judge interview material absent that information, and it considerably limits the value of the original research the author conducted.

Review by Peter Jackson, University of Strathclyde

The past two decades have witnessed the rise of a 'practice turn' in the disciplines of ethnography, sociology and (to a lesser degree) history. *International Security in Practice* is the most thorough and successful effort so far to introduce 'practice theory' into the discipline of International Relations. Vincent Pouliot has deployed the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu in a well-researched and thought-provoking study of the dynamics of NATO-Russian relations since the end of the Cold War. The most impressive achievement of this excellent book is Pouliot's case for greater theoretical attention to practices, which, he argues, can provide a rich and original perspective on the dynamics of international peace.

The central aim of *International Security in Practice* is to develop a practice-based theoretical framework that can deepen our understanding of the ongoing rivalry between NATO and Russia in the field of international security. Reconstructing the "practical logics of day to day diplomacy," Pouliot argues, sheds light on how "daily interactions between representatives whose states are at peace differ from those of rival states." The primary focus of his research, therefore, remains fixed "on the ground of international diplomacy" (a phrase that is used repeatedly throughout the book). (p. 1) This is borne out in the chief body of empirical evidence that underpins Pouliot's analysis: an extensive range of interviews with both NATO and Russian 'security professionals' in Brussels, Washington, Berlin, London, Ottawa, and Moscow.

The theoretical framework that Pouliot uses to analyse his empirical data draws heavily on sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's 'theory of practice'. Pouliot provides an elegant and accessible introduction to Bourdieu's theoretical corpus in the second chapter of the book. He also makes a persuasive argument that scholars of international relations would benefit from a greater focus on practices and thus greater engagement with Bourdieu.[1] Key concepts such as 'habitus', 'field', 'doxa', 'symbolic violence', and 'symbolic capital' are introduced and explained clearly. So is the notion of 'practical logic', by which Pouliot, following Bourdieu, means a set of dispositions that are part of the social actor's habitus but are adapted to a given social context (a 'field') to generate effective practices. These dispositions are not necessarily part of the actor's conscious decision-making and may not even be accessible to self-reflection. Pouliot describes them as constituting "background" or "inarticulate" knowledge. He stresses that they are fundamental nonetheless in shaping the parameters of the strategies adopted by a given actor.

Pouliot targeted the 'practical logics' of both western and Russian security elites in 69 interviews he conducted in 2006 that constitute the empirical core of the book. This data is 'objectified' in a methodology Pouliot developed for his study entitled "sobjectivism." This

[1] In the interests of disclosure, however, I should acknowledge that I approached the book (and this review) with a strong sympathy for a Bourdieusian approach. It is therefore not surprising that I found Pouliot's case for the potential contribution of a Bourdieusian perspective persuasive. As Bourdieu would say, 'One only preaches to the converted'.

is a three-step strategy that begins inductively with the "recovery" of the "realities and practical logics" of security professionals mentioned above. (p. 66) Pouliot then adopts a more deductive strategy to "objectify" the results of his research first by situating them in the "cultural" or "inter-subjective" context and then by "introducing time and history" to "account for the temporal dimension in the mutual constitution of social reality and knowledge." (p. 72-75) This social scientific language may put off many historians. But it is not miles away from the methodology of setting various forms of primary evidence in their cultural and chronological context that has long been used by international historians.

Pouliot uses his "sobjectivist" methodology to provide an interesting and in many ways original account of the course of NATO-Russian relations after 1990. His larger argument is that an important chance to create a durable relationship based on mutual confidence was lost during the mid-1990s when NATO embarked on its policy of double-enlargement. Pouliot is rather ambiguous as to whether it would ever have been possible to forge a "security community" – where war is unthinkable and all issues are considered only within the context of cooperative diplomacy – with post-Soviet Russia. His interpretation is structured by the Bourdieusian concepts of habitus, field, and symbolic violence. The collapse of the USSR and the consequent decline of Russian power, Pouliot argues, introduced profound changes to the "field" of international security. The Atlantic Alliance, enjoying an utterly dominant position in this field, was able to impose a new set of meanings to the concept of security that revolved around western practices of liberal democracy and market capitalism (what Pouliot terms the "inside/out" approach to security). In Moscow, the "great power habitus", which had been so prominent in Russia's engagement with the outside world since the time of Peter the Great, receded and there was a genuine willingness to play the game of international security according to the meanings and rules imposed by the West.

This inclination was undermined, however, by the double-enlargement policy, which revived long-standing suspicions in Moscow and led to what Pouliot describes as a "reactivation" of great power dispositions within the collective habitus of Russian policy elites. (p. 193) Russian policy thereafter became much more assertive and NATO-Russian relations became more confrontational (with the exception of a brief period after September 2001) and were characterized by intense symbolic struggles to define the most legitimate approach to security. Pouliot uses another Bourdieusian concept, "hysteresis," to interpret Russian policy. Russia's strategies, he argues, were out of step with its position in the field of international security – which remained dominated by NATO. A chance for cooperative diplomacy to become embedded as a "'self-evident" practice in NATO-Russian relations was lost.

The above summary does not do justice to the originality and significance of *International Security in Practice*, much of which flows from the eloquent argument it advances for the potential significance of practice theory. Three points are particularly worth emphasizing. First, Pouliot provides a persuasive critique of the dominance of representational knowledge at the expense of "background knowledge" in most international political theory. By "representational" Pouliot means conscious ideas and knowledge that can be used to explain social action. Examples include the process of rational calculation for

structural realists or the fundamental importance of identity and norm internalization in mainstream constructivism. Pouliot argues that underpinning all three of the above "modes of reasoning" is "background knowledge" that, although not readily accessible to conscious reflection or representation, constitutes the "practical sense" of the actor. Practical sense, in the Bourdieusian conception, is "prior" to conscious reasoning. It is through practical sense that actors decide which style of reasoning is most appropriate to a given social context. It thus conditions the possibility of thinking in terms of identity or rational calculation.

Social actors' practical sense is embedded in their habitus in the form of ingrained dispositions that actors obtain and develop through experience as well as formal and informal education and training. These dispositions adapt to different social contexts (or 'fields') to produce practices. It is essential, therefore, to consider the social and cultural backgrounds of both individual and collective social agents, their education and training as well as their day to day experiences. The dispositions that constitute the habitus cannot be reduced to 'identity' because they are prior to conscious representations of this kind. Nor are they the same as an agent's 'unspoken assumptions' - which may be 'unspoken' but are not usually inaccessible to conscious reflection. They are best expressed as an orientation to the world that conditions, but does not determine, the practices deployed in a given social context.

The great advantage of thinking in terms of dispositions and practices is that it opens up the opportunity to interpret not only how cultural or institutional reflexes operate but also where they come from. It provides for a more sophisticated approach to understanding the nature of 'interests', for example, in shaping the behaviour of foreign and security policy-makers. As Pouliot submits: "If interests drive the world, then social scientific theories need to explain not only their enactment but also their content and origin." (p. 242) One might easily insert 'international historians' in place of 'social scientific theories' in this sentence. The payoff is a more nuanced understanding not only of how policy-makers react to international challenges but also why they react and adapt in certain ways rather than others.

The emphasis on practices rather than representational knowledge provides the departure point for Pouliot's persuasive critique of the emphasis on collective identity in mainstream constructivist and post-structuralist theorizing. It is at least as important to analyse what policy elites *do* as it is to think about what they *say*. Identities are changeful and prone to fracture. The concept of the habitus, conversely, posits a durable set of dispositions that adapt to different contexts to produce varying practices. Pouliot argues that the constructivist assumption that identity produces practices should be rejected and indeed reversed:

> "… it is not only who we are that drives what we do; it is also what we do that determines who we are. By starting with the concrete ways in which state representatives handle disputes in and through practice, I reverse the traditional causal

> arrow of social action – from ideas to practice – and emphasize how practices also shape the world and its meaning." (p. 5)

Thinking about practices in this way better captures the complex dynamics of decision-making than does the focus on identity and norms that characterizes so much 'critical' theorizing about international relations.

A second key contribution of Pouliot's study is the attention it pays to the symbolic dimension to international politics. He deploys Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence – the process whereby dominant social actors are able to impose arbitrary categories of meaning as self-evident common sense in a given field – to provide a new perspective on the dynamics of NATO-Russia relations. A key aspect of these relations, he argues, is an ongoing struggle to define the meaning of international security and thus the legitimate means of achieving it. NATO's advocacy of liberal democracy and the free market as the best guarantees of security can be understood in this light. The same is true of attempts by Russian elites to represent international relations in the familiar language of great power politics. This is an original and thought-provoking way to think about international politics and provides the basis for some of the most insightful passages of *International Security in Practice*.

Finally, Pouliot makes the point that all stable international orders, and thus all durable peace, rests on some form of symbolic domination. "[F]or a practice to be self-evident" he submits "it must be part of a social pattern of domination." (p. 232)

Participants in a given order accept as self-evident the "doxa" – the rules, norms and operating assumptions – propagated by its dominant players. This allows for a powerful critique of the concept of 'security communities' as it is used in most constructivist theorizing. Rejecting the operating assumption that 'security communities' are based first and foremost on a strong collective identity, Pouliot argues instead that they are based on relationships of domination where all parties internalize the reigning symbolic order imposed by the dominant actors. With this internalization comes an acceptance of 'practicality' of diplomacy as the only means of interacting with one another. This focus on the symbolic dimensions to international politics allows Pouliot to offer an interesting new perspective on NATO-Russian relations. After 1990, he argues, the Atlantic Alliance dominated the 'field' and imposed its own 'inside/out' interpretation of security. This 'doxa' was accepted by key Russian elites and a brief window opened for the establishment of a NATO-Russian security community. The NATO double-enlargement, which was interpreted by the Russians as a traditional power political move aimed at securing strategic preponderance for the Atlantic Alliance, undermined the legitimacy of the symbolic order promoted by NATO and ruined the opportunity to forge a security community. The tone was thus set for the course of relations thereafter.

While Pouliot's reinterpretation of the NATO-Russian relationship is thought-provoking, it is not always persuasive. This is true of the conclusions he draws from his research into the practical logics of NATO and Russian security professionals. Among the most important

of these conclusions is that the "possibility of using force" had "disappeared" from the dispositions of security officials on both sides of the NATO-Russia relationship when he conducted his interviews in 2006. (p. 7, 95, 96) Pouliot provides a series of quotations in support of this conclusion, including one from a "NATO policy-maker with direct connections to the Secretary-General" who assured him that [t]here is no planning in NATO of any kind that engages Russia as a threat." (p. 99) Another "senior official" from NATO dismissed talk of a military confrontation with Russia as "hogwash." A Russian official, meanwhile, insisted that issues that would have led to confrontation during the Cold War would now be settled through discussion: "We may disagree. We may get sore, both sides, but we're not afraid of war". (p. 101) Pouliot notes that this "assurance" was "widespread" in 2006 and pervaded "the highest echelons of the NATO hierarchy." (p. 100)

On one level, all of this could be interpreted as compelling evidence that the use of force has indeed disappeared from the conceptual horizons of policy elites. Yet it might also be argued that diplomats are always likely to give the kind of measured and reassuring responses that Pouliot quotes. This is the way members of the diplomatic profession are trained to express themselves (particularly to outsiders). There are good reasons for this. Recourse to the language of force necessarily limits the scope for negotiation and compromise. Introducing military considerations into discussions of political relations, moreover, tends to increase the influence of soldiers at the expense of diplomats. Stressing the potential of negotiations, conversely, protects the space for diplomatic manoeuvre. The use of measured language and an emphasis on the need for conversation is therefore a pivotal disposition in the habitus of the professional diplomat. This observation is based in part on extensive work in the archival records of the French foreign ministry for the years before the two World Wars. It is very rare to find explicit references to the use of force even in the internal correspondence of Quai d'Orsay officials. This certainly does not mean that they had dismissed the possibility of war. The prospect of war dominated the atmosphere within the ministry on both occasions. It points instead to the fact that diplomatic professionals tend to avoid overt references to the need for military options, not least because their influence tends to diminish dramatically once this threshold has been crossed. Some consideration of this issue might have added greater nuance to Pouliot's analysis of his interview data.

Pouliot might also have devoted more attention to the specific practices of the security professionals he interviewed. His interviewees are identified in only the vaguest of terms and there is relatively little discussion either of their day to day experiences or of their precise role within the policy-making process. The problem is that there appears to be a fundamental disconnect between the book's analysis of the practical logics of security professionals in chapter four and the focus on policy-making at the national and international level in chapters five and six. Pouliot's argument that international security emerges "in and through practice" (p. 5, 20, 97, 110) would be more persuasive had he provided a detailed analysis of the precise role played by his "security professionals" within the machinery of foreign and security policy-making. It is conceivable that the way diplomatic and military officials at the coal face of international relations represent issues and frame policy options plays a vital role in shaping the parameters of high policy. To make this argument, however, requires a carefully considered analysis of the various

policy-making fields under consideration. The book does not do this and the argument is less persuasive than it might have been as a result.

Indeed the lack of a detailed discussion and analysis of the 'field of international security' is the most problematic aspect of *International Security in Practice*. A 'field' for Bourdieu is a network of social relations between actors. It is defined primarily by an internal logic which is distinct from those of other fields. Actors internalize this logic as common sense. When an actor's habitus is attuned to the logic (or the 'nomos') of the field, the result is a 'practical sense' (or a 'feel for the game') that opens the way for effective strategies. But the field is also structured by the distribution of different forms of capital. This distribution determines each actor's position in the field. Pouliot attributes much greater importance to symbolic and cultural capital than to material currencies of power such as economic strength, the possession of natural resources and military capabilities.

Pouliot's interpretation of the course of NATO-Russia relations hinges on a distinction that he makes between "cultural/symbolic capital" on the one hand and "material/institutional capital'" on the other. Cultural/symbolic capital refers to "artefacts, narratives and symbols that define the meaning of the world and legitimize it." Material/institutional capital, on the other hand, includes "military forces, money and material riches (industrial capacity, demographics etc), as well as networks of allies, friends and other institutional ties". (p. 148) This distinction admittedly obscures the interrelationship between various forms of power, but the analytical payoff for distinguishing between them is obvious enough. In a crucial move that establishes the framework for his central argument, Pouliot submits that the relative importance of material/institutional capital declined after the Cold War while that of cultural/symbolic capital increased. Material and institutional forms of power, he argues, were "the main currency of Cold War realpolitik." Cultural and symbolic resources, meanwhile, constitute "the staple of the post-Cold War, democratic peace era." (p. 148)

All of this is important for the argument Pouliot wants to make because he attributes NATO's superiority in cultural and symbolic capital after 1990 as the key determinant in its ongoing domination of the field of international security. This is how NATO was able to impose its "inside/out" approach, which represents liberal democracy and market capitalism, as the only legitimate foundations of international peace. To support this interpretation, Pouliot cites the work of Alexandra Gheciu and Michael Williams.[2] He points out that the activities of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe expanded and intensified after 1990. He also emphasizes the importance of the Paris Charter (1990), which proclaimed democracy to be the only legitimate form of government in Europe, as evidence of a decisive shift in bases of European politics. "In turning domestic politics into a central concern for international security," Pouliot asserts, "the [Paris] Charter was a turning point in the history of international security." Translating this into Bourdieusian terminology, he observes that "the capital conversion rate was basically

[2] A. Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe": the politics of international socialization after the Cold War*, (Stanford, 2005); M. Williams, *Culture and Security: symbolic power and the politics of international security*, (London 2007).

reversed; in the new rules of the game, cultural-symbolic not material-institutional resources formed the sinews of power." (p. 151)

Much of this is difficult to accept. The distinction between the Cold War and post-Cold War periods, for example, is overdrawn if not fundamentally misleading. There is virtual consensus within the recent historiography of the Cold War that it was as much a cultural struggle between contending belief systems as it was a traditional confrontation between rival power blocs. In this sense the East-West confrontation was a highly symbolic struggle between opposing ways of life. Western propaganda moreover, was suffused with the discourses of human rights and democratic legitimacy. Indeed many observers would argue that, to the extent that the western powers can claim victory in the Cold War at all, their success owed as much to cultural and symbolic resources as it did to more material and institutional superiority.[3] The post-1990 emphasis on these issues was a continuation of earlier trends rather than a decisive break with the past.

Similarly, one could easily argue that NATO's post-1990 dominance of the 'field of international security' owed as much to its absolute superiority when it came to precisely the kinds of capital that Pouliot argues were no longer crucial. It is worth remembering that from 1990 through 1994, in the period Russia appeared to have been most open to playing the game of international relations according to the rules imposed by the Atlantic Alliance, Russian material and institutional power was at its lowest ebb. Russia's military was in crisis, its alliance system had disintegrated along with much of its empire, its economy had collapsed and its internal political situation hovered on the brink of absolute chaos. NATO, significantly, enjoyed absolute and unchallengeable superiority in all of these domains. It was able to mobilize and deploy its military assets into regions that had been in the Soviet sphere of influence since 1944. Russia was incapable of mounting any kind of challenge to these policy initiatives. Moscow was unable to oppose NATO's various enlargements, which extended eventually to incorporation of states that had been part of the Soviet Union as recently as 1990.

Pouliot judges the Atlantic Alliance's promotion of the "inside/out" approach as a strategy of symbolic violence aimed at establishing and then reproducing western domination of the field of international security. One might go further to argue that the western powers are cloaking a bid for traditional geo-political dominance in the rhetoric of democracy and human rights. This is certainly the interpretation advanced by many Russian critics of western policy. A still more persuasive analysis, however, would underline the interrelationship between symbolic/cultural and material/institutional power in NATO strategy. These various forms of capital complement one another in a larger strategy aimed at establishing *both* the parameters of international legitimacy and a favourable

[3] For a sampling of this literature see O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World interventions and the making of our times*, (Cambridge, 2006); F. Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, (London, 1999); R. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War secret intelligence*, (London, 2001); C. Craig and F. Logevall, *America's Cold War: the politics of insecurity*, (Cambridge [Mass.], 2009) and the indispensable collection of essays in O.A. Westad and M. Leffler (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, three vols., (Cambridge, 2010).

balance of power. The fact that this strategy has been less successful as Russia's internal situation has become more stable and its economic prospects have improved points to the continuing importance of material forms of capital in structuring world politics.

This observation casts doubt on the persuasiveness of Pouliot's arguments concerning Russian "hysteresis" (I must confess that I have never been much convinced by the merits of this concept). Pouliot posits that Russia's resurgent 'great power' disposition after 1994 was out of step with its true position in the field of international security and is therefore a classic example of hysteresis. But this is not supported by a detailed analysis of the structure of this field. There is no systematic discussion of the distribution of material power over time on the one hand and the impact that this has had on Russia's 'position' within this field on the other. It may well be that Russia's increasingly assertive international posture, at least in areas where Russian elites feel its vital strategic interests are in question, is linked to greater domestic stability, the strengthening of its economic situation or on growing confidence in its military capability. On the other hand it may not. The point is that this dimension is missing almost entirely from Pouliot's analysis.

One might go even further to argue that the lack of agreement between Russia and the Atlantic Alliance over the bases of international security makes the concept of a field less useful as an analytical tool to understand relations between the two actors. If the existence of a field requires that both sides accept its internal logic, how can we say that such a field exists in NATO-Russian relations? In this sense, *International Security in Practice* may have sketched out the limits of a Bourdieusian approach for scholars of international relations.

To sum up, it should be emphasized that the above observations and criticisms in no way undermine the impressive achievements of this ambitious and original book. It is all too easy to find fault with work of this scope and richness. Vincent Pouliot has written an outstanding book that establishes practice theory as an approach that holds out exciting possibilities for the study of international relations. *International Security in Practice* must certainly become a referent point as a study that offers exciting new insights into the dynamics of world politics while at the same time posing a powerful challenge to existing practices within contemporary international theory.

Review by Robert Jervis, Columbia University

At a time when so many scholars and public affairs analysts are preoccupied by new dangers like cyber conflict, new opportunities (and problems) raised by globalization, and new non-state actors that can inflict harm as in terrorism or advance approved (by us) values such as human rights, it is good to be reminded that state-to-state politics remains central. In parallel, with the rise of China and India and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, many people have consigned Russia to the dustbin of history and Russo-NATO relations to the fringes. Vincent Pouliot provides a useful corrective, and reminds us that the evolution of relations between Russia and the West has not proceeded in a straight line and is not easy to explain. He seeks to unravel these puzzles by using the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, and this is his theoretical contribution.

To give my summary judgment at the outset, I find *International Security in Practice: The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* fascinating but in the end only partly successful. The second part of this judgment is perhaps less surprising than the first. Where one ends up depends in significant measure on where one starts, I come to this book both confused by and dissatisfied with what I have read of the Bourdieusian approach. That I now understand it somewhat better is an achievement of this book; that I am only marginally more impressed by its utility is probably to be expected. Pouliot shows that some insights can be derived from Bourdieu, but I believe that the main lines of the narrative re-describe in different language what close observers of the interaction of Russia and the West had previously understood. (For a related account of Western policy in the Bosnian crisis that like Pouliot's book is valuable for deeply engaging with empirical material but similarly subject to the criticism of being largely a redescription in less traditional language, see Hansen, 2006; a study that is more successful is Autesserre, 2010.)[1]

I will take advantage of this being a Roundtable to allow others to summarize Bourdieu. As far as I can tell, Pouliot does this very well. Terms like habitus, field, doxa, and practical sense are familiar to most historians and political scientists, even if the intricacies (and ambiguities) are not, and my explicating them would only give readers a third-hand approach. Instead I will focus on what I see as the main problems.

First, just a little description. After a chapter summarizing Bourdieu, Pouliot outlines his methodology, labeled "sobjective," which moves in three steps. "One begins with the inductive recovery of agents' realities and practical logics, then objectifies them through the interpretation of inter-subjective contexts [,] and thereafter pursues further objectification through historicization," although these are not conceived "as a unidirectional, linear pathway" (p. 65). This chapter seems to me to be a bit more drawn out than it needed to be, perhaps reflecting the book's own history of starting as a dissertation. Pouliot then moves to his case-study of the diplomacy between NATO and

[1] Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Severine Autesserre, *The Trouble with Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Russia, starting with an analysis of the extensive interviews he conducted with diplomats in 2006, next looking back at the post-Cold War history to see how we arrived at this position, and then briefly extending the analysis through 2008. (Pouliot treats NATO as a unit, which is understandable for convenience but misses an opportunity to compare the views of different states or even of different sub-national actors.) His concluding chapter lays out the ways in which he feels the Bourdieusian approach differs from and adds to alternatives.

The basic story is well told if familiar. Relations between Moscow and the West were remarkably good until 1994 at which point they started to deteriorate quite badly with the initial expansion of NATO membership and out-of-area activity in the Balkans (the "double enlargement"), getting even worse in 1998-99 with NATO moving further east and the Kosovo crisis. The forthcoming Russian response to 9/11 closed some of the gap with the West, but it soon widened again. The fundamental cause was a mismatch between the expectations, aspirations, and expressed interests (terms that I grant are vague and need to be probed) of the two sides. The West, seeing the end of the Cold War as a triumph of its material power and social system, was not willing to grant Russia the status of an equal, certainly not as a Great Power deserving of a veto over NATO's actions. In an important argument, Pouliot sees the double enlargement of 1994 as a true turning point, an argument to which I will return. Whether it was or not, it clearly was a rejection of treating Russia as an equal partner and one whose preferences would be heeded in areas with which Moscow had always been deeply concerned even before it was the capital of the Soviet Union. Pouliot describes this in terms of hysteresis, the clash of habitus and field. The crucial question is whether these concepts carry us deeper into the interactions and the actors' worldviews and conceptions of their interests than do more familiar conceptions. Pouliot understands that this is what he needs to do to convince his readers, and he presents an abstract defense at the end of his concluding chapter. But I think what will carry greater weight is the analysis in the historical chapters. Although they do bring out some facets that I for one had not fully considered before, I think most instances are not closely related to Bourdieu's framework, and for the rest Bourdieu does not take us into new territory.

First, building on Bourdieu, Pouliot says he is stressing the importance of practice and practical knowledge. Unfortunately, some of this is vague and other parts are wrong. The vagueness is in exactly what practice means in this context. From the theory chapters and the interviews with NATO and Russian diplomats who were assigned to the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) I thought this was the kind of day-to-day diplomacy and committee work, often quite boring, that never makes the newspapers and rarely is studied by scholars but that is much of what diplomats do and that both informs and is shaped by broader diplomatic relations. Some of the interviews deal with this, but many of them, and all of the history, treat practice in a more conventional way as the policies of the states and the interactions among them. This is fine, but I don't have to read Bourdieu to know that this is one of the main places I want to look.

For Pouliot, the concept of practice, even if it means little that is new to more traditional scholars, is important because it contrasts with a stress on identity, and particularly the

argument that "we-ness or collective identification" (p. 5) is necessary for the formation of a peaceful community. Pouliot argues that "as this book's case study has demonstrated, for interstate pacification to thrive we-ness must not only be represented but also enacted in and through practice. This is certainly one of the key contributions that practice theory can make to social and IR theories" (p. 237). Here Pouliot's target is constructivism that studies common and conflicting identities as represented in what people say (somewhat similar to what he did in his chapter drawn from NRC interviews), without looking at how actors behave. But for those of us who never thought this was a good idea, the central lesson is unnecessary.

It is important for Pouliot because he frames some of his argument in terms of security communities, and I think this is a distraction from his argument. As defined by Karl Deutsch, a security community is a group of countries among whom war is unthinkable.[2] More concretely, in modern times this can be operationalized as a situation in which the states do not have plans for war against each other. Here the slightest possibility of war simply does not enter in to the diplomatic calculations, and among Great Powers this is quite a rare condition. Even countries that are allied often think about fighting each other at some point in the future, and indeed politics within most wartime coalitions are influenced by this possibility. Traditional realists see the fear of war as being almost omnipresent and as driving much of international politics, and so the existence of security communities is of great interest.[3] Indeed, I have argued that the emergence of a security community among the leading world powers (excluding China and Russia) is a crowning achievement of the 20th century that has transformed world politics more than is generally appreciated.[4] Pouliot brings in the idea of the security community at the start of his book, introduces one section of his interviews with the heading "The Disappearance of the Possibility of Using Force" (p. 98), and quotes a senior policymaker as saying that "there is no planning in NATO of any kind, that engages Russia as a threat" (p. 99). In concluding, Pouliot claims to "have developed a theory of practice of security communities that defines self-evident diplomacy as the constitutive practice of security communities" (pp. 231-32). But even if this is not circular, it is a definition only because what he has studied is not a security community or what anyone had considered to be one. Although force is not in the foreground of NATO-Russian relations, neither has it receded entirely, as Pouliot himself realizes: "Russia and NATO cannot be said to form a security community" (p. 227). True, indeed obvious, and the only point of raising this red herring would have been if constructivists who focused on identity rather than practice had argued that a feeling of we-ness between Russia and NATO had made war impossible.[5] But they haven't--indeed

[2] Karl Deutsch, et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

[3] See, for example, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[4] Robert Jervis, *American Foreign Policy in a New Era* (New York: Routledge, 2005), ch. 1.

[5] A similar argument from a different theoretical perspective, see Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

no scholars believe that Russia and NATO have such a feeling--and so Pouliot's discussion neither refutes other constructivists nor shows the importance of practice in any sense other than diplomacy.

It is less surprising that Russia is not part of the security community and that relations with NATO have been rocky than it is that they have not gotten worse. It is startling that the expansions of NATO, the NATO interventions in the Balkans, the color revolutions, and the Georgia war were navigated largely without threats of the use of force. Pouliot points this out (p. 234) but does not take the opportunity to elaborate on its significance, perhaps because he is approaching the topic from the other direction--i.e., from knocking down the straw-man of a NATO-Russia security community. I wish that Pouliot had shown how his Bourdieusian approach can explain this and tell us why things are not much worse. Indeed, this question is a challenge to most approaches to international politics. I know that I do not have a ready answer for it and cannot think of any book or article that provides one. Part of the reason for focusing on practice, Pouliot reminds us, is that Bourdieusian analysis, building on the anthropology of Clifford Geertz and others,[6] is designed to uncover things that are so deeply understood by actors that they are not explicated. It is what is taken for granted that provides the substrate for so much thought and action, and is often missed by other approaches. Indeed, psychologists have discovered that even the most honest self-reports about why people form their impressions and beliefs are often quite incorrect--so much psychological processing is unconscious and inaccessible to us that we often understand ourselves no better than we do others.[7] But the problem here is that diplomats are highly self-aware, at least in the areas and on the questions that concern Pouliot. I do not think anything he said would surprise them. Excavation is not necessary here, or at least Pouliot has not succeeded in bringing up valuable artifacts. Russian spokesmen—I believe they are all men—are quoted as saying that their country is a Great Power that should be treated as an equal, not a lackey, and that they will not bow down to NATO's conceptions of appropriate behavior and Russia's (diminished) role in the world. Analysts and diplomats from the NATO countries are quoted as saying that democracy and human rights are the wave of the future that NATO should support and that Russia should not expect major concessions. More concretely, Russians articulate and NATO members reject a sphere of special privileged interest for Russia in its "near abroad." One does have to listen to the natives, and perhaps Russian and NATO diplomats have not listened carefully enough to each other, but Bourdieu and Geertz do not provide us with much added value.

This is not to deny that there are assumptions buried beneath what the officials said and believed, but only that Pouliot's Bourdieusian analysis has not enabled him to uncover

[6] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books 1973); Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," in Michael Gibbons, ed., *Interpreting Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), pp.133-47.

[7] For a good summary, see Timothy Wilson, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

them, to go any deeper than they did. As Albert Einstein wrote to a friend in 1938, "men are even more susceptible to suggestion than horses, and each period is dominated by a mood, with the result that most men fail to see the tyrant who rules over them."[8] Although clearly the positions and perspectives of the NATO diplomats, the Russians, and Pouliot differ, they may share enough of the same tyrant so that he cannot shed a really new light on the way that they view the world. Pouliot argues that the actors' preferences, beliefs, and values were historically conditioned, being derived not from first principles and abstract reasoning, but from what they had learned through national cultures, traditions, and experiences. The Cold War was important in its reinforcement of these. NATO countries, and particularly the US, saw the way the Cold War ended as vindicating the superiority of values and a way of life that was universalistic and that provided the foundations--the only foundations--for a peaceful and prosperous world order. For the Russians, the Cold War reminded them of their country's status as a Great Power and made them quick to see Western efforts to make Russia yield as a continuation of the earlier struggle. While I believe that this is correct and share with Pouliot deep reservations about the wisdom of the American approach, an exploration of these sources of world views is part of the tool-kit of traditional diplomatic analysis. Furthermore, although the summary that Pouliot and I have given is not put quite this way by the actors themselves, it is hardly foreign to them. This kind of exercise is important, and while difficult, can be done. Perhaps the most influential study of this kind was done by a traditional historian in James Joll's excavation of the "unspoken assumptions" operating in the pre-World War I diplomacy, and is paralleled by a recent study of diplomats' (mis)understandings of the causes of conflict in the Congo, two works that tell us and the actors things about their operating beliefs that they did not and perhaps could not grasp.[9]

From the perspective of the divergence between Russian and NATO perspectives and felt interests, one major puzzle is the 1992-94 period when Russia adopted the role of a "junior partner" with an "embrace of the new rules of the game" (p. 155). Unfortunately, Pouliot devotes only five pages to these years. Reading them is startling in today's context, but perhaps the explanation is simply the momentum of Gorbachevian "New Thinking" combined with overwhelming Russian weakness and preoccupation with domestic problems. From this perspective, this interlude could not last. Pouliot disagrees, and argues that NATO's double enlargement of 1994 was a true turning point. This is an important argument, and it is worth noting (Pouliot does not) that the bulk of the American scholars of IR and diplomatic history strongly argued against moving NATO eastward. But there are three lines of objection to Pouliot. First, one does not need Bourdieu to make it, and fairly standard IR/diplomatic history approaches would argue that this was a sort of slight to Russia's self-regard, infringement on her interests, and even a threat to her security that while it could be imposed on a recently-defeated country, would leave it

[8] Quoted in Manjit Kumar, *Quantum: Einstein, Bohr, and the Great Debate About the Nature of Reality* (New York: Norton, 2010), p. 326.

[9] James Joll, "1914: The Unspoken Assumptions," in H. W. Koch, ed., *The Origins of the First World War* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), ch. 8; Autesserre, *Trouble with Congo*.

aggrieved in a way that would harm if not poison relations in the coming years. Indeed, the Russian reaction is much less surprising to any Realist (using the term quite broadly) than is the American-led move, and explicating this is something that Pouliot says he will leave to others, unhelpfully including in his footnote the citation to a publication not listed in the bibliography (p. 177). Both this decision and the intervention in Bosnia were matters of high policy, and while the decision-making on the latter was indeed something of a comedy of errors (not atypical of President Bill Clinton's first term), it is hard to see them as growing out of practice in any useful sense of the term. A second objection is that Pouliot himself is unclear on the importance of the double expansion. The strongest argument would be that it sent relations off in a direction that would be hard if not impossible to reverse, which would mean that what came afterwards, however interesting descriptively, had little causal role. But he does not go that far and instead stresses the deleterious effects of what happened in 1998: the further expansion of NATO eastward, including states that had been part of the Soviet Union, and the intervention in Kosovo over strong Russian objections. This argument, however sensible, somewhat diminishes the claim that 1994 was the turning point.

Third and most importantly, the claim that the dual enlargement was a turning point and the associated claims for path-dependence need to confront the counter-argument that the 1992-94 period was an aberration, one that under almost all circumstances was doomed to be fleeting. It can be argued that what Pouliot says about NATO-Russian relations today applied earlier as well: "both the Russian Great Power habitus and the Alliance's tendency to speak in the name of the 'international community' are here to stay. These dispositions constitute a deeply ingrained, historically inherited background that cannot, and will not, change overnight" (p. 237). If the Balkans had stayed calm, there would have been a crisis somewhere else that would have brought out the clash of Russian and NATO interests and conceptions. The impulses that led the US and Germany to push for an eastward expansion of NATO, and that eventually convinced others in NATO to go along, were deep and could not be restrained over a prolonged period of time, especially when the countries of East and Central Europe (who do not appear as players in Pouliot's account) were clamoring for inclusion. I am not sure that this counter-argument is actually correct, and indeed it flies in the face of the fact that so many of us urged the U.S. not to follow this policy. At the time, I thought this was a missed opportunity, and on balance still believe that it was. Indeed, one can argue that accidents and contingencies, including the fact that Clinton rather than George H. W. Bush was elected in 2000, the vagaries of domestic politics, and the personal views of a number of key diplomats combined to produce the unfortunate decisions. But while such an argument comes easily to many forms of traditional scholarship as well as to several variants of constructivism, I do not think it fits well with the approach adopted by Bourdieu and Pouliot. But the argument for choice and contingency needs to be made at greater length than Pouliot or I have provided.

In arguing that it was the double enlargement rather than changes within Russia that produced the changed Russian stance, Pouliot uses standard process-tracing that owes little to Bourdieu (pp. 175-77). While I am inclined to agree with him, to be more convincing his argument would have to be more detailed and confront those who

disagree.[10] Because it is crucial for him that the rupture came from changed Western behavior rather than internal sources, moving this quickly is unfortunate. A related shortcoming is that Pouliot says next to nothing about the general argument that there are sharp limits to how good NATO-Russia relations can be as long as the latter remains an authoritarian system. For a variety of reasons, the West cannot fully trust a less than fully democratic country, and its continuing pressure for greater human and political rights creates an irremovable irritant. Furthermore, although NATO views are often self-righteous if not hypocritical and are produced by a flawed understanding of their own history, there is much to the basic point that countries that restrict liberties at home are prone to be disruptive abroad. Although I would be the last to deny the importance of interaction in international politics, the lack of attention to these domestically-based arguments is striking. One also wants to know whether the question of the balance between domestic and external influences could be approached in a Bourdieusian manner and whether one could affirm the Bourdieusian approach if what was central were domestic systems and each side's views of the other's domestic arrangements.

The Bourdieusian approach does have some pay-off, however. This is most clear in what Pouliot calls the "Don Quixote" effect. By this he means instances in which one actor feels that the other's attitude and behavior is not only inappropriate or harmful but is "out of touch with the reality of the international security field" in which it operates (p. 183). When this occurs, states not only come into conflict and have great difficulties understanding each other, but see the other as bizarre if not alien. When the other's behavior seems "out of place," mystification compounds mistrust and hostility (pp. 142-3, 182-7, 201-5).

Bourdieusian analysis may also sensitize us to the importance of humiliation and concerns over status. In Pouliot's account these were important if not central to Russia's estrangement from NATO (e.g., pp. 169, 173, 182, 201). Other approaches, some constructivist and others embodying classical Realism, also stress the importance of status and self-regard,[11] but a focus on material interests and traditional security concerns overlooks this important dimension and I believe that Pouliot is right to call our attention to it. Although in places he underestimates the degree to which NATO's expansion, especially to Poland and the former Baltic republics, in fact threatens Russian security and, in the latter case, the ability of Russia to cast a protective umbrella over ethnic Russians, he is surely right that the Russians took these moves as a slap in the face, and that the refusal to modify NATO policies in the Balkans and elsewhere despite vehement Russian objections and sometimes reasonable counter-proposals showed that Russia simply was not being taken seriously. Here Bourdieusian analysis, at least as interpreted by Pouliot,

[10] See, for example, Stephen Sestanovich, "What Has Moscow Done?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 87, Nr. 6, December 2008, pp. 12-28.

[11] Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) (A work cited in a footnote but omitted from the bibliography); Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War* (New York: Doubleday, 1995); Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, "Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to U.S. Primacy," *International Security*, vol. 34, Nr. 4, Spring 2010, pp. 63-95.

would benefit by a more explicit consideration of the role of emotions in human endeavors, but at least it points us in the right direction.

In a third and related contribution, Pouliot stresses the symbolic nature of many of the disputes (see e.g., pp. 142-47, 229, 232). This was true most obviously for Russia's objections to having its peacekeepers in the Balkans serve under NATO command. This was unacceptable and humiliating for a Great Power. Our understanding of when and how issues take on symbolic significance is limited, as is our knowledge of how creative leaders avoid, diffuse, or decouple such conflicts. A Bourdieu-inspired analysis certainly is not the only avenue by which these questions can be approached, and it may not even be the best. But Pouliot does a good job of showing that symbols were important.

To argue that more traditional (and largely unspecified) approaches tell pretty much the same story that Pouliot does by stressing the clash of interests, worldviews, and values is to raise the obvious question of where these come from. If we treat them as unproblematic we can move ahead with the story, but at the cost of treating them as unmoved movers, if not as taken for granted. We can, of course, point to the state's previous behavior and to how others in similar situations have seen the world and acted. Thus I do not think it takes a Bourdieusian analysis to explain why a country that has suffered a defeat but not been completely ground down will seek to regain much of its previous position, or to see why the defeat of Germany and Japan, crucially coupled with a reconstruction of their polities and societies (along with a significant external threat) yielded a different outcome. But the basic challenge remains, and the criticism of most standard approaches for not having directly confronted it, let alone surmounting it, is valid. Unfortunately, however, Pouliot's Bourdieusian analysis does not fare much better. Indeed, its stress on history and self-understanding has many of the same strengths and weaknesses as traditional analysis.

International Security in Practice refutes the common claim that Bourdieu cannot be used to illuminate international history. This is no slight achievement. But how much it adds remains subject to serious dispute.

Review by Ole Jacob Sending, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs

This is an important book. Vincent Pouliot offers a new interpretation of the nature of diplomacy as a set of inter-related social practices and from there proceeds to challenge and refine the nature and functioning of "security communities." Security communities, he argues, do not rest on shared identities, but on the emergence of diplomacy as the natural or self-evident mode of interaction. In so doing, he delivers the most comprehensive synthesis and application of Pierre Bourdieu's social theory to date in our field. Both for its substantive claims about diplomacy, and for its theoretical and methodological strengths, the book is bound to get a wide readership.

Pouliot starts by uncovering what he calls the "logic of practicality" and from there he builds a fully-fledged practice theory of security communities centred on diplomacy. In brief, the argument is that extant accounts of the logics of action – the Logic of Consequences, the Logic of Appropriateness, and the Logic of Arguing – all suffer from what he calls a "representational bias." Pouliot argues that while much constructivist work has succeeded in accounting for different aspects of world politics as social phenomena, they mistake the logic of models with the logic of what people do. Drawing on a range of different insights not only from Bourdieu, Goffman and other sociologists but also philosophers and psychologists, Pouliot argues that practical, non-representational knowledge matters more than representational knowledge (on which other accounts of action rests). The former is "tacit, inarticulate and automatic," while the latter is "conscious, verbalized and intentional" (p. 28).

It is this practical knowledge that defines the "inarticulate sense that allows agents to perform social activities" (p. 13), and agency is thus defined in terms of the "enactment of practice" (p. 20). The logic of practicality is thus here seen as ontologically prior to other logics of action. From there, Pouliot brings in Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital to construct a fully-fledged practice theory of security communities. The theoretical framework – the privileging of the logic of practicality, the stress on habitus and fields to specify actor level (habitus) and structural level (fields) dimensions – is generic and so can be adapted to offer new and challenging interpretations of a range of phenomena in world politics. Indeed, one of the great virtues of the book is its rigour in following through on the theoretical agenda launched in the first two chapters. This comes to the fore in the discussion of diplomacy as practice – a first step in re-formulating security communities from having to do with identities and shared values to having to do with shared, commonsensical, practices.

Consider, as an example, the following discussion of the relation between habitus, fields, and the logic of practicality:

> "…people go on with their lives using the tools and resources that are ready at hand and enact practices based on their resource endowment and the opportunity constraints they face… [T]hey make use of what is available around them to get their way. In

> practice, social action often derives from the materials that are immediately available in the social configuration; means regularly matter more than ends" (p 35).

In this paragraph, the whole debate about norms in IR theory is dealt a blow: it is no longer about developing ever more refined accounts of socialization mechanisms or scope conditions for the internalization of norms. Rather, it is about how ideational resources - unevenly distributed between different actors - define available means for actors. Actors marshal these to advance (field-specific) goals, and in so doing they are constrained by the configuration of the field and their position within it. This view of how to conceptualize "culture" and "ideational factors" is fairly well established in sociology through the works of Bourdieu but also by Ann Swidler and others.[1] It offers a new and interesting avenue for research that has yet, to my knowledge, to be fully explored in IR theory.

While I do share most of Pouliot's meta-theoretical commitments, I generally do tend to emphasize more the reflexivity and also strategic decisions on the part of actors. I recognize that Pouliot, following Bourdieu, would also see actors as being strategic, but would see it as a semi-automatic enactment of practice (the logic of practicality). This being the case, I like chapters five and six, which deal with field-level dynamics, more than chapters two and four, which are mainly about the logic if practicality. My main critique concerns the exclusion of representational knowledge in the logic of practicality. While Bourdieu, too, seems to privilege non-representational over representational knowledge, his "logic of practice" and larger theoretical framework does include the latter. Pouliot refers to this difference between his logic of practicality and Bourdieu's logic of practice in a footnote (p. 13). Given what rides on this issue, though, a more elaborate justification and discussion would have been appropriate. As I illustrate below, I think that the marginalization of representational knowledge generates some limitations in terms of methods, empirical focus, and theory. I discuss each in turn.

In keeping with what Pouliot terms a sobjective methodology, the book seeks to unearth inductively the meanings actors attach to social reality, and to contextualize and account for these meanings by placing them in a structural, objective, context. In terms of grasping empirically the logic of practicality, this seems problematic: Asking diplomats what they do, reading between the lines, and putting scenarios to them to gauge what is and what is not natural and self-evident seems to generate data that captures not only "non-representational" but also "representational" knowledge. Put differently, if the data here is primarily based on interviews, and readings of newspaper articles and policy documents, then it becomes a bit too restrictive to say that it is all about a "knowledge that does not know itself". I recognize full well the practical problems of getting access to inarticulate knowledge when participant observation is not possible, and I also think that one can and

[1] Swidler, Ann (1986) "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies," *American Sociological Review* 51: 273-286. A notable exception in IR theory is Laffey, Mark and Jutta Weldes (1997) "Beyond Belief: Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations" *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 193—237; and Krebs, Ronald and Patrick T. Jackson (2007) "Twisting Tongues and Twisting Arms: The power of political rhetoric" *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 35-66.

should try to uncover inarticulate knowledge through such methods as employed here. Nonetheless, it is difficult to differentiate representational from non-representational knowledge. The upshot of this is that what Pouliot reads as non-representational knowledge may very well be representational knowledge, making the contents of the logic of practicality less clear.

In terms of empirical focus, Pouliot focuses mainly on the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) to uncover the logic of practicality in chapter four. This logic is then contextualized and explained diachronically in chapters five and six, where field dynamics, habitus and the distribution of different forms of capital come to the fore. In the introduction to chapter four, Pouliot sets out to defuse three possible critiques of the choice of venue for empirically analyzing the primacy of the logic of practicality in general and in defining security communities in particular. He acknowledges that NATO-Russia dynamics are much more complex than those expressed at the NRC. Not only do elected officials engage in diplomacy and do so with a different habitus than do diplomats, but there are other venues than the NRC, such as the UN Security Council in New York, where relation between NATO allies and Russia is played out. While acknowledging these arguments, he proceeds to argue that "because this book deals with security development in and through practice, a focus on the NRC is warranted insofar as it is a prime locus of diplomacy and dispute settlement" (p. 97). The problem here, as I see it, is that Pouliot asks us to accept the premise of his argument about the primacy of the logic of practicality as a ground for choosing the NRC: If we accept that the logic of practicality is ontologically primary, it makes sense to choose the NRC as an empirical focus. But if we are uncertain or remain unconvinced about its primacy, then the argument would have been strengthened had Pouliot broadened the analysis to include also other actors and arenas than the NRC. Chapters five and six do so brilliantly, and so my criticism is not that other actors and arenas are omitted. It is that these actors – presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers etc – are not included in the analysis of the logic of practicality.

Thus, the account of the logic of practicality is somewhat detached from the analysis that centres on the how and why of the politics of NATO-Russia diplomacy: There seems to be a tension between the analysis of the logic of practicality at the NRC and the analysis of the evolution of Russia-NATO diplomacy in the 1990s and beyond. Compared to chapter four, chapters five and six contain a much stronger emphasis on what I would interpret as representational knowledge. Here, decisions are made, negotiations are stalled, and the actors involved are interpreted as enacting or rendering visible the distribution of capital, and the rules of the game of the field of international security. It is this account of the field of international security and of the distribution of material-institutional relative to cultural-symbolic capital that drives the account of why things looked rosy in the early 1990s and bleak from 1994 onwards, notably through the analysis of hysteresis effects.

This prompts a question about theory: is a security community as defined here the product of the dynamics and distribution of capital in this broader field? If so, is the logic of practicality about the how rather than the why of a security community? I ask because it is puzzling that the logic of practicality that was described in the NRC is no longer with us in the account of the broader field and the political dynamics that played itself out during the

1990s. Certainly, the concept of habitus – coupled with that of field and capital, and that of hysteresis effects – captures part of what goes on here. The account of the negotiations over the Founding Act is instructive here, and I quote it at some length:

> "For the Russians, this was a damage-limitation exercise, whereas for the alliance it was a way to have the Kremlin swallow the pill without balking. The main strategy adopted by the Alliance was to grant Russia some of the symbolic pomp of equality but without the substance. After much hesitation, and only once it became clear that Moscow would not sign the PfP otherwise, the Alliance finally accepted the beginning of formal negotiations on an individual partnership program with Russia in June 1994" (p.184).

This account of an important event, or decision, squares nicely with the account of the rules of the game in the field and its attendant distribution of different forms of capital. But can one account for these dynamics without including representational knowledge? Do Russian and NATO politicians and diplomats follow a logic of practicality whereby decisions and proposals follow from deeply internalized modes of behaviour that are actualized almost automatically?

A slightly different, but not altogether rival, account would stress that within the parameters of the field and its distribution of capital, actors' positional agency does in fact include an element of reflexivity and strategy (relative to which position they would think from). In such an account, actors would strategize and seek to prevail over others within the field using the capital available to them – as laid out by Pouliot in chapters five and six. But the logic of practicality would here be seen to form a "tool kit" rather than a script. It would still be background, and the question of the importance of representational and non-representational knowledge would be one of degree. Such an interpretation would, I think, bring the concept of practice even more to centre stage, as the relative importance of articulate and inarticulate knowledge would depend on the nature of the practice in question rather than on *a priori* assumptions about one being ontologically prior. In fact, Pouliot is careful to stress that his framework is intended not to debunk established theories so much as to introduce a new one that links up to a different, and I think much more powerful, theoretical universe (p. 231). While there may be a tension here with the claim that the logic of practicality is primary, the book succeeds in the most important task, which is to demonstrate how and why one can and should focus on practices rather than identities, and on the *social* configurations of actors rather than merely on material distribution or ideational content.

Review by Jennifer Sterling-Folker, University of Connecticut

Since the end of the Cold War, constructivism has brought to the forefront of International Relations (IR) theorizing an important topic: How is social reality created? That is, how are we to understand and study the social construction of meaning, interests, identity and behavior? And what does its study mean for our understanding of international relations? Such questions have propelled the constructivist study of a variety of topics, including international political economy, human rights, and development to name only a few.[1] Such questions are also increasingly being applied to the field of international security and the social construction of inter-state disagreement or management.[2]

Vincent Pouliot's *International Security in Practice* fits nicely within this genre. It grapples with the question of how enemies, in this case NATO and Russia, can move beyond entrenched rivalry. Pouliot's answer is that much depends on whether there is a mismatch between positions and dispositions, that is, between how much relative power each side actually wields compared with how much relative power each side *thinks* they do or should wield (p. 2). Mismatches lead to power struggles, yet these struggles can remain non-violent and diplomatic, as the post-Cold War NATO-Russian case illustrates. How is this possible?

Pouliot argues that it is because the non-violent settlement of disputes has become a normal practice between these former enemies (p. 6). That is, diplomacy is an everyday practice that has become so taken for granted by its NATO and Russian participants that they do not even notice it *is* a practice with its own logic and rules of engagement. That logic involves the peaceful management of inter-state disagreement which, as a social context in its own right, serves as the inarticulate, everyday practice of the relationship. As long as this practice substrata remains in place, we can expect the power struggle between them to remain nonviolent. It is possible that the mismatch could worsen, thus shifting the relationship to violence, or resolve itself, in which case the practices would tighten the relationship to one of security community (p. 43). But for the foreseeable future, it appears that the mismatch of NATO-Russian position and disposition will remain and the daily practice of diplomacy stabilizes this relationship.

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[1] See, for example, J. Samuel Barkin, *Social Construction and the Logic of Money: Financial Predominance and International Economic Leadership* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), or Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995).

[2] See, for example, Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1996), Franke Wilmer, *The Social Construction of Man, the State, and War: Identity, Conflict, and Violence in the Former Yugoslavia* (New York: Routledge: 2002), or Wesley W. Widmaier, Mark Blyth, and Leonard Seabrooke, "Symposium on the Social Construction of Wars and Crises as Openings for Change," *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (2007), pp. 747-59.

International Security in Practice provides a masterful argument regarding the social construction of reality. Pouliot elegantly marries a realist perspective on material power with a social constructivist perspective on identity and prestige (p. 244). In doing so, he consistently and convincingly underscores how everyday practice is what really makes the world go round. Failure to understand this point is most certainly a failure to understand the daily stuff of world politics. In addition, Pouliot provides an analytical framework which not only demonstrates why this is the case but which can also be applied to a variety of issue areas and topics. It is precisely the kind of analytical framework and research design that, according to Jeffrey Checkel, was missing in constructivism's first attempts to apply theory to empirical substance.[3]

There are, however, three curiosities given Pouliot's theory which are, I believe, endemic to constructivist theorizing. As such, their exploration tells us less about the flaws of Pouliot's work specifically and more about the continued difficulties of doing constructivism in the discipline of IR. The first curiosity involves the normative preferences Pouliot delineates at the beginning of his book. The second involves the advice he offers NATO-Russian diplomats at the end of his book, which is purportedly derived from his theoretical perspective. The third involves the question of change.

With regard to normative underpinnings, Pouliot states that continued animosities in NATO-Russian security relations "constitute something of a tragedy in international politics" and that "both sides have missed a rare opportunity to genuinely pacify and finally move beyond self-fulfilling security dilemmas" (p. xi). On the same page, Pouliot goes on to assert that too often political and social dynamics "produce self-defeating outcomes" and that his goal is to understand, about the NATO-Russian relationship specifically, "what prevented both sides from taking a direction more favorable to peace" (p. xi).

With regards to the advice he provides NATO and Russia diplomats, Pouliot hopes that "two key policy recommendations might contribute to easing power struggles between NATO and Russia" because "ultimately a better grasp of the logic of practicality in international politics promises innovative solutions to pressing problems, both practical and theoretical" (p. 8). These recommendations, provided in the conclusion of his book, involve Russia coming to grips with its own decline in power and prestige, and NATO providing Russia with the necessary "cultural-symbolic resources" so that it does not feel belittled in their relationship (p. 239). Ultimately NATO and Russia need to refocus, Pouliot claims, "on domains where dispositions do not clash as easily as in the field of international security" (p. 239). The goal of these policy recommendations, as Pouliot freely admits, is to "genuinely pacify" the NATO-Russian relationship (p. 238).

There is a strange disconnect here between the theoretical claim that practices are equal to and reify common sense, on the one hand, and the offer of advice to practitioners that they should do practices differently, on the other. Pouliot's own theoretical apparatus tells us

[3] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50, no. 2, pp. 339.

that it cannot possibly be this easy. After all, if practices have a common sense of their own, then no amount of redirect and advice to the contrary can change the practices of the practitioners for whom they make common sense. Or to put this another way, on what theoretical and practical basis would they be capable of making such changes to their own behavior and practices? The theoretical argument logically precludes casting aside practices on the basis of more effective or normatively desirable practices which exist *outside* or *beyond* the existing practices. Hence if standing in a queue based on the practice of "first come, first serve" is the common sense practice of a supermarket check-out line, what theoretical and practical space exists for suggesting to shoppers that they would do better to barter for their place in line?

By discussing normatively more desirable outcomes and behavior, Pouliot suggests, unwittingly I suspect, that there is indeed an "outside" to practice, that there is something either objectively or normatively beyond the common sense of the practices themselves which affects practice in particular ways. For Pouliot, I suspect this outside is the normative, rationally-derived preference mentioned at the beginning of his book, that is, the desire for peace. Pouliot is certainly not the first constructivist to confuse normative preference with analytically-derived conclusions, as a number of authors have noted.[4] And he can hardly be faulted for wanting what most of us would also prefer – peace instead of violence – or for failing to fully surmount sociology-of-knowledge issues in his arguments (an on-going issue for every IR theory perspective). The problem is that his advice is glaringly at odds with his own theoretical apparatus. It is advice being directed at people who, as Pouliot has convincingly argued, are engaged in a particular type of common sense practice and for whom there is no material or ideational capacity to behave as if there were a rationally and normatively more desirable goal beyond or outside those practices.

This brings us to the question of change, which continues to haunt the constructivist research agenda. One of the reasons constructivism rose to such prominence after the end of the Cold War was its claim that, in comparison to the static picture produced by structural realism, it would better explain transformation in and of the international system. Yet constructivism's relationship to change has continued to be problematic. The problem, as Jeffrey Checkel put it about the first wave of constructivist theorizing, is that "constructivists, despite their arguments about mutually constituting agents and structures, have advanced a structure-centered approach in their empirical work."[5] So it is with Pouliot's argument, which effectively sidesteps the story or question of change between different structures of practice.

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[4] Ibid., p. 339; See also, Jennifer Sterling-Folker, "Competing Paradigms or Birds of a Feather? Constructivism and Neoliberal Institutionalism Compared," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (2000), pp. 97-119, J Samuel Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," *International Studies Review* 5, no. 3 (2003) p. 325-4, and Matthew J. Hoffmann, "Is Constructivist Ethics an Oxymoron?" International Studies Review 11, no. 2 (2009): 231-52.

[5] Ibid., p. 342.

While Pouliot certainly recognizes that change occurs – from violence to diplomacy and from diplomacy to security community – and has documented in extensive detail the everyday practices of each, we actually gain no purchase on how or why the shifts between such practices can occur. What is produced in his examination of diplomacy as practice is, instead, a curiously static picture of diplomacy and peace. As Pouliot puts this, "when a practice is so fully a part of everyday routine that it is commonsensically enacted, it forms the background knowledge against which all social interaction takes place" and "as a result peaceful change can be dependably expected" (p.50).

This is a picture that, for all its well-done analytical argument and research, seems to confirm Alexander Wendt's argument not about the agent's ability to change social structures but about the difficulty of dislodging social structures once they are in place.[6] Thus non-violent diplomacy seems to hum along in Pouliot's analysis precisely because it is the dominant structure in which agents are currently engaged. Yet by being stuck so completely within the dominant common sense practice, we gain no analytical purchase on how shifts between structures of practice occur. If the "peaceful change" of power struggle diplomacy is so dependable, then why would it ever change? Dependability suggests a static image, but then just how durable are these practices? And if we really want normative change, how exactly do we get more practices that we like and less of those we do not?

Raising such fundamental questions about transformation also tracks us back into questions about the centrality of practice to explanation. If dramatic changes do not come about from the practices themselves, then perhaps it is exogenous shocks which are more important. But if this is the case, then just how important are these practices when push comes to shove? They may be important in the interim, between the shocks, at forming our social reality, but there seems to be a real possibility here that they are less important to why the world looks the way it does in the long run. As a result, Pouliot's analysis is highly reminiscent of the earlier constructivist distinction between "how" and "why" questions. As Roxanne Doty put this in 1993, constructivism "can get at *how* this reality is produced and maintained" but "not *why* particular decisions are made."[7] Similarly, Pouliot gives us an answer to the *how* question -- how is peace (or violence for that matter) dependably maintained?—but the *why* question – what causes violent practices to shift to peaceful practices, or vice versa?—seems to remain maddeningly elusive because the answer seems to rest beyond the practices themselves.

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[6]Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992), p. 411

[7] Roxanne Lynne Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," *International Studies Quarterly* 37 (1993), p. 303, emphasis original; See also Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interests," *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 3 (1996), p. 281.

Thus we are confronted with the same dilemma that faced International Organization scholars for much of the Cold War period, i.e.: why study international organizations, non-state actors, culture, identity, discourse, practice, etc., when the "real" motors of change still seem to derive from the nation-state, its leaders, and their systemic-level concerns over relative power. For all the criticisms that may be justifiably leveled at the realist perspective, at least one can say that realists have kept their "eyes on the prize" in this regard. Constructivism, on the other hand, shifts our gaze almost exclusively to practice, and we have certainly learned a great deal about the way the world works on a daily basis as a result. But insights into how to effect change for the better continue to be derived in the constructivist research program primarily from the preferences of the scholars themselves rather than the analytical frameworks they develop or the practices they so conscientiously document. Unfortunately, the key to understanding change in international relations continues to remain as elusive as ever.

Review by Andrei Tsygankov, San Francisco State University

Vincent Pouliot seeks to shed new light on post-Cold War NATO-Russia relations by analyzing their interactions within the framework of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). Building on the notion of habitus introduced by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and the concept of security community, the book develops a theory of practice of security communities. It argues that after the end of the Cold War, NATO and Russia have developed a practice of security community because even crises in their relations with each other – Kosovo, Ukraine's Orange Revolution, and the Georgia War – did not lead to a military standoff. Positions and dispositions in NATO-Russia relations went through a series of stages – a very strong match in 1992-1994, a growing mismatch in 1994-1998, a strong mismatch in 1999-late 2001, restored match in 2001-2003, and then renewal of a growing mismatch in 2003-2007. Despite this seemingly irregular pattern in NATO-Russia relations, Pouliot finds evidence of security community practices, such as the disappearance of the possibility of using force by either side against each other, the normalization of disputes, and the establishment of daily cooperation of the ground. His evidence is drawn from interviews with NRC participants in Brussels and discourse analysis of the most important media statements by experts and opinion-makers.

Much has been written about NATO-Russia relations. Scholars of Russia have found that its suspicious attitude toward the Western alliance can be explained by a variety of factors including Russia's *realpolitik* vision of national interests, claims of status and the mentality of a Great Power that were not accompanied by the country's domestic strength during the 1990s, perception of humiliation by NATO's decision to expand to the east against Moscow's wishes, as well as the Russian political elite's diversionary instincts.[1] The other side of NATO-Russia relations has also been analyzed at some depth. We now know how the decision to expand the alliance and ignore Russia was taken in response to domestic lobbies in the United States[2] and that this decision reflected the West's attitude of superiority toward Russia and the rest of the world.[3]

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[1] See, for example, Henry Trofimenko, Russian National Interests and the Current Crisis in Russia (London: Ashgate, 1998); J. L. Black, *Russia Faces NATO Expansion: Bearing Gifts or Bearing Arms?* (Boulder: Rawman & Littlefield, 2000); Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity* (Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); James Headley, *Russia and the Balkans: Foreign Policy from Yeltsin to Putin* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009); Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

[2] James Goldgeier, *Not Whether, But When: The US Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999); James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy Toward Russia after the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

[3] Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade*: *America and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russophobia: Anti-Russian Lobby and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Palgrave, 2009).

Pouliot's book adds evidence to support these divergent attitudes on both sides. He finds that within the NRC, Western officials no longer viewed Russia as a military threat but they could imagine Russia turning into a threat if it were to encourage regional instability, use energy as a political weapon, or cause other international problems. Pouliot identifies two positions inside NATO: one was expressed by countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Norway and Belgium and exhibited a higher level of trust toward Russia; and the other indicated a much greater skepticism regarding Moscow's intentions and was formulated by the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland, and the Baltic countries.[4] On the Russian side, the attitude of suspicion was also strongly held even though Russian diplomats shared the view that the possibility of military confrontation was remote. Pouliot concludes that "contemporary mistrust among NATO and Russian practitioners is not simply a remnant of the Cold War but also the result of post-Cold War interactions" and that "today's mistrust in many ways runs deeper than during most of the 1990s."[5]

The main value of Pouliot's book is its attempt to bridge these two separate accounts into a coherent narrative of NATO-Russia relations. By analyzing both sides' perceptions and grievances as expressed through diplomatic interaction, Pouliot takes our attention away from the tyranny of structural factors, such as Cold War history, or the widened disparity between the two sides in material capabilities after the Cold War's end. The intentionally bottom-up approach to the subject allows Pouliot to relax some previously established expectations, find evidence of what has not been said or expected, and partly remedy what he calls the representational bias in scholarly thinking about the two sides' interaction. The theory of practice of security community contributes to our knowledge and understanding of NATO-Russia relations by highlighting important nuances and providing a sense of proportion in judging the potential for their future cooperation. Such cooperation, Pouliot believes, can be developed further. In particular, he recommends providing Russia with sufficient cultural-symbolic resources in the game and refocusing NATO-Russia ties on areas of mutual interest.

In my view, the book's weaknesses stem from assumptions Pouliot makes about the nature of NATO-Russia interactions that derive from some of the theories that he integrates into his framework. Here, Bourdieu's notion of habitus serves Pouliot better than that of security community. Theoretically, selecting indicators of disappearance of the possibility of using force, normalization of disputes, and daily cooperation on the ground for validating NATO-Russia ties as a security community makes sense. In practice, however, these indicators prove to be rather elusive and hard to work with. As the book itself notes, in the twenty years after the Cold War, the two sides have gone through three major crises in relationships – Yugoslavia in 1999, the Orange Revolution in 2004, and the Georgia War in 2008. Each time, normalization of disputes was shattered, cooperation on the ground minimized, and the possibility of using force could not be excluded.

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[4] Pouliot, *International Security in Practice*, p. 111.

[5] Ibid., p. 107.

For instance, during NATO's airstrikes against Serbia in 1999, Russian nationalists argued for Moscow's military involvement on Belgrade's side and the Russian parliament fell short of only a few votes in a decision to support the admission of Serbia into a political and military union with Russia.[6] Events might have taken an even worse turn had Russia's efforts to mediate the crisis been less successful, and had NATO deployed ground troops to fight Slobodan Milosevic.[7] An even more striking example concerns the recent conflict between Russia and the West over Georgia. Russia and the West might have found themselves at war if President George W. Bush had listened to Vice-President Dick Cheney's advice to use force against Russia.[8] Alternatively, if the Republican presidential nominee, Senator John McCain, had won last November's election in the United States, the two countries might have moved to the next level of confrontation – possibly of a military nature. Few people in the U.S. political class have been more ardent in advocating the strengthening of U.S. ties with Georgia at the expense of relations with Russia.[9] Some of McCain's advisers were also known to have worked as paid lobbyists for Georgia's membership in NATO. Clearly they were not concerned that, had Georgia been a member of the alliance when the violence erupted in South Ossetia, the United States would have been in a state of war with Russia.

Should we assume that each time NATO and Russia approach a crisis in their relations, they are sufficiently protected from the possibility of violent confrontation by the existence of security community practices in their diplomatic relationship? Such an assumption may be even less realistic than the one made by advocates of the democratic peace theory. The latter have been criticized, but at least they have drawn support from a relatively large universe of cases across a long historical period.[10] By contrast, the theory of practice of

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[6] Communist-minded deputies of Russian Duma Gennadi Seleznev, Nikolai Rizhkov, Sergei Baburin and others went to Belgrade and signed an agreement with Milosevic supporting establishment of a common union. Communists and nationalists advocated providing Serbia with SS-300 defense systems against NATO bombings and threatened a limited use of nuclear missiles against NATO countries (For details, see my "The Final Triumph of the Pax Americana? Western Intervention in Yugoslavia and Russia's Debate On the Post-Cold War Order," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 34, 3, 2001).

[7] This is a not unlikely scenario given that Russia's envoy Victor Chernomyrdin was extremely unpopular with the military. President Bill Clinton's National Security Samuel (Sandy) Berger had been drafting what he called a "depressing" memo to justify deployment of NATO ground troops just the day before Slobodan Milosevic accepted Western conditions, as articulated by Chernomyrdin (Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2001), p. 74).

[8] Cheney reportedly proposed the possibility of bombardment and sealing of the Roki Tunnel and other strikes to stop Russia's military advancement (Ronald D. Asmus, A *Little War that Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 186).

[9] Stephen F. Cohen, "McCain, Obama and Russia," *Nation*, June 30, 2008; Andrei P. Tsygankov, "Blaming Moscow: The Power of the Anti-Russian Lobby," *Global Dialogue* 11, Winter/Spring 2009.

[10] The theory proponents used supportive cases from 19th and 20th century. For a summary of the debate, see Brown et al., *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993). Critics point out

security community has thinner empirical support and a shorter historical record to rely on. NATO and Russia interacted and, to a limited extent, cooperated even during the Cold War. However, Pouliot dismisses their Cold War interaction as a security community, and he is right to do so. Episodes such as the Suez crisis or the Cuban missile crisis should make every IR scholar pause before going this far. Nevertheless, there is hardly anything in the logic of the theory of security community that prevents it from being applied to Cold War conditions, and that casts additional doubt on the validity of the theory and its indicators.

NATO and Russia constitute an identity, rather than security-based, community. The "we" identity does not exclude conflicts, including military ones, between self and other. The West-Russia relations offer a good example of how self and other have historically shared some fundamental values beginning with Christianity, yet have frequently diverged in assessments of threats and disagreed on security policies. Christianity connected Russia to the West and gave Russia a much greater visibility in the world. Yet Russia also fought multiple wars with Western states, many of which were defensive. During the modern era, Russia shared a long border with hostile European powers and "was invaded more often and with more force than any other early modern empire."[11] The price of becoming competitive in military terms was that of decreasing the institutional similarity of Russia to Europe. As the Russian state was taking on burdens of external defense, it was increasingly avoiding the responsibilities of protecting Russian citizens' freedoms from abuses at home and was, therefore, falling behind its significant other. In George Vernadsky's expression, "Autocracy and serfdom were the price the Russian people had to pay for national survival."[12] Relationships within an identity community are complex and there is no reason to assume that, having found some agreement on values, self and other will now have less conflictual ties. It is equally possible that they will continue to diverge on other values, and – if one side feels that its values and interests are not respected – it is likely to resort to their assertive affirmation. In the post-Cold War world, Russia has already used the tools of energy coercion and military force for promoting its identity of a "normal great power," despite the severe criticism from the Western other.

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that the democratic peace claim is ahistorical and reflects American values of what is "democratic," and that those values themselves have been shaped by the United States' perception of external threats (Ido Oren, *Our Enemy and US: America's Rivalries and the Making of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002). For example, in the postcommunist context, democratization may be accompanied by state weakness, thereby becoming a permissive condition allowing for the re-emergence and rise of a previously dormant militant ethnic nationalism. As a result, not only do some of the newly established democracies go to war against each other, but they also may do so in part as a result of their moving away from authoritarianism (Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007).

[11] Marshall T. Poe, *The Russian Moment in World History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 50.

[12] As cited in Allen C. Lynch, *How Russia Is Not Ruled: Reflections on Russian Political Development.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 18.

This critique does not invalidate the book's central insight that intense diplomatic practices among actors make their military hostility less likely than their isolation. But the book's claims should be more limited. Although Pouliot's analysis does highlight the potential for NATO-Russia cooperation, this analysis is not conclusive in determining whether the two sides' conflict, including that of a military nature, should be excluded from our consideration. Diplomacy is not the primary deciding factor in state-to-state security interactions. Leadership is, and if leaders find it necessary to play the threat card, diplomacy may not be able to stop them.

Author's Response by Vincent Pouliot, McGill University

In the absence of an Archimedean point from which to appraise the world, the best way to refine our understanding and knowledge of history and politics is by having scholars engage in constructive dialogue and mutual critique of their respective works. I am honored that such a group of distinguished scholars deemed it worthwhile to comment on *International Security in Practice* and I welcome the opportunity to debate its key arguments. I am grateful to the six reviewers for their thought-provoking comments, as well as to the roundtable editor and the H-Diplo/ISSF team for making this conversation possible. Given that the editor and some of the reviewers have already done an excellent job of summarizing the book's key arguments, I will jump straight to the roundtable debate.

In the following pages, I will try to do justice to the most important critiques raised by the reviewers. For the sake of efficiency and clarity, I will group their criticisms in four main categories: theory, causality, methodology/research design, and empirics. In terms of theory, first, critics argue that the logic of practicality obliterates the importance of reflective strategizing (Sending), ask whether there exists an "outside" to practice (Sterling-Folker), and contend that Bourdieu's practice theory is old wine in new bottles (Jervis). Second, roundtable participants address the issue of causality in relation to change, criticizing my field analysis as superficial and my conceptualization of capital as unhelpful (Jackson), regretting that my account is more about the "how" of security community than the "why" (Sterling-Folker; Sending), and favoring identity and leadership as more decisive variables than diplomatic practices (Tsygankov). Third, on methodology and research design, roundtable reviewers call for more analysis of specific diplomatic practices (Jackson), observe a discrepancy between the empirical demonstration and the theoretical argument about practicality (Sending) and regret that my indicators are "elusive and hard to work with" (Tsygankov). Fourth and finally, participants in the roundtable raise questions about my empirical claim that NATO's double enlargement played a key role in limiting NATO-Russia rapprochement in the post-Cold War era, wondering whether a true partnership was possible in the first place and, if so, what would have happened to eastern and central European states (Goldgeier) and pondering the extent to which the 1992-4 honeymoon was bound to pass in any case (Jervis). I will now take up these points in turn.

1- The Logic of Practicality

International Security in Practice is part of a larger movement in the discipline of International Relations (IR) that seeks to foreground practices—that is, socially organized and meaningful patterns of action—in the study of world politics. The key reason for this move is that the concept of practices "forces us to engage with the relationship between agency and the social and natural environments, with both material and discursive factors, and with the simultaneous processes of stability and change" (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a: 2). An increasing number of scholars argue that taking practices seriously helps transcend many of the social theoretical dichotomies that otherwise impair our understanding of world politics: material vs. ideational, agency vs. structure, stability vs. change, etc. More concretely, the notion also helps capture how certain ways of doing things—for example,

deterrence, treaty-making, finance trading—come to structure international interactions. This, in my mind, may be the most important payoff of practice theory for the study of world politics. In the book I argue that under specific circumstances (more on this below), the practice of diplomacy creates a socially meaningful and organized pattern of state-to-state interaction called peace or security community.

While the benefits of taking international practices seriously are many (Adler and Pouliot 2011b), my book focuses mainly on one particular value added—the foregrounding of what I call, building on Bourdieu's sociology, the *logic of practicality*: "[I]n everything that people do, in world politics as in any other social field, there is always a practical substrate that does not derive from conscious deliberation or thoughtful reflection. […] An essential dimension of practice is the result of inarticulate knowledge that makes what is to be done appear self-evident or commonsensical" (p. 12). I argue that this tacit know-how is generally overlooked in most social theories—whether rationalist or constructivist. This is not to say, as Sending erroneously concludes, that "Pouliot argues that practical, non-representational knowledge matters more than representational knowledge." To be as clear as possible, my contention is *not* that practices are more inarticulate than reflective; this kind of weighing exercise would be pointless and unproductive, as Sending correctly notes. The claim rather is that "people continuously think, talk, deliberate, make judgments, have expectations, etc., in what is overall a very active reflective life. Yet it is the logic of practicality […] that makes this reflexivity and intentionality possible in the first place" (p. 37). Contrary to many social theories that focus solely on represented beliefs and ideas, I argue that practices are *not only* reflective but *also* inarticulate. To use Sending's apt categories, practicality is *both* a tool kit *and* a script.

Sending is certainly right that, in the study of diplomacy, strategic thinking is of prime importance. Given that my book's objective is to discuss the inarticulate side of diplomacy, however, I often put representational knowledge in the backseat. This may not be ideal, because in so doing I might reverse the problem that I set out to solve: in order to throw light on oft-ignored tacit know-how, the risk is to give too little attention to reflective action. In operational terms, looking into the logic of practicality should not come at the expense of strategic decision-making or rule following. Indeed, a major payoff of practice theory is precisely that it reconciles the inarticulate with the reflective. Bourdieu's notion of "strategy," to take one example, does just that (in IR, see Williams, 2007). Together with Emanuel Adler, I have tried to show elsewhere how Thomas Schelling's theory of bargaining becomes richer when we account for its practical foundations (Adler and Pouliot, 2011a; see Schelling, 1980). Outside of political science, a vast research program in management is currently reconceptualizing strategy as a practice as opposed to a purely rational design (e.g., Golsorkhi *et al*, 2010). Ultimately, as Sending would likely agree, the objective in fostering the logic of practicality should be to better theorize reasoning, including in the strategic sense, as a practical mode of action (Kratochwil, 1989).

This leads me to an intriguing comment raised by Sterling-Folker in reaction to the two policy recommendations that I offer to security practitioners in the concluding chapter of the book (pp. 237-241). As she puts it: "There is a strange disconnect between the theoretical claim that practices are equal to and reify common sense on the one hand, and

the offer of advice to practitioners that they should do practices differently on the other." Can we change practices simply by talking about them? My own view is that this is very hard to do but not impossible. As Sterling-Folker correctly notes, within a practice ontology there is no "outside" to practice, that is, no external vantage point from which to judge political action normatively or offer policy advice reflectively. The "competence" that certain practices exhibit—while others may not—is socially ascribed by the community of practitioners itself, of which the scholar is generally not a "native" member. That said, practice epistemology also rejects the subject-object distinction according to which the job of academics is to match the world out there with mirroring words. My own research practices do not stand outside of the diplomatic field, but inside—albeit in a peripheral location. I like to think of my standpoint as similar to what Georg Simmel called "the stranger," that is, someone who is a temporary insider on a journey that will go to many other places. Under favorable circumstances, strangers can be catalysts of change by casting the order of things in a different light. (Natives can do it too, as with Bourdieu's Kabylian "virtuoso," but these instances seem much less frequent.) Thus, despite the heavy weight of doxa and of established practices, I remain relatively hopeful that the scholarly hermeneutic position at the crossroad of various narratives, combined with a permanent disposition to historicize and uncover power relations, can generate a "sobjective" knowledge that recovers commonsense to better problematize it. I agree with Sterling-Folker, though, that such change in practices is far from easy, as the Russian-Atlantic case illustrates in spades.

I will conclude this first section with a reaction to Jervis, whose main line of attack—'already said, already done'—unfortunately fails to engage with my argument in a meaningful or productive way. In dismissing the novelty of my focus on inarticulate knowledge, Jervis cites one historical study of "unspoken assumptions" that was published forty years ago, in 1972. To me, this single and distant precedent rather confirms that, indeed, few people in IR have explored the logic of practicality so far. Similarly, I still wonder what are the "traditional approaches" that Jervis repeatedly claims have already said everything that my book advances. Given his own intellectual trajectory, I presume that he is referring to realism. However, assuming with Jervis (2009) that the key distinctive feature of this approach is that it "begin[s] with structure," I fail to see how realism could have come up with an analytical narrative that is primarily centered on process, meaning and agency, as mine is. Arguably, there are limits to claims of having already discovered all uncharted territories. Realism, despite the interesting synergies with practice theory noticed by Sterling-Folker, would still face a number of hurdles in explaining some of the aspects of NATO-Russia politics that my book illuminates. Let me point out just two.

For one thing, realism's materialist ontology fails to account for the much richer variety of resources that matter in world politics. The politics of NATO-Russia diplomacy cannot be reduced to the triptych of tanks, tunes and technology. In the power struggles that animate the relationship, various cultural and symbolic resources play a primary role: identity narratives, civilizational artifacts, and moral claims have been the real currency of Russian-Atlantic politics, as my book demonstrates. In the actual practice of world politics, power and domination are much more complex than what the infamous realist distribution of

material capabilities is able to capture—a point that Jervis actually concedes when praising me for "stress[ing] the symbolic nature of many of the disputes." For another thing, and puzzlingly even for theorists who like Jervis have forayed into political psychology, power is not only positional but also relational and intersubjective. Domination is not just a question of positions and "perceptions." As my analysis of NATO-Russia politics demonstrates, domination works through the actual use of various resources in a socially constituted game in which what is at stake is "not only how much power agents *have* but also what power *is* in practice" (p. 49). In order to operationalize this point, in my book I go micro and look at everyday ways of doing things and agent-level dynamics by which social meaning is reproduced and contested. As a result, my narrative of NATO-Russia politics centers on symbolic power struggles over the very terms of the relationship—the rules of the game, the players' respective roles, and the very nature and value of their resources. How a materialist theory focused on structure could have come up with this story simply escapes me.

2- The "How" and "Why" of Change

Moving on to the issue of causality, Sending and Sterling-Folker suggest that "the logic of practicality [is] about the how rather than the why of a security community." In a basic sense, this is very true. One of my key objectives in the book is to understand *how* a social fact like international peace exists in and through the practices of diplomats and security practitioners (pp. 40-4). In the everyday state-to-state business of a security community, what ways of doing things can we observe that are different from other political configurations? My response, as should be clear by now, is that interstate peace rests on self-evident diplomacy, that is, the axiomatic practice of the non-violent settlement of dispute. This is, indeed, very much a *constitutive* argument (Wendt, 1998) that seeks to explain how a given social fact is rendered possible. By implication, faulting me for not focusing on what "precedes" practice is slightly misplaced, insofar as my point of departure precisely is practice itself and its constitutive effects on politics.

That said, I do address the causes of change in practices in the second section of the theoretical chapter (pp. 44-50). Building on Bourdieu's notions of homology and hysteresis, I argue that a given practice becomes self-evident when agents' positions in the field fall in sync with the dispositions that they have acquired in playing the game. Thus, the answer to the question *why* we got a burgeoning security community based on self-evident diplomacy in the early 1990s is *because* the empowered habitus in Moscow matched Russia's low position in the field, which led to various "junior partner practices" that fit well with NATO's own position at the top and disposition to take the lead. Under these short-lived circumstances, the symbolic power relationship that is necessary for any practice to establish itself made a peaceful order possible. The same causal reasoning applies, albeit in reverse order, to explain the many difficulties in NATO-Russia politics that ensued. As Table 7.1 summarizes (p. 236), overall my causal plot explaining the ebb and flow of diplomatic practices hinges on the varying degree of hysteresis in the political relationship. Clearly, change in practice is endogenous—it is the work of practice itself, which reproduces or undermines the domination patterns that sustain doxa. In the NATO-Russia case, I argue, growing hysteresis was largely due to the Alliance's own practices, in

particular the "double enlargement," which undermined the very rules of the game that NATO was promoting (more on this below).

In this connection, Jackson observes that my account lacks "a detailed analysis of the structure of th[e] field [of international security]." Jackson is right that my narrative is quite heavily tilted toward meanings, struggles, and practices, sometimes at the expense of structure. More data about evolving distributions of resources in the field of international security would certainly have enriched my argument regarding positional agency in NATO-Russia politics. Given the huge amount of empirical work that studying the logic of practicality requires, however, I had to make a few hard choices in terms of emphasis. When it came to field analysis I drew inspiration from two authoritative studies (Gheciu, 2005; Williams, 2007) that brilliantly trace shifting rules of the game from the Cold War era, where "material institutional capital" was the main currency, to the post-Cold War situation premised on "cultural-symbolic capital" (pp. 148-155). Jackson maintains that this distinction "is overdrawn if not fundamentally misleading," countering that the Cold War was "as much a cultural struggle between contending belief systems as it was a traditional confrontation between rival power blocs." Admittedly, despite their heuristic value, my two categories of capital run the risk of obscuring sophisticated strategies in the field—as in Jackson's observation that in the contemporary game of international security, "[t]hese various forms of capital complement one another in a larger strategy aimed at establishing *both* the parameters of international legitimacy and a favorable balance of power."

To conclude on the issue of causality, Tsygankov argues that "[d]iplomacy is not the primary deciding factor in state-to-state security interactions. Leadership is" (see also Sending). If this point is taken to mean that diplomats essentially deal with the implications of political decisions made at a higher level, then it is obviously right. We could debate the extent to which permanent representatives have autonomy from their capital (see Cross, 2007) but this would take attention away from a more important issue. My analytical objective in the book is to throw light on the "groundswell of Russian-Atlantic relations […] underneath the sea foam of high politics" (pp. 85-86). To achieve this objective, I still think it is best to focus analysis on diplomats and military officers, who generally spend long careers within a homogenizing organizational culture, rather than on political leaders, who mostly come and go as part of a partisan process that builds on, and reinforces, divisions and differences. Pushing his point further, Tsygankov maintains that "NATO and Russia constitute an identity, rather than security-based, community." But that argument glosses over a key theoretical wager that I make at the beginning of the book—that identity not only precedes practice, but also results from it (p. 5). Self and Other dynamics certainly matter, but they are more than representational identities. My objective is to understand how the joint performance of socially organized and patterned ways of doing security things may, or may not, create "we-ness" in world politics.

3- Methodology and Research Design

Studying the logic of practicality requires amassing a considerable amount of data directly on the playground of diplomacy. As Sending notes, recovering "knowledge that does not

know itself" is a daunting challenge. Because participant observation was impossible at the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), I had to rely on several dozens of in-depth interviews with security practitioners (diplomats and military officers from all sides), which I focused on practical logics with the aid of a variety of ethnographic "tricks" (pp. 66-72).

A first challenge to my methodology comes from Jackson, who notes, building on Bourdieu's field analysis, that it may in fact be part of the diplomatic habitus to downplay the possibility of using force. As he explains: "Introducing military considerations into discussions of political relations […] tends to increase the influence of soldiers at the expense of diplomats." As a result, the diplomatic stress on non-violence that I observe in NATO-Russia politics has less to do with security-community building than with field logics in which diplomats and military officers vie for influence. I would think that there is a bit of both. On the one hand, even if we hold a diplomatic disposition for the peaceful resolution of disputes constant, evolving interactional and field dynamics significantly affect its intensity and instantiation in practice and at particular points in time. On the other hand, Jackson draws attention to a particularly important dimension of the Bourdieusian method to which I could not do full justice because of the sheer number of interviews that I performed. The objectification of interviewees' positions in the field of international security, for example through an analysis of their specific resources and professional trajectories, would have further illuminated the practical logics under study.

Jackson would have also liked to read more about "specific practices" in NATO-Russia politics. What, for example, does the day-to-day experience of being a Russian diplomat in Brussels look like? I agree with Jackson that ever more attention to concrete ways of doing things can only benefit the analysis—practice theory requires no less—and in my book, I tried to illuminate the day-to-day practices of Russian-Atlantic diplomacy in several ways. Chapter 4 features a wealth of details obtained by leading my interviewees to describe their daily practices and their interactions with colleagues. In a section about "daily cooperation on the ground," I describe various specific activities, such as the sharing of communications codes that military officers implement in their joint exercises. Elsewhere, I note for example how a French representative phones his Russian counterpart to discuss a contentious issue ahead of an NRC meeting in a way similar to what he would do with his NATO counterparts. Then, in chapters 5 and 6, I focus on various discursive practices performed during summits or for home media consumption, and describe the minute process of specific negotiations over the Balkans, etc. Admittedly, this analysis does not amount to an exhaustive portrait of everyday practices in NATO-Russia diplomacy, but it does open a window onto the secretive and socially complex world of international security.

For his part, Sending observes that the evidence that I present in chapters 5 and 6, which feature a historical narrative of NATO-Russia diplomacy between 1992 and 2008, largely consists of representational knowledge instead of practical logics: "Here," he notes, "decisions are made, negotiations are stalled." In my view, this heuristic and theoretical distinction should not confine the empirical analysis because, as Sending notes, in the practice of research "it is difficult to differentiate representational from non-representational knowledge." Contrary to chapter 4, in which most of my focus is on

distilling practicality, chapters 5 and 6 move into historical objectification, where data is organized along a narrative centered on the notion of hysteresis. Because of this analytical shift, I spend several pages discussing shifting positions and evolving rules of the international security game—two parameters that appear to take the analytical focus away from tacit dispositions. But that is partly an illusion, for positions and dispositions are always interconnected. For example, when I quote Kozyrev's speeches in discussing the new rules of the game, it is less for what they say than for all the tacit assumptions that go into what is being said. I also analyze at length the re-emergence of the Russian Great Power habitus and show in detail how it led to various quixotic practices. In recounting how obsessed with procedural equality the Russians were in negotiating peacekeeping arrangements in the Balkans, for instance, I am also demonstrating the practical effects of their largely inarticulate and historically inherited proclivity for status seeking. In sum, a practice analysis shows that the diplomatic strategizing and posturing rest in part on tacit forms of know-how.

Finally, Tsygankov observes that the empirical indicators that I utilize in chapter 4 (the disappearance of the possibility of using force; the normalization of disputes; and daily cooperation on the ground) "prove to be rather elusive and hard to work with." To be sure, since these indicators are neither quantifiable nor amenable to dummy values, they leave room for interpretation and debate. That said, I do wonder how Tsygankov reached the conclusion that I argue in the book that "NATO and Russia have established a security community." From cover to cover, I make a much more nuanced analysis, as several other critics point out (Goldgeier even laments that chapters 5 and 6 "lead to despair"). "In terms of a security community in and through practice," I explain, "the evidence is mixed" (p. 96). I discuss at length how, for each indicator, the data reveals deep tensions between, for instance, the gradual normalization of diplomacy and the latent mistrust that colors interactions. Joint exercises, similarly, are taken to demonstrate not only a growing military-to-military cooperation, but also clashing ways of doing things that degenerate in symbolic power struggles. From this angle, the elusiveness that Tsygankov criticizes is due less to the indicators than to the data itself. In my inductive approach to practicality, I refrained from flattening out any of the many contradictions and inconsistencies that I would often hear or observe during fieldwork and after. Instead of neatly organizing data in a set of coherent boxes with straightforward implications, my objective was to analytically reconstruct just how messy and full of tensions the world actually is in practice. The result is an ensemble of claims that do not always sit easily together and that make simple, black-or-white conclusions impossible. When all is said and done, I see more value in a non-parsimonious account that renders the messiness and fluctuations of practices in plain view, than in stylized models that evacuate from sight the meanders of world politics.

4- NATO's Double Enlargement and Russia

A final set of comments deals with a key empirical argument that I make in the book—that the limited pacification between NATO and Russia in the post-Cold War era owes considerably to the Alliance's "double enlargement" (geographical and functional). While Goldgeier disagrees and instead suggests that conditions for a Russian-Atlantic security

community were never met, Jervis is more sympathetic to my narrative but raises doubts about the 1992-4 "honeymoon."

Goldgeier raises "two fundamental questions" which "[t]hose who criticize the West for missing an opportunity to bring Russia into the European security community fail to answer." One has to do with Eastern European countries, which, Goldgeier argues, would have been left in a security vacuum but for NATO's enlargement. Based on historical data, however, this conjecture appears to be wrong. The early story of NATO and EU enlargement is one of two organizations competing for the leadership role in European security affairs. Smith (1999: 54), for example, convincingly documents what he calls "incremental linkage"—"the tendency for significant moves forward in the EU enlargement process to have a kind of knock-on effect on NATO—particularly American—policy." As he continues: "This was most evident during 1993 and 1994. EU member governments opened the door in principle to the enlargement of the European Union into central Europe at the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993, a decision which galvanized the Clinton administration into action" (Smith, 1999: 54; see also Schimmelfennig, 2003). The U.S.-led Alliance was eventually able to establish its dominant role by beating the EU enlargement policy at the punch: "Just before the Commission published its draft recommendations in July 1994, the US decided—without prior consultation with its European allies in NATO—to seed the ground for steps forward in developing a NATO enlargement process. On an official visit to Warsaw the president announced that 'bringing new members into NATO … is no longer a question of whether, but when and how'" (Smith, 1999: 55). Of course, in the early 1990s EU enlargement faced a number of hurdles which, had it proceeded first, would have likely slowed down the integration of post-communist countries into Western structures. But the historical record shows rather clearly that these countries were on the way to Europe, with or without the American rush to get NATO to move first (see also Sarotte, 2009 for a detailed account).

The second question raised by Goldgeier, which Jervis also touches on, is more difficult: even without NATO enlargements, was a partnership with Russia possible in the first place? As Goldgeier correctly notes: "A core issue in the NATO-Russia relationship is that NATO has not wanted Russia to have a veto over alliance decisions, whereas Russia seeks a full voice in European security affairs." But as true as it may be, this statement requires qualification: there are many different ways in which, even short of a veto, NATO member states could have better taken Russian interests into account. Jervis seems to agree, reminding us of the many voices, including in the U.S., that advocated just that (see also Tsygankov). I would argue that reducing the issue of NATO-Russia relations to "either a veto or disregard" presents a false dichotomy that obscures other available options (see also Kupchan, 2010). Furthermore, one should bear in mind that the Russian drive to block the Alliance was itself propelled by the decision to enlarge—not the other way around. Until the mid-1990s, Moscow had grudgingly accepted to play a junior role, with no or very limited influence over issues as crucial to the Russians as the Balkans. As Sarotte (2009, 214) concludes in her masterful study of the creation of the post-Cold War European order: "The chance to foster enduring cooperation with an unusually willing, if weak, Russian leadership passed, and it will not appear again soon. Looking back at the choices that

defined the post-Cold War international order, we should strive to be clear-eyed about both their benefits and their costs."

This leads me to Jervis' final point—that perhaps the 1992-4 honeymoon was an "aberration" of history and that it was bound to pass sooner or later. Unfortunately, we will never know, because we cannot re-run the tape of history. To be sure, I, too, note the weight of history on Russian foreign and security practices, including the deep roots of the Great Power habitus (pp. 228-9; see also Neumann and Pouliot, 2011). But then I also document the many different ways in which the end of the honeymoon *followed from* and *reacted to* NATO's enlargements (pp. 176-82). In pondering this crucial issue, we should remind ourselves that the fact that history carries weight does not mean that it determines everything in a purely continuous direction; otherwise, we skirt the issue of political agency and responsibility. Something, somewhere, must have been potentially conducive to change for Russia to produce two political leaders in a row—Gorbachev and Yeltsin (1985-1999)—who were deeply favorable to a rapprochement with NATO countries and acted accordingly. Had their overtures been reciprocated in mutually accommodating ways, perhaps historians of the future would not construe their leadership stints as aberrant, but as what could have become a new beginning in NATO-Russia politics.

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