

H-Diplo | ISSF

Roundtable, Volume IX, No. 8 (2016)



A production of H-Diplo with the journals *Security Studies*, *International Security*, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, and the International Studies Association's Security Studies Section (ISSS).

issforum.org

H-Diplo/ISSF Editors: **James McAllister and Diane Labrosse**

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable and Web/Production Editor: **George Fujii**

Commissioned by **James McAllister**

Stefano Recchia. *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0-8014-5291-8 (hardcover, \$39.95).

Published on **21 December 2016**

Shortlink: tiny.cc/ISSF-Roundtable-9-8

Permalink: <http://issforum.org/roundtables/9-8-reluctant>

PDF URL: <http://issforum.org/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-9-8.pdf>

Contents

Introduction by Michael Beckley, Tufts University	2
Review by Andrew Bennett, Georgetown University	4
Review by Risa Brooks, Marquette University	7
Review by Joel H. Westra, Calvin College	12
Author's Response by Stefano Recchia, University of Cambridge	16

Introduction by Michael Beckley, Tufts University

Why does the United States, a superpower with the world's strongest military, go to great lengths to secure multilateral approval from bodies such as the United Nations and NATO for its military interventions? And how might the answer to this question hinge on civil-military relations in Washington—notably, on the U.S. military's known reluctance to become embroiled in lengthy 'wars of choice' launched in the absence of imminent threats to U.S. national security?

These are the questions Stefano Recchia answers in his expertly researched book, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*. They have been at the center of intense debates for at least a quarter century – not just among academics but also among pundits, policymakers, and the public – and Recchia, a scholar educated in both Europe and the United States and former fellow at the Brookings Institution, is well placed to address them.

Drawing on recently declassified documents and more than 100 interviews with top American policymakers, Recchia breaks down the U.S. decision-making process leading up to the U.S. interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq. In addition, the book contains shorter analyses of U.S. decisions to intervene in Liberia in 2003 and Libya in 2011.

His findings, as the three reviews below note, are profound and for the most part persuasive: especially when it comes to humanitarian interventions and other non-vital missions, the U.S. military is frequently among the staunchest advocates of multilateralism and often pressures civilian leaders to seek approval from the United Nations, or at least NATO, before U.S. combat forces are deployed. American generals value multilateral authorization mainly so that allies and partners can be enticed to bear some of the burden of the operations and thereby reduce the risks and costs to the U.S. armed forces.

One provocative implication of Recchia's argument is that U.S. military leaders, as "reluctant warriors," have often restrained interventionist civilian policymakers from plunging the United States into quagmires without partners to share some of the load. The key exception to this trend, he argues, was the 2003 Iraq War: Recchia's careful analysis of this case shows what can go wrong when top U.S. military leaders are sidelined or fail to speak up during the decision-making process.

The quality and topical nature of Recchia's book is reflected in the quality of reviewers it has attracted. Risa Brooks is a leading expert on civil-military relations, Andrew Bennett is both a prominent scholar and former practitioner of U.S. foreign policy, and Joel Westra is an expert on international law and his work serves as one of the main foils of Recchia's argument.

All three reviewers find much to praise in Recchia's book, but also point out some problematic aspects and raise questions to be addressed in future research. Collectively, the reviews and Recchia's response make for an enlightening and engaging discussion of the role that civil-military relations and international organizations play in recent and contemporary U.S. foreign policy.

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

Participants:

Stéfano Recchia is lecturer (assistant professor) in international relations at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Clare Hall. He holds a PhD in political science from Columbia University, awarded with distinction, and has been a fellow in the foreign policy program at the Brookings Institution. His principal research interests are in military intervention decision making, US foreign policy, multilateralism, and just war. Recchia has published three books; furthermore, his research has appeared in a variety of peer-reviewed journals, including *Security Studies*, the *Review of International Studies*, *Political Science Quarterly*, and *Ethics & International Affairs*.

Michael Beckley is a Professor of Political Science at Tufts University specializing in international security and U.S. and Chinese foreign policy. His research has been featured in a variety of academic journals and popular media including *National Public Radio*, *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Financial Times*, *The National Interest*, *International Security*, *The Harvard Business Review*, *The Weekly Standard*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *The Yale Journal of International Affairs*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Monkey Cage*, *The Interpreter*, *The Week*, *The Dish*, *War on the Rocks*, and *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, which awarded him the Amos Perlmutter Prize for best article of the year.

Andrew Bennett is Professor of Government at Georgetown University. He is the author, together with Alexander L. George, of *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (MIT Press, 2005), and his most recent book, edited with Jeffrey Checkel, is *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Risa Brooks's research focuses on issues related to civil-military relations, military effectiveness, and militant and terrorist organizations; she also has a regional interest in the Middle East. Professor Brooks is the author of *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton University Press, 2008) and editor (with Elizabeth Stanley) of *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford University Press, 2007), as well as many articles in the field of international security.

Dr. Joel H. Westra is Associate Professor of Political Science at Calvin College. His teaching and research interests include international organizations and law, international security, international relations theory, and American foreign policy. His research focuses on multilateral and regional security institutions as instruments of international order, specifically on questions pertaining to institutional design and to mechanisms of legitimation and restraint on the use of armed force within the international system. Previously, Dr. Westra was Visiting Lecturer in the Committee on International Relations at The University of Chicago and Fellow in the John G. Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Methodist University.

Review by Andrew Bennett, Georgetown University

While the ‘war-hungry General’ is a common trope in movies and no doubt has real historical referents, Stefano Recchia’s *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* argues that in the case of post-Cold War America, it has been civilian leaders rather than military officers who have been eager to undertake unilateral military interventions.

This pattern is not entirely unprecedented. One of Russian President Boris Yeltsin’s advisers, echoing a Tsarist adviser before the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, argued in favor of Yeltsin’s 1994 intervention in Chechnya by stating that “we need a small victorious war to raise the President’s ratings.”¹ Nor has it gone unnoticed that in the American case, at least since the Vietnam war, military officers have often been less eager to use force than their civilian counterparts.²

What is more novel about Recchia’s argument is that in the particular case of American post-Cold War military interventions for humanitarian or other purposes that are short of vital security interests, military officers have made the approval of multilateral organizations and the commitment of allied resources preconditions of their support for military intervention. These officers were concerned that without multilateral approval and resources, it would be difficult to maintain the support of the American public over the lengthy period necessary for intervention to succeed. With the partial exception of the 2003 intervention in Iraq, U.S. military officers were successful in playing the two-level game of linked domestic and international negotiations and persuading civilian leaders to undertake difficult and time-consuming negotiations leading to support from international organizations and foreign governments.

Recchia documents his argument with case studies of internal American discussions and international negotiations leading to the interventions in Haiti in 1993-1994, Bosnia in 1992-1995, Kosovo in 1998-1999, and Iraq in 2002-2003. His research, including over 100 interviews with top officials, is thorough and convincing. Indeed, his case studies are well worth reading even for those already very familiar with these interventions. His thesis holds up very well in the first three cases, in which liberal internationalist civilian advisers like National Security Adviser Anthony Lake and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright were willing to use force unilaterally, and military officers successfully pushed for multilateral commitments before embracing the use of force. These case studies serve as reminders that the professional expertise of the uniformed military constitutes a powerful bargaining chip – Presidents can override the professional judgment of the military, but they take considerable political risks in doing so.

The case of Iraq in 2002-2003 is a partial exception to Recchia’s thesis, and he addresses it forthrightly. In this case, he argues, three key military leaders—Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Richard Myers, his deputy General Peter Pace, and Commander of Central Command General Tommy Franks – failed to

¹ Carlotta Gall and Thomas De Wall, “A Small Victorious War,” Chapter 8 in *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus* (New York: NYU Press, 1998), 162. Of course, neither war proved successful for Russia, although Vladimir Putin used Russia’s later 1999 intervention in Chechnya to catapult himself into power.

² See Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), and Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

forcefully represent to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and President George W. Bush the concerns of many officers that the planned intervention in Iraq would require far more troops than the plans called for, and that success would be difficult without greater allied support. Thus, most officers expressed the concerns his theory predicts, but they were overridden by civilian leaders in a context in which Bush, Rumsfeld and even Secretary of State Colin Powell argued that vital interests were at stake and the public and Congress, with memories of 9/11 still vivid, believed them. These circumstances place the case at the edges of or even beyond the scope conditions of Recchia's theory, which focuses on less-than-vital interventions.

This is excellent work, and like any good scholarship it raises a number of questions, most of which Recchia addresses in passing, that deserve additional research. I raise five such questions for the purposes of this symposium. First, it is curious that military officers were more attuned to the problem of long-term public support than the civilian leaders, including elected officials in the Congress as well as the executive branch. Why should this be so? Civilian leaders also pay political costs if military engagements are more costly and less successful than they promise. Is it that civilian leaders have different time horizons, focusing on the next election or the next job rather than a long-term institutional career? Is it that their lack of military expertise makes them over-confident about unilateral intervention? Is it that they are playing a two-level game against a military that they view as overly cautious since Vietnam?

Or, my second point, was some of this dynamic partisan? How much should we make of the fact that three of Recchia's cases fall in the Clinton Administration, when civil-military relations were notoriously rocky as the all-volunteer force became increasingly populated by self-described Republicans? And that the one case of unusual deference by the uniformed military arose under a Republican administration? Even if we think partisanship played a role, have the attitudes of military officers toward Democratic and Republican presidents, or toward partisanship itself, changed as a result of the setbacks in Iraq and Afghanistan?

Third, how much of the behavior that Recchia uncovers was driven by cyclical learning? Recchia notes the effects of cyclical learning at several points (for example, 63-64, 120, 132, and 165). He also notes the particular reluctance to use force after the failure of U.S. intervention in Somalia in 1993, which reinforced the cautionary "lessons" that Powell and some others drew from the Vietnam war. Brief bursts of optimism also had effects after successes in Iraq in 1991 and Kosovo in 1998. Most important, one reason the uniformed military did not push back harder against over-optimistic plans for Iraq in 2003 was that, after weeks of criticism by the military and others in the initial phases of the intervention in Afghanistan, Rumsfeld's 'light footprint' approach had shifted almost overnight in the fall of 2001 from slow progress to a sudden victory in expelling the Taliban. Rumsfeld felt vindicated, and the military was intimidated from challenging him over Iraq. Recchia gives a brief quote from General Charles Wald along these lines (189) but it deserves greater emphasis.

Fourth, and related to my first and third points, is the danger of a 'cry wolf' problem in U.S. civil-military relations. This problem has waxed and waned since the Vietnam war: military officers often view civilians as overly-optimistic on how much can be achieved with short interventions with limited forces, and they worry about mission creep. Civilians, in turn, often view military officers as exaggerating how many troops and resources are needed for success, in order to leave themselves a huge margin of error that results in sure successes but creates higher fiscal costs. Each side has at times felt that the other is gaming the system by inflating or deflating estimates of the military resources needed for success. Rumsfeld clearly felt the military was organizationally biased toward overly pessimistic projections; it is not (just) that he was a "tyrant (214). His successor, Robert Gates, expressed the concerns of military officers in warning in 2011 that an air

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

campaign in Libya would be risky and costly due to Libya's missile-based air defenses. Yet in the end the air campaign succeeded with zero casualties from these air defenses, which might lead some civilians to once again fear unduly pessimistic estimates from military officers concerning air defenses in Syria and elsewhere. As military officers are 'agents' with key information and expertise, this creates a great problem for civilian 'principals.'

Fifth, while Recchia notes the role of two-level games in negotiations over multilateral approval and burden sharing (176-177), more might be made of this. For example, Recchia points out that other countries often assert that they will not contribute to operations that lack United Nations (UN) approval. Yet it also seems at times that the lack of U.N. approval is a convenient excuse for simple free riding or for foreign leaders to satisfy domestic audiences while minimizing the fallout in relations with the United States. Relatedly, Recchia makes the interesting point that in contrast to the United States, several countries have to some degree enshrined international organizations like the U.N. in their constitutions (19). It should also be noted, however, that international system structure conditions the domestic institutional structures in this particular two-level game: after WWII the U.S. pushed the countries Recchia mentions—Germany, Italy, and Japan, the losers of the war—to put limits in their constitutions on the use of force, and the U.S. then was and still is in a different structural position from other countries as the world's most powerful state.

I raise these issues for further discussion and research. They do not undercut Recchia's argument, and he notes many of them himself. They may qualify his argument, however, as the particular intensity with which civilians and military officers argue their views, and the nuances of those views, may change over time depending on the perceived success or failure of recent military interventions, the president's political party, the proximity of elections, and the degree of military and foreign policy expertise that the president and his or her civilian advisers have.

Review by Risa Brooks, Marquette University

Stefano Recchia has written an important book about the impact of U.S. civil-military relations on the country's propensity to engage in multilateral humanitarian interventions. The question he asks is why the United States in the post-Cold War era sought the endorsement of the United Nations (UN) or NATO for its humanitarian interventions, even when doing so was constraining and contrary to the initial instincts of hawkish officials within the government. His answer is a novel one: officials pursued multilateralism in order to reassure the U.S. military that international burden-sharing would be forthcoming in the interventions. Providing these assurances was necessary to avoid opposition and a potential veto to the operations from the senior military leadership.

Among its many contributions, the book offers an innovative take on the on-going debate among scholars of American civil-military relations about the political activism of the United States military and its senior officers. Much of this contemporary debate dates to the 1990s, when Richard Kohn famously warned of a crisis of civil-military relations during Colin Powell's tenure as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the early 1990s.¹ At that time Powell advocated openly and aggressively against involvement in the Bosnian civil war and allowing gays to serve openly in the military. In so doing, he veered across the red line of politics that has long characterized normative understandings of the appropriate division of labor in American civil-military relations. In the dominant view, military leaders are supposed to leave politics to the politicians and keep their focus on military matters.

In the years since Powell's forays into advocacy on the Bosnian war and personnel policy, a sizable body of research and analysis has explored themes related to the American military's political identity and activities. This scholarship has focused on everything from documenting the growing partisan self-awareness and decided Republican slant of the officer corps to the willingness of its senior leaders to engage in candidate endorsements in political campaigns.² A major concern is the "gap" between the military and American

¹ Richard Kohn, "A Crisis in Civil-Military Relations," *The National Interest*, Spring 1994. <http://nationalinterest.org/article/out-of-control-the-crisis-in-civil-military-relations-343>.

² See Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap in American National Security* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 2001). Jason Dempsey, *Our Army: Soldiers, Politics and Civil-Military Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Heidi Urben, "Party, Politics and Deciding What is Proper: Army Officers' Attitudes After Two Long Wars," *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 351-368; Kori Schake and Jim Mattis, eds., *Warriors & Citizens: American Views of Our Military* (Stanford: Hoover Press, 2016); Jeremy M. Teigen, "Veterans' Party Identification, Candidate Affect, and Vote Choice in the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election," *Armed Forces and Society* 33:3 (April 2007): 414-437; James Golby, "Duty, Honor, Party: Ideology, Institutions and the Use of Force," PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 2011; Risa Brooks, "The Perils of Politics: Why Staying Apolitical is Good for the U.S. Military and the Country" *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 369-379. For a recent discussion of the role of military leaders in elections see Peter Feaver, "We Don't Need Generals to Become Cheerleaders at Political Conventions," *ForeignPolicy.com*, 29 July 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/29/we-dont-need-generals-to-become-cheerleaders-at-political-conventions/>; Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, "Military Leaders Do Not Belong at Conventions," *Washington Post* 30 July 2016. <https://www.google.com/?ion=1&espv=2#q=martin%20dempsey%20washington%20post>; Don M. Snider, "The Problem with Generals Backing Candidates at Conventions," *Washington Post*, 4 August 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-problem-with-generals-backing-candidates-at-conventions/2016/08/04/8830be9c-59af-11e6-9aee-8075993d73a2_story.html?utm_term=.78a5959b4c2d

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

society and the implications and potential remedies to that gap.³ Scholars have also explored the impact of the social esteem of the military and its implications for military leaders' ability to influence the citizenry to support or oppose foreign interventions, as well as other themes.⁴

Recchia's book is a welcome and important addition to this scholarship. Indeed, with the book's focus on the senior leaders' impact on international action and commitments, it adds a new dimension to debates about the military's political behavior. The logic of his argument is as follows. The priorities of the United States military reflect its organizational interests, and in particular its desire to fight "real wars" core to its self-defined mission, as well as the imperative of protecting the prestige and wellbeing of the organization. Faced with the prospect of intervening for humanitarian purposes or for "wars of choice" (by which Recchia means the Iraq 2003 war), the military is a "reluctant warrior" (2). Consequently, military leaders seek to neutralize the potential costs and challenges of engaging in these interventions by demanding a promise from civilians that the American military will not have to unilaterally bear those costs. Under threat of a military veto, civilian leaders, many of whom are reluctant to pursue multilateral intervention, do so nonetheless to assuage the concerns of its leaders. In effect, what Recchia describes is a mechanism whereby approval by multilateral organizations provides a means by which civilians can commit to assure the military burden-sharing in humanitarian interventions.

Recchia's book thus contributes to the argument that there is considerable slippage between the fiction and reality of apolitical norms of civil-military relations in the United States. Even more provocative are the implications of his analysis, which suggest that the outcome of the military's political behavior is not necessarily negative. After all, according to Recchia, it is because of military pressure that civilian leaders solicit international support and assure burden sharing in costly humanitarian interventions. In that vein, the book offers a significant challenge to scholars who would rather not engage the fact that, however adverse for norms of civil-military relations, political activity by the U.S. military may not always be bad for the country.

Beyond this important contribution, there are many things to like about the book. Recchia covers a nice array of empirical cases, for which he has undertaken dozens of interviews with high-level officials. The book makes a concerted and in many instances compelling case for his general thesis that military apprehensions about costs are a contributing cause to multilateral humanitarian intervention and reason for seeking NATO and UN approval. The argument is creative and ambitious and will attract much interest among scholars of civil-military relations.

³ See James Fallows, "The Tragedy of the American Military," *Atlantic*, January/February 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/01/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/>. Feaver and Kohn eds., *Soldiers and Civilians*; Schake and Mattis, *Warriors and Civilians*. Early concerns about the gap were voiced by Tom Ricks in "The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society," *Atlantic* July 1997, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1997/07/the-widening-gap-between-military-and-society/306158/>.

⁴ Jim Golby, Kyle Dropp, and Peter Feaver's research for the Center for a New American Security. "Military Campaigns: Veterans' Endorsements and Presidential Campaigns, Center for a New American Security," October 2013; "Listening to the Generals: How Military Advice Affects Public Support for the Use of Force," April 2013, <http://www.cnas.org/master-taxonomy-list/dr-james-golby>; Risa Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," in *American Civil-Military Relations*, Suzanne Nielson and Don Snider (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

Strengths aside, there are, nonetheless, as in nearly all ambitious books of this kind, some analytical and empirical issues that might have been dealt with more effectively. For one, the implicit model of civil-military relations on which Recchia's argument is built is rather stark: the mechanism of a military veto, which is the lever through which the military extracts promises to attain multilateral support, is not especially well-developed.⁵ Scholars of civil-military relations have spent a great deal of time trying to understand the subtleties of military influence. It is challenging to explain theoretically, and then evaluate empirically, when the military exercises "undue" influence on strategy and shifts policy away from civilian preferences. Consequently, some may doubt whether the proposed mechanism of a military veto on foreign interventions is as direct and unmitigated as Recchia seems to characterize it. The book, for example, left me wondering how Recchia conceives of this veto and whether he is using the term metaphorically, or has some more specific policy process in mind.

It does not help, moreover, that the threat of a military veto is often inferred rather than established in the empirical case studies. Recchia shows that civilian leaders do seem to be consistently concerned about securing military complicity in the interventions. And civilians do seem to pursue multilateralism to provide some assurance to worried military leaders. The interviews speak well to both issues, and the argument is well crafted in this regard. But in some instances the important evidence that it was fear of a military veto of the intervention that forced civilian hawks' hands is absent. Rather, the evidence might also be used to support a more benign interpretation: civilian leaders recognize that success in these operations requires buy-in by the principal actor in charge of executing them (i.e., military). That story may be wrong, but it is unclear that the evidence is always there to fully dismiss its plausibility. To his credit, Recchia acknowledges these evidentiary challenges.⁶ But the fact that these may be insurmountable in some cases means that questions linger about exactly how much civilians are driven by fear of a military veto versus more practical concerns about ensuring that the intervention is a success.

A second issue relates to the book's characterization of military preferences. These are attributed to a mix of conservatism in U.S. military culture and old-fashioned organizational self-interest. Evidence supporting the analysis can be found in surveys of officers by Ole Holsti and the Triangle Institute for Security Studies,⁷ which were completed in the late 1990s.⁸ The TISS findings show that military leaders are dismissive of operations beyond conventional wars to protect core national interests, and especially those deemed to be

⁵ For discussion of the "veto" see 35, 49-52.

⁶ His sensitivity to the issue is apparent in "Soldiers, Civilians and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention," *Security Studies* 24:2 (2015): 251-283.

⁷ Ole Holsti, "Of Chasms and Convergences: Attitudes and Beliefs of Civilians and Military Elites at the Start of a New Millennium," in Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap in American National Security* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001).

⁸ Although the TISS surveys have not been replicated, there has been some more recent research on aspects of military attitudes. See, for example, Feaver and Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians*. Jason Dempsey, *Our Army: Soldiers, Politics and Civil-Military Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). Heidi Urban, "Party, Politics and Deciding What is Proper: Army Officers' Attitudes After Two Long Wars," *Orbis* 57:3 (Summer 2013): 351-368. Schake and Mattis, *Warriors and Civilians*.

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

humanitarian in nature.⁹ Also referenced by Recchia are findings that in the area of military operations and strategy, significant numbers of officers surveyed felt it was warranted that they “insist” that civilians follow their advice (p. 47). His argument about the “reluctant warriors” builds on these findings.

Given that most of the book is about post-Cold War 1990s humanitarian interventions (Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo), these assumptions seem fitting.¹⁰ This was a time when many in the military certainly appeared to be reluctant to engage in humanitarian interventions.¹¹ Yet, the 1990s was a long time ago, not just in years, but in world events. Consequently, can we assume that military preferences remained the same and the subsequent debate has the same post-Cold War “reluctant warrior” tenor and terms?¹² As Recchia observes, for example, the 9/11 attacks may have played an important role in stifling dissent within the military in the lead-up to the Iraq 2003 war (189, 215). The ensuing Afghanistan and Iraq wars, and now the Islamic State/Daesh challenge and Syrian civil-war, may also have altered those terms such that they no longer coincide with the 1990s framing—that is, that there are legitimate conventional wars to fight, and the rest is a diversion from what should be military priorities. In other words, has the view of the threats facing the United States and way that humanitarian issues intersect them evolved in the post 9/11 era?¹³ And, if military leaders’ underlying preferences have become more nuanced, are they as likely to condition their support for a war in the future on attaining UN or NATO approval? In short, might it be appropriate to add “in the post-Cold War era” after the phrase, “U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Interventions” in the book’s subtitle?

One final point is warranted about the Iraq war case, which illustrates many of these points. Recchia argues that the military failed in the Iraq case to exert the necessary pressure to assure appropriate burden sharing. The military’s top-level generals remained silent, as he frames it (209). He attributes this silence to military chiefs’ excessive deference to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. But the empirical record is a bit more complex. Then chairman of the Joint Chiefs Richard Myers, an Air Force General, professed to have a self-described mind-meld with Rumsfeld (i.e., he adopted to Rumsfeld’s way of thinking in order to work with

⁹ See the extensive analysis using the TISS surveys in Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), especially chapter two.

¹⁰ Recchia makes a good case for the post-Cold War focus on plagues, 12-13.

¹¹ Deborah Avant, “Are the Reluctant Warriors Out of Control,” *Security Studies* 2:2 (1996): 51-90; Feaver and Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles*, 25.

¹² Schake and Mattis’s YouGov survey does show some continuity in civilian veteran elites attitudes toward the use of force, but importantly, that survey does not include data from active duty military officers. In Jim Golby, Lindsay P. Cohn, and Peter D. Feaver, “Thanks for Your Service: Civilian and Veteran Attitudes after Fifteen Years of War,” in Schake and Mattis, *Warriors & Citizens*, 110-113. On the methodology used for the survey see Kori Schake and Jim Mattis “A Great Divergence,” in Schake and Mattis, *Warriors & Citizens*, 12-15.

¹³ Pew surveys suggest that there may be some greater complexity in the views of veterans. Although support for nation-building activities remain limited, six in ten post 9/11 veterans surveyed by Pew in 2011 supported the “non-combat” nation-building role. See Pew Survey, “War and Sacrifice in the Post 9/11 era” Pew Research Center, 5 October 2011. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/10/05/war-and-sacrifice-in-the-post-911-era/>

him, which suggests a dynamic more complicated than deference).¹⁴ In Recchia's account, General Tommy Franks, the head of Central Command, the unified combatant command in charge of running the war, also deferred to Rumsfeld. It is worth noting, however, that Franks nonetheless engaged in an active and iterative discussion with the Secretary about the number of troops required for the combat phase of the war.¹⁵ Admittedly, not much appears to have been said in those conversations about the war's final stabilization phase, when international support would have been especially useful in keeping costs down. It was not, however, deference that resulted in Franks's ignoring the post combat phase—he was simply not especially engaged with Phase IV planning. There were, however, individuals in the services—notably Chief of Staff of the Army Eric Shinseki—who did raise concerns about the post-combat phase, but were shut-out of the process, as Recchia also notes.

So, here is a case—if ever there was one—that the military should have been motivated to press civilians to pursue cost savings through international burden-sharing. As Recchia recounts, however, the “impassioned plea to the president for seeking UN approval” came from the Secretary of State, Colin Powell (207) and not the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, or other senior military leaders. Yet, even had military leaders made their support for the war contingent on attaining UN approval, it is unclear that they would have been able to exercise a veto over the Bush administration's decision to go to war without it. While Recchia therefore makes an intriguing and compelling case about military influence on multilateralism in the 1990s, how far the case travels into the present is perhaps less well established. Regardless, Recchia's book raises major questions about the impact of military pressures on multilateral interventions. He has given us much to consider in our future scholarship.

¹⁴ Bob Woodward, *State of Denial, Bush at War Part III*, Simon & Schuster, 2007. Also see “Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs Chair Hold Briefing,” CNN.com/Transcripts 4 March 2002 <http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0203/04/se.01.html>

¹⁵ Risa A. Brooks. *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment*, Princeton University Press, 2008, 229.

Review by Joel H. Westra, Calvin College

Post-Cold War U.S. military intervention generally has entailed some form of post-conflict stabilization, either as the intended purpose of such intervention or as an anticipated consequence thereof. This has changed the nature of U.S. military intervention, not only at the operational and tactical levels, but also at the strategic level, as policy-makers frequently have sought multilateral support for military intervention. Multilateral support is beneficial insofar as it facilitates sharing of the long-term burden of post-conflict stabilization; however, it also incurs bargaining and transaction costs and constrains military decision-making. Disagreement among policy-makers regarding these costs and benefits produces variation in their efforts to obtain multilateral support.

In seeking to explain variation in policy outcomes, Stefano Recchia uses a bureaucratic politics approach that is informed by insights from both cognitive psychology and U.S. civil–military relations. According to Recchia, decisions regarding whether or not to seek multilateral support for post-Cold War U.S. military intervention are outcomes of a bargaining process between civilian ‘interventionist hawks’ and more dovish policy-makers, with top-ranking military leaders playing a central role in the outcome of such bargaining by serving as informal veto players. Recchia argues that ‘interventionist hawks’ generally focus on the reasons for which military intervention should occur, tending therefore to treat the feasibility of such intervention secondarily and to make overly optimistic assumptions, while military leaders generally focus on the manner in which military intervention would occur, tending therefore to consider the feasibility of such intervention more carefully. Because of parochial concerns regarding the strength and prestige of the military organizations in which they have spent their entire careers and because of lessons they learned through their prior combat experience, military leaders often worry that the Congress will not support lengthy, post-conflict stabilization missions and therefore tend towards skepticism regarding U.S. military intervention. Recchia argues that these leaders can exercise an informal veto over policy-making by using their expertise to portray military intervention as infeasible and by using their influence and esteem to speak out publically (or threaten to do so) against military intervention. Thus, to gain leverage in policy debates, Recchia suggests that ‘interventionist hawks’ seek out institutionalized, multilateral support to ensure long-term burden sharing by other states, thereby *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors* by assuaging their concerns regarding Congressional support for sustained military action. By contrast, when military leaders are not involved in decision-making, the United States is less likely to seek multilateral support and may be burdened by the costs of post-conflict stabilization.

Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors is carefully argued and well written. Recchia specifies the causal logic clearly and provides supporting evidence gathered from numerous interviews with both civilian policy-makers and military leaders as well as from primary-source documents. The hypotheses are clearly specified and accompanied by observable implications that provide a basis for careful process tracing within the cases examined, with the need for such process tracing clearly articulated. The logic of Recchia’s argument, however, contains a contradiction that the book only partially addresses.

Recchia argues that U.S. policy-makers seeking multilateral support for post-Cold War military intervention were motivated by concerns regarding “burden sharing and congressional support” (31) and believed that “institutions-based multilateralism” (10) would facilitate international burden sharing and hence ensure congressional support. According to Recchia, “institutions-based multilateralism” helps “to lock in international support and commit allies and partners to sustained burden sharing” due to “the reputational implications of public pledges of support” (28). In particular, “[o]nce member states are ... committed to

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

supporting U.S. policy, subsequent resistance by them ... would expose them to accusations of flip-flopping, harming their reputation[s] as reliable international partners” (28).

Recchia dismisses this logic, however, in his rejection of negative-issue linkage as a concern for U.S. policy-makers in deciding whether to seek multilateral support for military intervention. According to Recchia, liberal institutionalism suggests that “if the United States acquires a reputation for noncompliance with the norms, rules, and procedures embedded in the UN Charter regime, other states might reciprocate through costly retaliation” (21). Recchia concludes, however, that U.S. policy-makers “were [not] motivated by concerns about issue linkage” (22–23), thereby dismissing the reputational logic that he embraces elsewhere as a key part of his causal logic.

Recchia is aware of this potential contradiction and addresses it by suggesting that asymmetry of capabilities produces asymmetry of reputational concern. According to Recchia, “one reason why American leaders in the post-Cold War period have generally been little concerned about costly international resistance in the form of issue linkage is that under unipolarity, ... [i]f weaker states were to reduce their cooperation with the United States ... , they would primarily harm themselves” (23). This argument, however, downplays the importance of contiguous territory and airspace for undertaking military intervention and narrows the scope of Recchia’s analysis to include only US military intervention undertaken since the end of the Cold War.

Recchia argues that “it is unlikely that the United States, as the world’s military superpower, values IO [international organization] approval ... primarily for the purpose of capability aggregation during major combat,” because “American combat operations are increasingly technology-intensive endeavors” and “only a few major allies ... possess the ability to substantially contribute to U.S.-led combat operations” (25–26). This logic, however, downplays the importance of basing, transit, and overflight rights, which can give less powerful states significant leverage over an intervening state, even under unipolarity.¹ Although Recchia notes that side payments to other states may be necessary in some instances to secure IO approval (2, 11, 54), he does not otherwise consider the leverage that other states might exert over an intervening state by withholding or threatening to withhold basing, transit, and overflight rights and/or other assistance.² Moreover, the evidence Recchia provides to support his conclusion that policy-makers “were [not] motivated by concerns about issue linkage” (22–23) is only partially convincing.

Consider, for example, Recchia’s discussion of side payments used to secure IO support for U.S. military intervention in Haiti in 1994, which involved the exertion of “significant diplomatic pressure” on Brazil to ensure UNSC approval of the proposed military action (103). As Recchia admits, U.S. policy-makers were concerned about reputational consequences and negative issue linkage (77) but concluded, nevertheless, that “securing a UN [United Nations] mandate for the use of force would have little impact on ... opposition within the hemisphere,” insofar as the United States already had acquired a reputation among Latin American states for noncompliance with U.N. Charter rules, and that opposition from these states “would be of little practical consequence” due to power asymmetries (100-102). Although concerns regarding reputational

¹ Erik Voeten, “The Political Origins of the UN Security Council’s Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force,” *International Organization* 59:3 (2005): 540-550; Joel H. Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the Major Powers* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 43.

² See Steven R. David, “Why the Third World Matters,” *International Security* 14:1 (1989): 50-85.

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

consequences and negative issue linkage were not determinative in this instance, such concerns were part of the policy-making process, and as such, the policy outcome might have been more a consequence of particular circumstances (i.e. policy-makers' confidence regarding the feasibility of projecting US military power into Haiti without help from other states) than Recchia admits in his effort to find a generalizable causal relationship.

Consider also U.S. intervention in Iraq almost a decade later. Recchia's important insight here is that "[t]he lack of vigorous civil–military debate ... yielded a flawed U.S. strategic assessment," such that US policy-makers "didn't really focus much on diplomacy with the other Security Council members" (220, 226). Recchia convincingly demonstrates the limits of U.S. efforts in securing U.N. Security Council (UNSC) support for military intervention in Iraq, especially as France's diplomatic position hardened.³ However, Recchia does not consider that, having given up hope of achieving a second UNSC resolution authorizing military intervention in Iraq, U.S. and British policy-makers still held out hope for achieving nine votes in the Security Council, despite likelihood of veto by one or more of the other permanent members.⁴ Such a vote, without achieving UNSC authorization "to lock in international support and commit allies and partners to sustained burden sharing" (28), is inconsistent with Recchia's argument and suggests that other concerns must also have been in play, at least in this case.

Further, although Recchia reports that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell "was [not] concerned about issue linkage" and that U.S. National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley did not "remember anyone making the argument that we needed international sanction on Iraq to keep people cooperation with the U.S. in other areas," Woodward reports Powell expressing concern to US policy-makers in August 2002 that "[w]ithout the attempt" to secure UNSC approval, "nobody would be with them – no Brits, no bases, no access or overflight agreements" and that failure to seek UNSC support would "suck the oxygen out of just about everything else the United States was doing, not only in the war on terrorism, but all other diplomatic, defense and intelligence relationships."⁵ Likewise, a leaked memorandum from a January 2003 meeting between U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair notes agreement between them regarding the need for nine votes in the UN Security Council to give "international cover, especially with the Arabs,"⁶ picking up on a previous memorandum that noted the need for "bases either in Jordan or in Saudi Arabia"

³ See also Stefano Recchia, "Did Chirac Say 'Non'? Revisiting UN Diplomacy on Iraq, 2002-03" *Political Science Quarterly* 130:4 (2015): 625-654.

⁴ Doyle McManus, "Bush Decides a Majority Is Worth the Wait," *Los Angeles Times* (14 March 2003); David E. Sanger, "Canvassing the Votes To Gain Legitimacy" *New York Times* (13 March 2003); Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*, 145.

⁵ Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002): 332-334; *Plan of Attack: The Definitive Account of the Decision To Invade Iraq* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004): 157.

⁶ Don Van Natta, Jr., "Bush Was Set on Path to War, British Memo Says," *New York Times* (27 March 2006).

and discussed the need for such support in the context of legal justifications to be presented to the UN Security Council.⁷

These observations by no means undermine Recchia's excellent analysis, but they do suggest that concerns regarding long-term burden sharing and congressional support existed alongside concerns regarding negative issue linkage, and hence that some of the cases Recchia examines might be overdetermined, as Recchia admits in discussing the generalizability of his arguments (244–245). Indeed, Recchia is careful to bound the scope of his analysis to post-Cold War U.S. interventions, in which the latter concerns tend to be weaker, and to consider the possibility that “negative issue linkage, while not a major concern at present, might further constrain U.S. policymaking in the future” (249). However, it is necessary to consider more carefully how much of a role the latter concerns played in these cases as a means of assessing generalizability.

The most original and important contribution that this book makes to theory and to policy is its consideration of military leaders as bureaucratic veto players in policy debates regarding military intervention. Recchia provides a clear and compelling analysis regarding the role of U.S. military leaders in post-Cold War policy debates, noting both the post-Vietnam culture of caution among such leaders (42) and the policy consequences when such leaders are sidelined during the policy-making process (209–227). It will be interesting to see whether there also emerges an enduring, post-Iraq culture of caution among the general public, which will make it more difficult for “interventionist hawks ... to carry great weight in U.S. administration debates about national security” (39), even if military leaders do not play a significant role in such debates. Recchia's book helps us to observe such debates in new light and to consider the importance of military leaders in them. It is a welcome addition to the existing literature on multilateralism and US civil–military relations.

⁷ *Memorandum from Overseas and Defence Secretariat Cabinet Office Outlining Military Options for Implementing Regime Change* (8 March 2002). Available online from downingstreetmemo.com/iraqoptions.html.

Author's Response by Stefano Recchia, University of Cambridge

I could hardly have wished for a better qualified group of scholars to review my book, *Reassuring the Reluctant Warriors: U.S. Civil-Military Relations and Multilateral Intervention*. The three reviewers complement each other extremely well in terms of their expertise, which includes military intervention decision making and qualitative research methods;¹ civil-military relations;² and the influence of multilateral rules and norms on the use of force in international politics.³ In fact, each of the reviewers focuses on somewhat different aspects of the book's argument, and taken together, the reviews make for a fairly comprehensive, nuanced, and highly insightful analysis. I will not spend much time summarizing the book's argument here, as all three reviewers have already provided excellent summaries. I am grateful to the reviewers for their laudatory comments. I also very much value the questions they have raised and their more critical remarks, which give me the opportunity to further clarify important parts of the argument. After a few general considerations, I address the reviewers' main criticisms below.

Context

Over the last decade or so, numerous studies have sought to explain why the United States, as the most militarily powerful country on earth, typically seeks multilateral approval from organizations such as the United Nations (UN) or NATO for major military interventions. Social constructivists suggest that U.S. policymakers may have internalized new norms of appropriate behavior, which make international organization (IO) approval necessary unless an intervention is clearly carried out in self-defense.⁴ Others have hypothesized that the United States may seek IO approval in order to facilitate international burden sharing on the intervention at hand⁵ and/or to avert broader retaliation from other states in the form of negative issue

¹ Andrew Bennett, "Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti: What Went Right, What Went Wrong," in Joseph Lepgold and Thomas Weiss, eds., *Collective Conflict Management and Changing World Politics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998); Andrew Bennett and Alexander George, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004).

² Risa Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Risa Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," in Susanne Nielsen and Don Snider, eds., *American Civil-Military Relations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

³ Joel Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force: The UN Charter and the Major Powers* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007); Joel Westra, "Cumulative Legitimation, Prudential Restraint, and the Maintenance of International Order," *International Studies Quarterly* 54:2 (2010): 513-533.

⁴ Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Between a New World Order and None: Explaining the Reemergence of the United Nations in World Politics," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Christian Reus-Smit, "Liberal Hierarchy and the License to Use Force," *Review of International Studies* 31:S1 (2005): 71-91; Ian Hurd, *After Anarchy: Legitimacy and Power in the United Nations Security Council* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

⁵ Sarah Kreps, *Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

linkage.⁶ Finally, yet another group of scholars suggests that policymakers may seek IO approval in order to increase U.S. public and congressional support for intervention.⁷ My book draws on several of these studies in important ways.

Some of the aforementioned hypotheses—notably, those referring to norm internalization and issue linkage—are alternative to my own argument; I test them explicitly and find little empirical support. (I further discuss the issue-linkage hypothesis below, when I address Joel Westra’s questions.) Other hypotheses—those emphasizing concerns about burden sharing and domestic support—are complementary to my argument as developed in the book. My research confirms that a desire for international burden sharing, and related concerns about U.S. domestic support for potentially open-ended commitments, motivate policymakers to seek IO approval before intervening. Previous studies that emphasized these factors, however, suffered from an important limitation: they considered the United States as a unitary actor, while in reality, in almost every case, senior decision makers in Washington disagree among each other—often quite vehemently—about whether the U.S. government should seek multilateral approval to share costly burdens and increase domestic support. Specifically, policymakers tend to disagree about whether in the particular case at hand, the benefits of multilateralism are likely to outweigh related freedom-of-action costs. After all, securing multilateral approval often requires protracted diplomacy, and substantial side-payments and logrolling may be necessary to persuade hesitant member states to offer their affirmative vote.

Logic of the argument

To address the problem of policymakers whose perceptions and cost-benefit analysis vis-à-vis multilateralism may systematically differ, I combine a bureaucratic politics approach with insights from the civil-military relations literature. There is ample evidence that, for parochial organizational and ideological reasons, America’s senior military officers are reluctant to deploy U.S. forces in humanitarian interventions and liberal wars of regime change, especially when there is no clear threat to U.S. national security.⁸ As I show in the book, generals and admirals are more likely than civilian leaders to worry that such interventions will result in open-ended commitments without an exit strategy and with dwindling U.S. domestic support. The primary

⁶ Erik Voeten, “The Political Origins of the UN Security Council’s Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force,” *International Organization* 59:3 (2005): 527-557; Alexander Thompson, *Channels of Power: The UN Security Council and U.S. Statecraft in Iraq* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2009); Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*.

⁷ Kenneth Schultz, “Tying Hands and Washing Hands: The U.S. Congress and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention,” in Daniel Drezner, ed., *Locating the Proper Authorities: The Interaction of International and Domestic Institutions* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003); Atsushi Tago, “Determinants of Multilateralism in US Use of Force,” *Journal of Peace Research* 42:5 (2005): 585-604; Terrence L. Chapman, *Securing Approval: Domestic Politics and Multilateral Authorization for War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Joseph Grieco, Christopher Gelpi, Jason Reifler, and Peter D. Feaver, “Let’s Get a Second Opinion: International Institutions and American Public Support for War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 55:2 (2011): 563-583.

⁸ Peter D. Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, *Choosing Your Battles: American Civil-Military Relations and the Use of Force* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Jim Golby, Lindsay Cohn, and Peter Feaver, “Thanks for Your Service: Civilian and Veteran Attitudes after Fifteen Years of War,” in Kori Schake and James Mattis, eds., *Warriors and Citizens: American Views of Our Military* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2016).

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

reason why senior military officers pay greater attention to the long-term costs of armed intervention and related issues of public support than many (especially pro-intervention) civilian leaders—to answer one of Andrew Bennett’s questions—seems to be that the military’s operational planning naturally leads them to focus on issues of feasibility and implementation.⁹

The senior officers’ acknowledged professional expertise, their control of military planning, and their high standing in American society allow them to exert significant influence over military-intervention decision making. I argue that when top-ranking generals (especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) express strong concerns about the risks and likely operational costs of a particular intervention, and, crucially, when civilian policymakers are divided over the merits of intervention,¹⁰ the military may be able to steer U.S. policy toward nonintervention—the reason being that American presidents are reluctant to overrule the top military brass.¹¹ This is what I mean when I write that military leaders can sometimes “veto” armed intervention (49, and 49-58 more generally).

The military veto should be understood metaphorically: I certainly do not mean to suggest that the military can directly block armed interventions that it opposes. American presidents, as commanders-in-chief, can of course overrule the military if and when they choose, but as Bennett notes in his review, “Presidents can override the professional judgment of the military, but they take considerable political risks in doing so.” When top uniformed leaders express strong concerns about the costs and complexity of prospective military interventions, this is likely to reduce support for those interventions in Congress and among the American public.¹² Top-ranking generals can also directly convince influential civilian policymakers—the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Adviser, and even the President—that the military intervention plans pushed by other, more hawkish civilian administration members would likely result in unacceptably high costs for the United States. As I write in the book, “senior officers can form bureaucratic alliances with more dovish civilian officials and resort to [other expedients, such as leaking their reservations to the media and leveraging their contacts with sympathetic members of Congress (49-51)] in order to derail the interventionists’ agenda.” In many cases, I further emphasize, “the military’s bargaining power stays latent and shapes the debate as a powerful background force” (53).

In her review, Risa Brooks seems to interpret the threat of a military veto quite literally, and argues that the absence of direct evidence that civilian authorities feared such a military veto constitutes a flaw in my argument. As I conceive it, again, the “military veto” is a metaphor that encapsulates the military leadership’s

⁹ In the book I also refer to findings from research in cognitive psychology that help us better understand the longer time horizons of military officers (43-44).

¹⁰ As emphasized repeatedly in the book, on viii, 6, 35, and 48-50.

¹¹ For similar arguments, see also Deborah D. Avant, “Are the Reluctant Warriors Out of Control? Why the U.S. Military is Averse to Responding to Post-Cold War Low-Level Threats,” *Security Studies* 2:2 (1996): 51-90; Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 29-33; and Richard H. Kohn, “The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military,” *Naval War College Review* 55:3 (2002): 8-59.

¹² On how military opposition can reduce public support for intervention, see Jim Golby, Kyle Dropp, and Peter Feaver, “Listening to the Generals: How Military Advice Affects Public Support for the Use of Force,” Center for a New American Security, 2013.

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

ability to put up significant obstacles in the way of interventionist civilian policymakers. The veto threat, because it is often latent, may be unobservable and needs to be inferred from other factors. If key civilian policymakers who were initially willing to bypass relevant IOs to maximize U.S. freedom of action acknowledge in interviews that they needed to secure UN or NATO approval and further commitments of allied burden sharing, in order to address the military's concerns, "reassure the reluctant warriors," and ultimately persuade the president to authorize armed intervention, that provides strong corroboration for my argument. I provide numerous quotations from on-the-record interviews that I conducted with high-level civilian policymakers, which demonstrate that for interventions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo, these policymakers came to view multilateral support as essential, precisely in order to address the military's concerns and form a winning bureaucratic coalition in favor of intervention. Additional, less direct evidence is provided through process tracing: I show that in all three cases, top-level civilian leaders were initially willing to bypass relevant multilateral bodies, but these same civilian leaders were unable to form a winning intra-administration coalition in favor of intervention and obtain the president's go-ahead, *until* they effectively addressed the military's concerns about burden sharing and exit strategies by securing IO approval and other commitments of international support.

Scope of the argument

Both Bennett and Brooks further ask important questions about the scope and temporal reach of the book's argument. Which cases can my theory explain? And does the theory apply to U.S. policymaking beyond the 1990s?

My argument is not that top-level uniformed officers are always decisive in steering U.S. intervention policy toward IOs (see 7-8 and 54-57). Civilian policymakers clearly may have other, independent reasons for seeking IO approval. However, the United States usually finds it difficult to secure IO approval for coercive humanitarian missions and liberal wars of regime change, because such interventions are *prima facie* incompatible with the principle of noninterference in states' domestic affairs as enshrined in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Consequently, hawkish U.S. policymakers contemplating such interventions, if left to their own devices, may be tempted to bypass relevant IOs in order to maximize U.S. freedom of action. The military's reluctance, for its own set of reasons, to deploy American forces in this type of intervention is then likely to play a key role in steering *these particular interventions* toward multilateralism. Put differently, the military's role in steering U.S. intervention policy toward multilateralism is likely to be most salient, and hence identifiable, for coercive humanitarian interventions and other liberal wars of regime change launched in the absence of clear threats to U.S. national security.¹³

For this reason, as Bennett rightly notes, the 2003 Iraq War lies "at the edges or even beyond the scope conditions of [my] theory." As I write in the book, in the Iraq case, top military officers—JCS Chairman Richard Myers; his Deputy, Peter Pace; and CENTCOM Commander Tommy Franks—were not simply deferential to bellicose civilian officials such as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, although this was certainly the case.¹⁴ The George W. Bush administration's successful framing of Saddam Hussein's Iraq as a

¹³ See also Stefano Recchia, "Soldiers, Civilians, and Multilateral Humanitarian Intervention," *Security Studies* 24:2 (2015): 251-283. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2015.1036626>

¹⁴ For assessments that emphasize the deference of these three generals and its detrimental effects, see Michael O'Hanlon, "Iraq Without a Plan," *Policy Review* 128 (January 2005); Christopher P. Gibson, *Securing the State*

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

major threat for U.S. national security, and the relentless insistence by hardliners such as Rumsfeld and Vice President Richard Cheney that the goal of regime change in Iraq was a central component of the administration's "war on terror," also made it extremely difficult for other senior military officers, who worried about the lack of international support, to make their voices heard. As I note repeatedly, in the post-9/11 climate, senior officers on the Joint Staff and in the services could not "speak out and articulate an alternative narrative without appearing disloyal, unpatriotic, or dangerously naïve" (215, see also 15, 189). Furthermore, I entirely agree with Brooks in her assessment that "even had military leaders made their support for the [Iraq] war contingent on attaining UN approval, it is unclear that they would have been able to exercise a veto over the Bush administration's decision to go to war without it." The reason is that the Bush administration's civilian leaders were united in supporting the war (even Secretary of State Colin Powell never spoke out against it), which in any case would have left the military bereft of heavyweight civilian allies.

A related point raised by the reviewers is that three of my four case studies (Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo) are from the 1990s. One might thus wonder whether my argument still applies today. I selected these three cases, as well as the 2003 Iraq case, for two reasons. First, in each of these cases, it was clear from an early stage that securing IO approval would be difficult, and consequently high-ranking U.S. policymakers argued that the United States should bypass relevant IOs and intervene only with improvised "coalitions of the willing." That makes U.S. efforts to nevertheless seek IO approval especially puzzling. Second, these cases occurred long enough ago that key individuals involved in policymaking at the time are now willing to be interviewed on the record and speak candidly about their motivations and concerns. Relevant documents are also being declassified (hundreds of pages of previously secret U.S. national security files have been released pursuant to Mandatory Declassification Reviews that I requested). This allows us to reconstruct the U.S. decision making process for those cases with a high degree of accuracy.

The military's preferences as they pertain to my analysis, however, have not fundamentally changed over the last decade; indeed, there are strong grounds to believe that the main pattern of civil-military relations identified in the book continues to apply. I nowhere argue, as Brooks writes, that the military has a desire to fight only conventional wars, or "real wars' core to its self-defined mission," and is reluctant to become involved in modern-day counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations. I explicitly note that "the armed services now devote greater resources to training and capabilities development for counterinsurgency and stabilization missions overseas," and I acknowledge that "a majority of veterans now recognize that nation building is an appropriate role for the military" (46).¹⁵ Absent in Brooks' discussion is a recognition of the fact that the experience of protracted deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq appears if anything to have further convinced senior U.S. military officers that the United States cannot bear long-term stabilization burdens all by itself. This is especially the case for humanitarian interventions and other regime change operations that may be launched in the absence of clear threats to U.S. national security. Senior military officers remain extremely reluctant to deploy U.S. forces in liberal wars aimed at internal political change—as illustrated by

(Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), 50-64; and Dale R. Herspring, *Rumsfeld's Wars: The Arrogance of Power* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 65-125.

¹⁵ I base this latter conclusion on the same 2011 Pew survey that Brooks cites, oddly, as a challenge to my argument.

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

the military's well-documented reservations about humanitarian intervention in Darfur, Libya, and Syria over the last decade.¹⁶

Burden sharing on the intervention or negative issue linkage?

Finally, in his thoughtful review, Joel Westra challenges my argument that negative issue linkage does not feature prominently among U.S. policymakers' concerns when they seek multilateral approval. Together with Alexander Thompson and Erik Voeten, Westra has been among the principal proponents of the issue-linkage hypothesis that I view as problematic.¹⁷

First, according to Westra, my argument that "the United States, as the world's military superpower, values IO approval and the resulting legitimacy primarily... as a catalyst for sustained military and financial burden sharing *after major combat*" (25-6) underestimates the importance of IO approval to obtain basing, transit, and overflight rights during combat. My focus is admittedly on long-term burden sharing, going into the post-combat phase, but I nowhere argue that concerns about operational and logistical support during combat are not also important.¹⁸

Second, Westra views anecdotal evidence that U.S. policymakers value IO approval to secure basing and overflight rights as supporting the hypothesis that concerns about issue linkage indeed motivate these policymakers. To do so, however, Westra stretches the concept of "negative issue linkage" to a point where it ceases to be analytically helpful. If other states react to U.S. interventions launched without multilateral approval by declining to offer logistical and operational support for the intervention at hand, there is no issue linkage (since the issue-area is the same), but simply lack of burden sharing.

Negative issue linkage, as conventionally understood in the institutionalist literature, occurs when noncompliance with international rules on a particular issue results in reduced cooperation with the rule violator *in other issue-areas*. Thus, if the United States intervened militarily in violation of international rules and norms requiring multilateral approval, other countries would have to reduce their cooperation with the United States in other areas, such as finance and trade, nuclear proliferation, or counterterrorism.¹⁹ I argue

¹⁶ I discuss the Libya case on 234-239 in the book. On the U.S. military's opposition to humanitarian intervention in Darfur and Syria, see, respectively, Rebecca Hamilton, *Fighting for Darfur: Public Action and the Struggle to Stop Genocide* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), Ch. 6; and David Fitzgerald and David Ryan, *Obama, U.S. Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), Ch. 6.

¹⁷ Westra, *International Law and the Use of Armed Force*. See also Voeten, "The Political Origins of the UN Security Council's Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force;" and Thompson, "Coercion through IOs."

¹⁸ I explicitly recognize that U.S. policymakers who support efforts to secure IO approval frequently view such approval as useful "to maximize support from international allies and partners *for both combat and postcombat stabilization*" (207, emphasis added).

¹⁹ Thompson writes that rule violation in the context of military intervention might result in the imposition of international costs on the coercer "through negative issue linkage: the coercer finds its relations with other states suffering in other issue areas. [Consequently,] the coercer may find... the achievement of other foreign policy goals more difficult in the future," (*Channels of Power*, 19). On issue-linkage, see also Ernst B. Haas, "Why Collaborate? Issue-Linkage and

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

that under unipolarity, this is unlikely; indeed, top-level policymakers whom I interviewed, such as Brent Scowcroft, Anthony Lake, Colin Powell, and Stephen Hadley, informed me that when the administrations they served in sought UN approval for prospective military interventions, this had little to do with concerns about reduced cooperation with the United States in other issue-areas.²⁰ (I do recognize, however, that such concerns might become more prominent in the future, as America's relative power declines [23, 249]).

Westra claims that I nevertheless obliquely acknowledge the importance of concerns about issue linkage in the 1994 Haiti case, when I write that U.S. policymakers feared a failed effort to secure UN approval might harm America's international reputation (77). But states might value a reputation for compliance with international rules for a number of reasons – concerns about issue linkage being only one of them. In 1994, the only countries that were seriously concerned about the possibility of a U.S. intervention in Haiti were other countries from the region. Yet, if there is one region where the United States over the last twenty-five years has not had to worry about costly retaliation in the form of issue linkage, it is precisely Latin America and the Caribbean. As I write, at the time of the Haiti intervention, most countries in the region “were deeply enmeshed in mutually beneficial bilateral relations with the United States, [and they] had the most to lose from a deterioration of bilateral relationships with the United States.” Consequently, I conclude, drawing on interviews with senior officials involved in U.S. policymaking on Haiti, “there was never much doubt [in Washington] that hemispheric opposition would remain confined to the level of rhetoric” (101-102).

Westra also reminds us that in the 2003 Iraq case, the United States and Britain still held out hope for achieving a majority of votes in the UN Security Council, even after other permanent members indicated that they might veto the use-of-force resolution on the table—which, he believes, is “inconsistent with [my] argument.” But the main reason why Washington and London continued for a few days in early March 2003 to seek a UNSC majority for their preferred resolution, even after France threatened a veto, was that British officials felt they needed whatever legitimacy they could get out of the UN process in order to temper UK domestic opposition to their country's participation in the war and be able to share in the burden of intervention.²¹ This appears entirely consistent with my argument.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank the reviewers for their generous, incisive, and insightful comments. I have addressed only their main criticisms in this reply. I apologize to Andrew Bennett, in particular, for failing to answer some of his excellent questions; but he acknowledges that these can simply be viewed as an encouragement for further research. While Americans are currently hesitant to support new large-scale military commitments overseas to change the domestic politics of foreign countries, this may well change over the next few years, especially under the proactive leadership of a new administration. Whenever the President's principal policy advisers seriously discuss the possibility of such interventions, the military is

International Regimes,' *World Politics* 32:3 (1980): 357-405; and Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 103-104.

²⁰ See also Stefano Recchia, “Why seek international organisation approval under unipolarity? Averting issue linkage vs. appeasing Congress,” *International Relations* 30:1 (2016): 78-101. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117815593137>

²¹ For a discussion, see Stefano Recchia, “Did Chirac Say ‘Non’? Revisiting UN Diplomacy on Iraq, 2002-03,” *Political Science Quarterly* 130:4 (2015): 625-654. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.12397>

H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable 9-8

likely to offer a voice of caution, raising awareness about the risks and likely operational costs of such endeavors, and thus about the importance of multilateral support, burden sharing, and clear exit strategies. Scholars of U.S. foreign policy have not usually thought of the military as an important driver of U.S. multilateralism. My book and the evidence presented therein are an invitation to think again.