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Introduction by Joshua Rovner

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Introduction by Joshua Rovner, Southern Methodist University

The defining characteristic of modern international politics is unipolarity. Never before has one state achieved such a remarkable lead in economic capacity and military capability. American power today is unrivalled and durable, even after the economic crisis of the last decade. It will be a very long time before another state qualifies as a peer competitor.

This does not mean, however, that the United States has ignored its allies since the demise of the Soviet Union. Paradoxically, it has invested a great deal of military and diplomatic effort in sustaining international institutions, rallying peacetime alliances, and mobilizing wartime coalitions. The United States might prefer to fight alone in order to avoid the practical and political difficulties of coalition warfare, and it certainly has the capabilities to do so, but it has consistently tried to seek out partners. Among other reasons, U.S. leaders have tried to use the appearance of alliance support to overcome skepticism about military interventions.¹

Why and how those smaller allies work with Washington is the focus of Stefanie von Hlatky's analysis. While it seems obvious that they have strong reason to cooperate with the strongest power, their record of cooperation is mixed. Von Hlatky examines the recent history of U.S. relations with wartime allies Canada, Great Britain, and Australia to explain this variation.

Military and diplomatic historians have long been interested in the coalitions in war, and their best work usually includes at least implicit theories about the forces that drive allies together or apart.² Political scientists have written extensively on the origins of peacetime alliances but have had far less to say about what happens when the shooting starts. The experience of two protracted coalition wars, however, has led to renewed interest and some important analyses of what happens when politics, strategy, and tactics come together.³

¹ Sarah E. Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Interventions after the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).

² Classics include Gordon A. Craig, "Problems of Coalition Warfare: The Military Alliance Against Napoleon," U.S. Air Force Academy, Harmon Memorial Lecture #7 (1965), <http://www.usafa.edu/df/dfh/docs/Harmon07.pdf>; and Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

³ See especially Nora Bensahel, "The Coalition Paradox: The Politics of Military Cooperation," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1999); Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008); and Patricia A. Weitsman, *Waging War: Alliances, Coalitions, and Institutions of Interstate Violence* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

Von Hlatky's argument is rooted in neoclassical realism, which has gained popularity among historically minded political scientists. Neoclassical realism starts with the premise that all states respond to international signals, as predicted by structural realists. Those signals are filtered through domestic institutions and politics, however, meaning that while all states are subject to the same pressures, they do not all respond the same way. Recent neoclassical realist analyses have covered a variety of subjects, including grand strategy, war, intelligence, and political economy. The approach is satisfying to political scientists looking for the kind of fine-grained explanations for state behavior that structural theories cannot offer. It should also be attractive to theoretically minded historians.⁴

All of the reviewers in this roundtable applaud von Hlatky for presenting a lucid treatment of both the theory as well as the cases. They all find her argument intuitive, and commend her for stating it explicitly and then putting it to the test. (There is value in transforming intuition into a testable theory, even if the argument feels obvious and the results seem preordained. Ignoring intuitive arguments is a good way of letting the conventional wisdom flourish – even if it is wrong.)

The reviewers also respect von Hlatky's explanation for her case selection. The decision to choose three similar countries – long-time allies who are all majority English-speaking liberal democracies - allows her to hold a number of factors constant and hone in on the differences that might explain variations in their behavior. Nonetheless, the reviewers all suggest that a broader selection of cases would be welcome. Beatrice Heuser sees value in including a case from outside the Anglosphere, especially France. Patrick Morgan notes that the carefully chosen cases make it easier to control for variation but harder to claim that the theory applies to other kinds of states. Patrick McHugh suggests that broadening the cases to include less powerful states might usefully illustrate the dynamics of asymmetric relations when power differentials are especially stark.

The reviewers offer a number of other individual critiques. Heuser believes the book could have gone further by considering not just why the small states need Washington, but why Washington needs small allies.

⁴ For overviews, see Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, eds., *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Brian Rathbun, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism," *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (April 2008), pp. 294-321; and Gideon Rose, "Review: Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (October 1998), pp. 144-172. For examples, see Jack L. Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991); Aaron Friedberg, *The Weary Titan: Britain and the Experience of Relative Decline* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); and Mark R. Brawley, *Political Economy and Grand Strategy: A Neoclassical Realist View* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009).

Morgan wonders if the U.S. drawdown from Iraq and Afghanistan suggests a grand strategic retrenchment that will fundamentally affect alliance relations. The premise of von Hlatky's book is that an assertive United States forces its allies into tough decisions about whether and how to cooperate in risky and costly military interventions. What happens if the United States stops asserting itself?

Finally, Morgan and McHugh both want more from von Hlatky's treatment of domestic politics in the case studies. Morgan is interested in knowing more about how the United States affects smaller allies not just in terms of security but in terms of the totality of their economic and social relationships. McHugh argues that the cases themselves could offer more detail.

Taken together, these comments suggest that von Hlatky has made a convincing argument about the relationship between international pressures and domestic politics, as well as provoking a series of questions about coalitions that lie beyond the scope of her analysis.

Participants:

Stéfanie von Hlatky is an Assistant Professor of political studies at Queen's University and the Director of the Queen's Centre for International and Defence Policy (CIDP). She received her Ph.D. in Political Science from Université de Montréal in 2010, where she was also Executive Director for the Centre for International Peace and Security Studies. In 2010, she was a postdoctoral fellow at Georgetown University's Center for Peace and Security Studies and a policy scholar with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. In 2011, she was a Visiting Professor at Dartmouth College's Dickey Center for International Understanding. Prior to joining Queen's, von Hlatky was a senior researcher with the Center for Security Studies at ETH Zurich. She is also the founder of Women in International Security-Canada. She has published in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *International Journal*, *European Security* and has recently published a book with Oxford University Press entitled *American Allies in Times of War: The Great Asymmetry* (2013).

Joshua Rovner is the John Goodwin Tower Distinguished Chair in International Politics and National Security at Southern Methodist University, where he also serves as Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Studies at the Tower Center for Political Studies. His recent publications include "Delusion of Defeat: The United States and Iraq, 1990-1998," *Journal of Strategic Studies* (forthcoming in 2014); and, with Caitlin Talmadge, "Hegemony, Force Posture, and the Provision of Public Goods: The Once and Future Role of Outside Powers in Securing Persian Gulf Oil," *Security Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (July-September 2014).

Beatrice Heuser holds a Chair in International Relations at the University of Reading. She is currently a visiting professor at the University of Paris. A graduate of the Universities of London (Bedford College and LSE) and the University of Oxford (D Phil), she holds a Higher Doctorate (Habilitation) from the Philipps-University of Marburg. Her publications include *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present* (2010); *Reading*

Clausewitz (2002); and several books, edited volumes and many articles on strategy (especially nuclear strategy and culture in Britain, France and Germany), NATO, and on Cold War international relations.

Dr. James T. McHugh is Professor of Political Science and a Fellow of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics at the University of Akron and a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Political Science and Fulbright Distinguished Research Chair of North American Integration at the Centre on North American Politics and Society at Carleton University. He has published widely within various fields of political science, history, political philosophy, and international studies, including *Diplomats without a Country: Baltic Diplomacy, International Law, and the Cold War* (co-authored with Dr. James S. Pacy), *Toward a North American Legal Tradition* (edited), and *Comparative Constitutional Traditions*. His current research and scholarship include the development of paradiplomacy and protodiplomacy and the concept of a North American charter of rights.

Patrick M. Morgan is emeritus Professor of Political Science and Emeritus Tierney Chair in Global Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of California, Irvine. He has specialized in national and international security affairs, writing books such as *Deterrence Now* (Cambridge) and coediting books such as *Complex Deterrence* with T.V. Paul and James Wirtz (University of Chicago). A specialist on deterrence, arms control, U.S.-Korean relations, and U.S. foreign and national security policy, he is currently working on a study of the evolution of the American alliance system since the end of the Cold War.

Review by Beatrice Heuser, University of Reading

This is a comparative study of the bilateral relationships which the United States has with three 'Anglo-Saxon' powers: the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. I is a shame that France was not included, which would have added an awful lot of spice, and a great deal of difference. By selecting these three 'Anglo-Saxon' countries, Stefanie von Hlatky has chosen countries drawing on the same gene pool of political ideas and traditions, with just a dash of French alternatives brought into the mix in the case of Canada, but in this case also, relations between Ottawa and Washington tend to be dominated by an Anglo-Saxon elite and Anglo-Saxon political traditions. Even as the study stands, however, von Hlatky shows that there is some variation worth reporting on.

The author has chosen to structure the book according to the three bilateral relationships, rather than thematically. Both methodologies have advantages and disadvantages. The author has in my view quite successfully circumnavigated the major disadvantages of her approach, which does not come across as unduly repetitive.

Von Hlatky shows that in each country, domestic support is important; all three partners of the U.S. have political cultures and beliefs that see it as very important to play by the book, i.e. to be on the right side of international law, the United Nations, and of the UN Security Council's decisions (indeed, both the U.S. and the United Kingdom are of course permanent members with decision-making and with the veto power). She shows that the military, economic, and financial resources of all three countries – limited in the case of the UK, very limited in the case of Canada and Australia – are an important constraint on actions. She also shows that regional considerations diverge, as the three allies of the U.S. are situated in different parts of the world, each with their own security context and trade possibilities.

These findings are not entirely counterintuitive: the more dangerous the situation, the greater its scope (i.e. if it transcends merely regional dimensions), the greater the convergence in behaviour and interest. If there is the perception of a common problem, there is no great divergence over its perception, but – and this in my view is the key to understanding alliance relations – the prioritisation of mutually exclusive measures to take, or of measures that will compete for limited funds, is usually what divides allies. This means that in the study considered, all four states favour peace and security and try to squeeze out terrorism and bring order and peace to countries tormented by violent domestic turmoil. But they have resources on varying scales to devote to the issue, and other issues of domestic and regional importance that make demands on overstretched budgets, other considerations creep into the equation, especially in times of financial crisis.

Von Hlatky has worked out that the three smaller powers' relations with the U.S. are dominated by their dependence on the latter, but that this becomes critical only when war looms. Otherwise, America's allies try to secure wriggle room and seek as much freedom of action as the alliance relationship can bear. An interesting factor is that the U.S. cannot really afford to bear a grudge over its allies' deviation from a line taken by Washington, because when international relations are truly critical and the stakes are high, including

war, Washington in turn will need its allies. This is true for even those allies that have irritated the American leadership by veering off the course set by Washington in other – or even the same – contexts.

The Franco-American relationship has been a prime example of this over the years. There is a creed that is widespread among French élites, namely, that Charles de Gaulle, father of the Fifth Republic, the very man who took France out of NATO's integrated military structure, would take the staunchest pro-American, pro-Alliance line, standing up courageously to the USSR in defence of common Western interests, when the going got hard. This narrative mode is perhaps best summarized by de Gaulle's conversation with the Soviet ambassador Segei Vinogradov during the 1961 Berlin crisis; when the latter pointed out the danger of an escalation of the crisis to war and indeed nuclear world war, de Gaulle famously replied, "Well, Mister Ambassador, in that case we shall die together."¹ When détente prevailed, however, de Gaulle's France would pride itself on its determination to defend itself *tous azimuts*, in all directions of the compass, which to America's great irritation implied that this defence was directed also against France's Atlantic neighbours.

Perhaps von Hlatky's book would have benefitted from a little further exploration of the dependence of a superpower on its allies. There one can find that despite the relatively small contributions – relatively small in relation to what the U.S. can field – which allies make to any joint venture, the giant, for reasons of world public opinion, values its little allies disproportionately to the effective contribution made. U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson's famous plea with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson – which went unanswered at the time – that even the dispatch of a band of bagpipes to Vietnam would be greatly appreciated is symbolic of this dependence. It is due, of course, to the strange construct of international relations by which all states are nominally treated as formally equal entities, so that it sounds much better if the (huge) U.S. can claim to have a number of other states standing alongside it; thus having Luxemburg, Belgium, Iceland, and Lithuania alongside it *sounds* better than having just, say, Italy alongside it (even though the latter would have more economic clout and its total population would exceed that of the four previously-mentioned countries).

All in all, alliance relations are an amusing subject to watch and analyse, and there are further, even more intriguing relations to explore.

¹ Quoted in Cyril Buffet: "De Gaulle and the Bomb, or how to use a political weapon", in Leopoldo Nuti and Cyril Buffet (eds.): *Dividing the Atom*, special issue of *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali* (Autumn 1998).

Within this book, Stéfanie von Hlatky offers a new assessment of an underappreciated theme: an assessment of the system of alliances that continues to persist, especially within an asymmetrical world. The tenacity of democratic alliances in a post-Cold War context is a particularly notable feature of the current global situation and yet it has often been taken for granted. Even in the wake of the American ventures in Afghanistan and Iraq, relationships between the United States and its traditional allies remained intact, even when strained by profound disagreements over American strategic decisions and commitments. While foreign policy analysis and international relations theories have offered ways to consider this development, a comprehensive and satisfying explanation has not truly emerged. This book seeks to overcome that absence through a targeted application of those theories to certain key asymmetrical alliance relationships, thus creating a model for assessing current and future trends in this respect.

The central thesis of this book is that despite the ongoing constraint of a unipolar power distribution that influences the foreign policy behavior of secondary states (who must choose either to remain relevant or become marginalized in international affairs and their relationship to the United States), those policy choices are affected and, at times, constrained by domestic political considerations. As a result, states must balance considerations of the demands that these alliances impose upon them (especially in relation to the still-dominant presence of the United States) and the political limitations of domestic policy preferences and electoral demands. This emphasis might initially seem obvious to the reader but it quickly becomes apparent that it is addressing a serious gap in the current scholarly literature.

The book begins with an overview of this analytical problem and various approaches toward addressing it. That overview is initiated by the proposition that the asymmetry of the current unipolar world would appear to create a scenario in which secondary states are particularly obliged to follow the lead of their dominant American ally. However, foreign policy events of the first decade of the twenty-first century and even at other times (such as during the Vietnam War) indicate that this expectation is not necessarily fulfilled. Therefore, it considers a more nuanced approach to understanding the relationship of democracies under these conditions, including in contrast with the more volatile experience of alliances among non-democratic states. The book then proceeds to assess the international relations literature, especially from a theoretical perspective, in order to consider explanations that conventional approaches might provide, emphasizing the contrast between realist, liberal, and constructivist sources and approaches. None of these schools necessarily deals with the challenge of asymmetrical relationships in an entirely satisfying manner, thus further underscoring the need to develop alternative approaches and theories.

This demand leads the book toward its case-study analysis. Von Hlatky carefully chooses and justifies the three states that she has chosen for this part of her analysis: Britain,

Canada, and Australia. These choices are driven by the similarities among these states in terms of their shared Westminster style of parliamentary government, their respective 'special relationships' with the United States, and similarities in terms of their comparative political cultures, experiences, and their respective foreign policy experiences and goals. The diverse strategies of leveraging (using support to extract concessions), hedging (attempting to maintain a 'middle ground' relating to alliance demands), and compensating (seeking to rectify the policies of the stronger ally that are perceived to be injurious to one or both parties) are employed as an effective exercise for building a new theoretical construct for addressing this ongoing conundrum of international relations.

Arguably, other states could have been included, and the presence of smaller and less powerful allies would have addressed a highly relevant aspect of unipolar power relationships. But the choice of these three case studies is well defended and the emphasis upon the contrasting domestic political constraints of the three countries provides valuable insights into this overarching theme of alliances on the current international stage. Given the paucity of other contributions to this theme within the international relations literature, these cases studies represent a reasonable starting point for further study, prompting other scholars to follow the approach that von Hlatky ultimately devises within this study.

Von Hlatky is particularly effective at challenging beliefs that may appear, otherwise, to have been relegated to the realm of unchallenged assumptions. Her central thesis appears to be intuitively correct, even prior to her review of the theoretical considerations and their applications to her case studies. Therefore, the greatest strength of the book is the fact that it actually tests that intuition, both through the application of conventional theories and a critical analysis of case studies. Ultimately, it leads to a conclusion that opens new theoretical possibilities—a growing necessity in a global environment that no longer conforms to the neater dualities of twentieth-century international relations.

The end of the Cold War created an entirely new environment for international relations, both at the policy and the theoretical level. Therefore, it is surprising that more academic literature has not been devoted to addressing the peculiarities of this altered theoretical landscape. In particular, the condition of a unipolar international system remains murky, and another factor that this book might have addressed is the question of whether the current global situation is, indeed, truly unipolar or whether it is devolving into a multipolar context that, obviously, would have tremendous implications for the sorts of alliance relationships upon which von Hlatky focuses in this book. That focus could be addressed by subsequent studies that build upon this one.

The book correctly identifies the importance of domestic constraints upon this development. Arguably, it could be even more comprehensive and critical in this respect. That sort of domestic emphasis for explaining strategic relations among states (obviously one that is more strongly favored by scholars of comparative politics) can transcend the abstraction that often both over-simplifies and obscures the more nuanced factors that can influence all such relationships (including asymmetrical ones) among states. It also can produce unanticipated results—such as the diverse responses of American allies (both in

support and in opposition) to its operations in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Nonetheless, von Hlatky's identification of this factor and the importance that she accords it is a welcome corrective to the underappreciated role that it often plays within international relations.

This book offers a very important contribution to the overall literature in international relations, especially as the United States and the international community continue to redefine their respective roles within the twenty-first century. Its premise initially may appear to be more obvious and less profound than the author ultimately demonstrates that it is. Its originality lies in its desire to break through the constraints of traditional international relations theories in a way that compensates for a surprising lack of similar efforts among scholars and analysts in this area. Often, the most pressing need of scholarship is to challenge prevailing notions and define conventional concepts and situations. This book will hopefully prompt additional scholarly and policy inquiry and debate as the alliance systems and foreign policy choices of the current century continue to evolve.

Stefanie von Hlatky's *American Allies in Times of War* is certainly timely. It investigates the workings of certain American alliances at precisely the time when they have attracted increasing scrutiny as to their utility and reliability. Her book offers a detailed examination of how the core components of the American alliance system actually work when called upon to respond to a military conflict alongside the U.S. Her goal is to provide a theoretical analysis of how that system works by exploring the relations between the U.S. and three of its major allies – the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia at the outset of and then during the early years of the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and then Iraq in the wake of 9/11. Her target is uncovering ways to explain why U.S. allies were, and remain, unpredictable when called upon to provide military support for the U.S.

This is not a profound mystery about which little is known. Rather it is a topic which many theoretical approaches in the field of International Politics have addressed, offering a good number of explanations, and the author's own explanation is not startlingly new. Her selected theoretical approach is neoclassical realism, and thus seeks to merge insights on intra-alliance insights from the relationships at the national-international level with findings, hers and others, on the impact of domestic factors on the allies' ultimate decisions and behavior as conditioned by their domestic situations. The case studies follow the allies as they confront serious international security situations, at the urging of the U.S., when their alliance commitments are a potent context for shaping their reactions but in which, in the end, domestic factors have a major effect on those reactions as well.

The book is quite clearly written throughout, carefully and systematically arranged, and consistently concise. Von Hlatky's overall summary is as follows. For each ally the U.S. is clearly the dominant actor and on which it is highly dependent for its security, a situation that goes back decades and is rooted in profound political/economic relationships extending well beyond security affairs. Each relationship has produced not only the specific alliance treaty but a raft of additional agreements, years of military and intelligence interdependence and interaction, plus considerable military interoperability. The result is that any serious military situation for the U.S. brings considerable pressure on the allies to be of assistance, pressure that comes not just from the U.S. but from each ally's natural desire to show its concern and support, thereby reaffirming its loyalty and reliability as an ally.

But power asymmetries and geography can lead allies to seeing and assessing international security threats differently from the U.S., while domestic factors impose limits on what they are willing to do. As a result they may resort to a variety of maneuvers, such as seeking to do enough to not look like they are free-riding; making at least some low-risk contributions; putting off uncomfortable decisions – and seeking other allies' support in this stalling; citing the need for due process decision making, such as asking the US to seek UN Security Council backing for its military plans; offering to be of assistance on some other problem instead, currently or in the future; and promising that eventually they will provide some support.

The allies may also plead that their domestic situations leave them little choice but to disappoint the US. This leads to claims that they cannot meet the situation fully because they have no suitable military forces available – they are either unsuited for the fighting ahead or are stretched too thin by other commitments; because there is no solid consensus in the government, parliament, electorate, etc., for taking the requisite action; or because there is no unified central decision maker or entity endowed with the power and authority to take the nation into military action on its own.

Von Hlatky emphasizes that this is in spite of the fact that the three alliances are ‘special alliances’ in how they share intelligence, and pursue military interoperability through extensive joint training, arms sales, etc. They have fought together in the past, and have many shared perspectives that have been shaped within a very long history.

The book is a considerable achievement in calling attention to things we, more or less, knew about all along but generally neglected in studying alliances. It pulls this knowledge together via a neat theoretical package encompassing important explanatory findings bolstered by extensive evidence.

Thus its shortcomings are primarily ones of omission – not carrying the investigation still further, which is hardly a serious infraction for what was originally a dissertation. One of the missing elements is giving special attention to the impact of the Cold War on how the three alliances emerged and developed, in particular via: generating the previously avoided U.S. preoccupation with ‘the global,’ particularly the threat of communism (more briefly reiterated in our time in the American reaction to terrorism); resulting in the vast wartime and peacetime American power projection capability down to the present; and backed more or less consistently by highly unusual levels of domestic support.

All this was a marked departure from the prior history of U.S. foreign policy, and its post-Cold War staying power turned out to be quite surprising as well. The ‘special alliances’ really originated in World War II and became special as a result of these American responses to world conditions. This is important because it suggests that the alliances and their striking level of interdependence with the U.S., coupled with the weaker members’ notable unreliability at times, are indications that the book is really about a rather unique phenomenon rather than providing a theoretical explanation applicable to alliances in general.

A related comment would then be that the book is strongly oriented toward findings about the impact of domestic factors on the behavior of the three lesser parties in seeking to explain their behavior. But what about the impact of the U.S. on each of them, not just in terms of security considerations but its overall effect on their economies and societies? It is at least plausible that these relationships have also shaped the alliances and how the parties have interacted, perhaps in the form of shaping communities, or a single community, that go well beyond what we normally mean by the term ‘alliance.’

This invites speculation at least about how homogenous alliances in general are, and thus provokes doubts how readily theoretical conclusions about them can be generalized. After all, the 'special alliances' are products of a rather striking era and for unique purposes, among Anglo-Saxon societies and polities, with advanced economic systems, a common language, etc. The author treats these elements, quite appropriately, as similarities that narrow down the relevant explanatory variables bearing on the allies' behavioral differences in crises while highlighting variables that therefore consistently stand out as actually driving their decisions and actions. But this can also invite seeing the book as too narrowly focused to lend itself to analyzing alliances as a whole.

Similarly, concern can be raised about the fact that the case studies are primarily about wars and wartime relationships. Alliances are, of course, affected by and influence the nonmilitary and non-fighting relations among their members, something that has been especially true of the alliances in this book.

Finally, it is clear that the American alliances are today under extensive scrutiny, generated in large part by reactions to the fact that a pair of lengthy wars are concluding, wars in which the U.S. was not always pleased with its allies and vice versa, and with the wars and alliances (plus a massive recession) having greatly contributed to wearing out the West's overall interest in and support for extensive military operations far from home. The author aptly notes how this reflected the U.S. shift to *international security management* since the Cold War, often via military interventions, and its efforts to take the allies with it down that road. Today that endeavor is in ill repute in many quarters of the West (and elsewhere), including the U.S. We will have to see if the book turns out to be relevant to understanding how all this turns out, how well it has shown us what to expect, and how it helps us grasp the implications of these developments for the future of U.S. alliances – these three special ones and the others. At a minimum, the book's many virtues invite all of us to urge the author to continue expanding our understanding of the evolving Western alliance system via her penetrating analysis and style.

Author's Response by Stéfanie von Hlatky, Queen's University

I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to the H-Diplo team for organizing roundtable reviews of recently released scholarly books. I am honored to have my first book featured. The reviewers, Professors Beatrice Heuser, Jim McHugh, and Patrick Morgan, offer honest and constructive appraisals of my work. I am grateful to them as well for having taken the time to read and comment on my book. Their comments and suggestions have led me to reflect on what I learned during this research process, how much the study of alliance politics has flourished in the last few years, and how significant current regional crises are for the management of expectations between the U.S. and its allies.

My main objective when writing *American Allies in Times of War* was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the literature on intra-alliance dynamics by focusing on countries considered to be the United States' special allies, the UK, Canada, and Australia. I focused on these cases for reasonable methodological reasons, as McHugh and Morgan point out, but also because we generally take too much for granted when talking about these three 'special' relationships. As I watched the global debates about Saddam Hussein's Iraq unfold in 2002 and 2003, I felt the need to revisit the analytical tools and approaches I had relied on to understand alliance politics. As Morgan notes, International Relations scholars may have an intuitive sense for intra-alliance dynamics, but an effort to bring these insights together and to confront them with empirical scrutiny was needed. Perhaps I should have broadened the analysis to include France – its inclusion would indeed have added 'spice' to the discussion of the cases, as suggested by Heuser, but my impression at the time was that there was palpable awkwardness in the foreign policy statements coming out of London, Ottawa, and Canberra. I remember thinking that yes, alliance solidarity is an end in itself, but it can come at an unbearable price. Witnessing the invisible pressure of alliance expectations testing the closest circle of allied nations was and still is fascinating to me. I like the way Morgan puts it when he describes this pressure as an "ally's natural desire to show its concern and support." The management of these expectations by governments is essentially what the book is about.

What proved counterintuitive in the end was the inability of these special allies to really say 'no' and to walk away from the United States when pressured to join the multinational coalition. As Morgan reminds us, whether they free ride, shirk, or hedge their bets, allies are accountable to their domestic political audiences and each other. And, while we have come to expect a firm and unapologetic 'non' from the French, except when, as Heuser points out, the Western world is under existential threat, the Anglo-Saxon allies are somewhat more unpredictable. To be sure, the same kind of malaise characterized alliance interactions prior to the Vietnam War, as McHugh relates, but we tend to quickly disregard what comes after a decision has been made. From my perspective, the realization that negotiations and posturing continue well after the first bombs have been dropped was the unexpected finding that emerged from the book. The idea that a country like Canada can publically opt out of a U.S.-led war, reaping the domestic political benefits of turning down an unpopular adventure, but in the end, still make every effort to convince its allies that the

bonds remain intact, that alliance solidarity and reliability are as strong as ever, is quite interesting. The use of compensation tactics by allies to repair the damage of a public 'no' means that U.S. allies always end up participating in American wars. If they do not send soldiers, they send quiet apologies in the form of material or financial contributions to support the war effort. This is how allies ultimately attempt to prove their loyalty and reliability, as Morgan notes.

The three reviewers' thoughtful comments also encouraged me to think about what else might be missing in the literature on alliance politics. It seems to me that we spend a lot of time and effort discussing the importance of interoperability and burden-sharing, but scholars tend to do this in a way that is heavily focused on material indicators of cooperation, i.e., the interoperability of weapons systems and platforms. When I think about where to take my research next, I come back to alliance dynamics but want to examine *cultural* interoperability, rather than technical interoperability. While the achievements of the war in Afghanistan seem underwhelming, the coordination efforts between NATO allies and partners have been rather exceptional. The learning curve was steep, to be sure, but the scope and depth of alliance coordination in this context was unprecedented. My hunch is that this has more to do with people than machines. Within a NATO context, how is it that 28 different member states can reconcile their individual organizational cultures for shared alliance goals? I plan to find out and I should add that this study will undoubtedly include France.

As I look forward to new research endeavors, I am also inspired by other recently published books in the field. There have been truly exceptional contributions dealing with alliance politics lately, namely those by Sarah Kreps, Jason Davidson, David Auerswald and Steve Saideman, and the late Patricia Weitzman, to name only a few.¹ When I started writing *American Allies in Times of War*, I did not anticipate that I would join such a great cohort of authors with a renewed interest in intra-alliance politics. Indeed, whether one studies decisions related to multinational military interventions, burden-sharing dynamics, or American leadership in regional or international organizations, the importance of secondary states is recognized and informs the theoretical and empirical strategies of these works.

To conclude, it seems fitting to reference the ongoing regional crises occurring in the Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East to stress that, while alliances have a proven deterrent effect, meaning that full-blown escalation and diffusion appear contained by robust security assurances, collective action problems remain. The Obama administration has made it its trademark to let other nations take the lead as much as possible and this is a particularly vexing conundrum for allies that are used to following rather than leading.

¹ Sarah Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2011); Jason W. Davidson, *America's Allies and War: Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq* (Palgrave Macmillan: 2011); Patricia Weitzman, *Waging Wars: Alliances, Coalitions and Institutions of Interstate Violence*, (Stanford University Press, 2013); David P. Auerswald and Stephen M. Saideman, *NATO in Afghanistan: Fighting Together, Fighting Alone*, (Princeton University Press, 2014).