

jargon aside, is to see how satisfyingly it explains the case at hand: singular causal analysis. Moreover, while both authors undertake comparative studies of decision-making, the value of these comparisons is largely that they illuminate how unique the decision-makers and the cases were: had a different decision-maker, who held different beliefs, occupied the position of decision-making authority, a different decision may have been made.

Jackson's account of analyticism, applied to the study of foreign policy decision-making, highlights much that is unique about this area of IR scholarship. The use of single case studies, the creation of ideal-types, and the notion that every policy-maker encounters a complicated and unique situation require a way of understanding scientific method that is distinct from neopositivism, scientific realism, or postmodernism. Jackson's chapter, in this context, might be read with great profit.

Conclusion

Jackson's analyticism neither follows from its assigned philosophical basis in pragmatic theories of scientific inquiry nor is born out in the paradigmatic example of Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*. While these are objections to the manner in which Jackson moves from philosophical wagers to a Weberian methodology, they do not mean that his chapter on analyticism is without merit. It is an eye-opening discussion, both because it is ambitious and because it sheds a different light on a tradition that is under-theorized in IR. While I am not convinced that a combination of monist and phenomenalist philosophical wagers requires us to abandon empirical generalization, I am persuaded that the concrete research methodology that Jackson proposes might be useful if pursued.

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The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: The View from Graduate School

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Jackson's book, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*, is most likely to be assigned or recommended in graduate classes addressing the philosophy of science, qualitative methodology, and research design. It might then be useful to ask two graduate students whether this is a good idea. How helpful is yet another book on the meta-theoretical status of International Relations? Our answer to this question has four parts. First, we ask whether and how Jackson's ordering scheme clarifies debates in IR. Second, we discuss the consequences of the scheme for understanding the state of research in IR. Third, we outline the prescriptive consequences of the scheme for graduate students and our own research. Finally, we present three limitations on the usefulness of Jackson's book to budding scholars.

A Clarifying Contribution

At its most basic, this book helps to map the contours and confusions of many debates in IR; ably drawing the links between them, while also debunking much of what scholars think is at stake here. Perhaps the greatest debunking Jackson provides is his stress that the meaning of "science" is still unsettled, and that authors like Lakatos, Kuhn, and Popper—names that all IR graduate students are familiar with—spent much of their time manifestly disagreeing with each other, not building towards a consensus position. This fact alone helps the graduate student breath a sigh of relief. If these philosophers of science never agreed, it is no wonder that IR research is so confused about its scientific underpinnings.

To explicate what science can mean in IR, Jackson introduces his ordering idea of philosophical ontology and the four ideal-type categories that make up the book's 2 x 2 table of philosophical-ontological positions (see the table in the introduction to this symposium). In an arena of debate already cluttered with difficult concepts, this table actually provides welcome relief. A common barrier to graduate student attempts to navigate the waters of the philosophical underpinnings of inquiry is that those waters are often muddy. Opacity of prose can deter a student from spending valuable time on these matters since their empirical topic of interest or methods might seem to have a more direct payoff. It can also mean that time spent on philosophy of science or social science is less profitable than it might be. By contrast, Jackson's writing in this book is very accessible, especially considering the subject matter.

When engaging philosophical matters graduate students can find confusing the forest of terms designating positions that are often only comprehensible in relation to a specific debate. Jackson alleviates this problem in two ways. First, he generates neologisms for some of his conceptual categories. There are startup costs to this strategy since readers must deal with even more new terms. However, once past this hurdle, the cost is outweighed by the benefits of clarity. The reader is told what transfactualism, analyticism, etc., are and is unlikely to confuse them with other more well-known terms that mean something different. Jackson's second way of mitigating potential confusion is placing the ideas he discusses in context, both of work in the philosophy of science and metatheoretical debates in IR. For example, learning that Lakatos' conception of progressive and degenerative research programmes sought to account for the demonstrated empirical success of physics helps indicate how this conception may or may not be applicable to IR. For one thing, physicists were successful long before there were philosophers of science to tell them what to do. The theme that philosophy of science should not be a narrowly prescriptive exercise is accompanied by an exhortation to philosophical awareness of what it is that one is trying to do with one's research and of whether that makes sense. Most critically, the four varieties of philosophical ontology explicated by Jackson give the graduate student eager to engage the underpinnings of IR inquiry a clear sense of what's what in the discipline: both practically and theoretically. We would warn readers, however, that the initial presentation of Jackson's central concept of philosophical ontology is not especially clear. As graduate students socialized into a particular vernacular, we kept waiting to see how philosophical ontology linked into IR debates about ontology and epistemology. It does not become clear until later why this traditional dichotomy was ignored—i.e., it presupposes a dualist position—but if mentioned earlier this would have made Jackson's framework understandable sooner.

“Science” in IR: Rhetoric and Practice

Jackson ably demonstrates that complaints that a certain piece of research is not “scientific”—due, for example, to it being unamenable to falsification—are too often nothing more than disciplining moves rather than substantive criticisms. Jackson takes a “broad Weberian” stance on what counts as science: it is “empirical inquiry designed to produce knowledge.” Science is not differentiated from the category of pseudo-science, then, but from partisan political action. One of the liberating functions of Jackson's position is that it offers a basis for deflating knee-jerk denunciations of work that is different from one's own as “unscientific” or “not political science.” Graduate students cannot help but be desperately concerned that their work be taken seriously as political science, and in order to avoid the charge of being unscientific, they might be motivated to conform to standards of methodology, and of method, that are widely regarded as scientific rather than those that make sense to them. The overriding theme of Jackson's view of science is a call to intellectual honesty that encourages researchers not to allow themselves to be forced down certain

paths. Acknowledging that the function of the commonplace “science” is often to discipline—that is to try and “reshape how inquiry is conducted” by “drawing on the rhetorical power of ‘science’”—can take the sting out of charges that some modes of inquiry are not worthwhile.

A significant contribution of Jackson's book is his discussion of the dominance of neopositivism in IR, and how it is frequently considered the only real definition of science in the discipline. Once one recognizes this, it becomes clear that the big debate about quantitative vs. qualitative methods is, as Jackson stresses, just that: a discussion about method that sidesteps broader ontological or epistemological concerns. Moreover, although constructivism tends to be treated as a “post-positivist” position in the discipline, much of it often professes to adhere to the mind-world dualism and phenomenalist position of the most committed neopositivist. Constructivism vs. rationalism is thus commonly a battle over what Jackson calls scientific ontology, not underlying philosophical principles.

This dominance of neopositivism is somewhat ironic once the actual practice of IR research is considered. As Jackson occasionally points out, IR as practiced rarely adheres strictly to the tenets of neopositivism and frequently veers toward analyticist or critical realist positions, even when authors do not necessarily think this is what they are doing. Highlighting this fact provides both good and bad news to the budding IR practitioner. The good news is that one may be able to dress research in neopositivist clothing without necessarily following its implications to the letter. Consider the attention to causal mechanisms in current IR, for example. Although any truly neopositivist mechanism should in principle be reducible to empirically observable intervening variables and thus subject to falsification (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994: 86), the significance of game theoretic models shows that this is not a necessary requirement for work to be considered scientific—as game theoretic models require the consideration of unobservable off-the-equilibrium-path outcomes. The bad news is that if one is committed to full intellectual honesty and defending one's work on its philosophical merits, this can be hard to do. However unfair it may seem, the dominance of a particular view of science in IR is not something a young scholar can ignore.

Jackson's philosophical-ontological distinctions also put front and center the meaning and use of concepts—in principle, for neopositivists, concepts should only be treated instrumentally. Critical realism, on the other hand, treats many common concepts in IR—such as the state, institutions, social forces etc.—as real-but-unobservable entities, which allows for much more complicated concepts. Yet in IR scholarship, concepts often have an ambiguous status: their place in many theories is far more fundamental than simple placeholders, but they are not necessarily claimed to be real entities. Consider Snyder's (1991) log-rolling coalition of imperial expansion, Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) norm life cycle model, or Fearon's (1995) war model. These conceptual frameworks do not comfortably fit either the critical realist or neopositivist stances, yet have made significant contributions to the field, and may, we suggest below, be best understood in light of

Jackson's analyticist stance. Philosophical-ontological wagers thus influence the assumptions that scholars implicitly or explicitly make in their theories. Unpacking such assumptions, as Jackson advocates, can clarify what would count as persuasive arguments against the concepts a scholar uses from *within* that scholar's own methodological point of view.

Applying Philosophical Ontology: Consequences for Research

This book was not written as a strategy guide to tell PhD students how to avoid disciplining moves, but as a call to researchers to understand that there is no consensus about what philosophical commitments are scientific and, instead of trying to solve this puzzle, to get on with conducting research in a manner aware of one's own philosophical commitments. For this insight alone the book should be required reading for any graduate student.

Jackson offers much in the way of practical usefulness by showing the significance of philosophical "wagers" for producing coherent scholarship. His presentation of alternative philosophical-ontological positions as "wagers" is especially useful as it emphasizes the unresolved nature of the puzzles about what science is, and suggests that at some point a researcher must make a leap of faith, but should do so with awareness of what they are doing. As Jackson's discussion of monism vs. dualism illustrates, there is no way a dualist can claim there is a distinction between an objective world "out there" and a subjective world "in here" without first subscribing to a mind-dualist position to begin with. In other words, arguments that "facts speak for themselves" fundamentally presuppose the very thing they try to demonstrate. One of the primary lessons from the book is that researchers should not only be clear about what their epistemic aim is, but also what it means to consistently pursue that aim.

If graduate students are able to manipulate the philosophical-ontological categories in Jackson's scheme, that is, if they are able to articulate the link between fundamental epistemic warrant and their research in a way that is accepted by their audience, then the scheme is potentially useful in organizing their thinking. The scheme provides ways to identify logical inconsistencies in the work of others, and avoid them in one's own work. For example, Jackson links the use of case comparison to the epistemic warrant sought for one's claims. Recognizing that there are non-positivist types of epistemic warrant, and that much of how IR is conducted is far from professed neopositivist ideals (for example, Waltz's monist explanation of balancing), liberates scholars from the belief that falsification is a gold standard by which to judge research. Continuity across empirical (actually existing) cases is indeed pivotal for a neopositivist knowledge claim. However, if you are making such a claim, then you cannot consistently resort to unobservables or the idea that your model is just heuristically useful. If you do not intend to rest a knowledge claim on a neopositivist basis, then empirical generalization may be irrelevant to the value of your research. This point is different from the neopositivist idea that single cases or small-n research designs are defensible as part of a broader attempt at estab-

lishing causal laws (Rogowski 2004). Neither an analyticist pursuing singular causal analysis nor a critical realist trying to "elucidate the variety of ways that causal properties and the complexes into which they are arranged play out in practice" (Jackson 2010: 111) need be concerned with evaluating the status of a general causal law. The importance of this point cannot be overstated for a graduate student looking to defend their work to a seminar, dissertation committee, or peer group. The ability to defend against methodological criticisms is vital to being a competent scholar. There may be a temptation to resort to one's own stock of buzzwords, like process-tracing, instead of carefully thinking through the kind of epistemic warrant one is seeking, in order to be able to clarify the goals and conduct of one's research. Another temptation is to give in and respond to charges of lack of generalizability with a nominally comparative case design or an "inconsequential data analysis...tacked on as the final one-tenth of the paper" (Clarke and Primo 2007: 749).

It is in the presentation of analytic ideal-types that Jackson is perhaps most interesting. Prior to reading his book, we had not conceived of analyticism as a distinct coherent approach to the philosophical underpinnings of knowledge claims. Some confusion might be expected here inasmuch as both neopositivists and analyticists are committed to phenomenalism. However, the monist element of analyticism means that instead of agonizing over falsification, the researcher is encouraged to focus on a theory's internal logical coherence. Indeed, this approach assumes ideal-types will never completely map onto the empirics as all analyticist models fundamentally make equal that which is unequal (Jackson 2010: 124). The value of theory comes not from how well it appears to be empirically true in general, then, but rather how useful it is in a given instance; not from its representational truth, but its explanatory usefulness. If we think again about authors such as Fearon or Finnemore and Sikkink, or models such as the tragedy of the commons or prisoners' dilemma, we see that their importance comes from precisely this kind of analyticist explanatory utility. In effect then, much of the best work in IR may be analyticist at least in part, and Jackson's illumination of this is of great value to the graduate student.

Indeed, insights gleaned from Jackson's account of analyticism have had practical implications for how we are conducting our own dissertation research. Banks' dissertation is focusing on how diplomatic symbols and rituals are manipulated by states. Prior to reading Jackson, his theoretical reflection on this had tried to steer an uncomfortable path somewhere between critical realism and neopositivism. In addition, Banks had worried about how to falsify and test against the effects of symbols and rituals in diplomacy. Now, his focus has shifted to building a logically coherent ideal-type of the diplomatic game that he sees states playing. The analyticist approach directs Banks to understand the value of his theoretical framework in terms of how well it illuminates specific empirical cases, where such illumination may come from the way deviation from the ideal type calls attention to case-specific causes explaining this deviation.

Similarly, Jackson's account of how analyticist research

methodology combines ideal-typical concept construction and singular causal analysis has provided O'Mahoney with a more coherent means toward his explanatory end. His work on changes in the rules of state reaction to interstate war outcomes is essentially directed toward explaining a single major historical transformation in these rules. This is the epistemic goal of the research, rather than the use of a single case to test a general causal proposition about institutional change. Analytically general models of institutional change are useful in constructing potential explanations of the single transformation and crucial to a disciplined use of counterfactuals as a way of imagining alternate pathways to those observed. However, the truth value of those models is independent of the empirical findings of the current research. Similarly, the theoretical implications of O'Mahoney's project are potentially more general if they are useful for analytically modeling other historical transformations. But they are not necessarily general in the specifically neopositivist sense of establishing causal laws about what states' reactions to war outcomes are going to be.

Limitations of *The Conduct of Inquiry in IR*

As much as we find to praise in *The Conduct of Inquiry* in IR, we also saw three major limitations in the book. First, Jackson unfortunately confuses a key issue in contemporary IR discourse: the status of hypothesis testing. He associates "hypothesis testing" narrowly with the falsification or verification of empirical generalizations. However, this is not how we have found the phrase used, either in the literature or in discussions amongst graduate students or with professors. A broader conception of hypothesis testing can include specifying what data might be relevant to one's research question before doing the research, or simply being clear about the claims that one is making. It seems that, in Jackson's terms, hypothesis specification and testing is irrelevant to any research that is not neopositivist. Making this claim explicit, especially in the conclusion's prescriptive lexicon, would have been helpful. It would also have been interesting to hear what Jackson would object to about broader uses of the phrase that encourage scholars to be more explicit in such activities, for example, as the forming, appraisal, and revision of hunches in a singular causal analysis.

Second, while the practice of IR rarely fits neatly into one of his four philosophical-ontological boxes, Jackson does not address this issue head-on. We would have liked him to be clearer about if mixing commitments from different philosophical-ontological positions is a mistake. A prominent example of such mixing is research in which a formal model is used to generate predictions and then a statistical analysis is done to empirically test those predictions. Apart from a few asides, Jackson does not address how such research fits in terms of his philosophical wagers. A reader may infer that the formal model is analyticist and the statistical test neopositivist, and therefore there is a possible inconsistency in marrying them. But Jackson does not say exactly what the problem would be. He claims that singular causal analysis is the goal of an analyticist, and says that empirical generalization is logically independent of ideal-types, or that it does not make sense to

test an ideal-type against evidence. Indeed he states that an ideal-type is "not available for any kind of direct empirical verification or falsification, in virtue of its roots in a set of value commitments on the part of the...researcher" (2010: 142). This would seem to imply that the conclusions that come out of formal models and statistical analysis have no bearing on each other. If Jackson does reject the widely lauded practice of statistically testing a formal model, there are ways in which he could have debated this practice more explicitly: stating the implicit premise that underlies using large-n covariation regularities to test an ideal-type and explaining why this premise is unfounded, or providing an example of a claim that tries to meld analyticism and neopositivism and showing how to frame a rejection of the claim.

Jackson is especially strong when discussing the analyticist tradition, so much so that it has influenced how we are conducting our own research. Moreover, he uses it himself in setting up the two-by-two typology that structures the bulk of his book. But in doing so he fails to fully apply to himself the standards he ascribes to analyticism. According to Jackson, the "value of an ideal-type lies precisely in its being 'entirely' used as a means for the comparison and measurement of actuality" (2010: 144). Yet as just noted, his failure to analyze the manner in which traditions are mixed in *practice* means the reader is left unclear how one should assess much of the work that is actually *conducted* in the discipline. By title this is a book about the conduct of inquiry in international relations, but there is not enough attention to how research is actually conducted. More explicitly attending to the fact that IR as practiced is more mixed than Jackson's ideal-types, and explaining the trade-offs or implications of mixing philosophical ontologies, would have been of great use to graduate students as they nervously undertake dissertation research.

Our third and final criticism approaches Jackson in light of the concern with audience that he so convincingly explicates as central to a reflexivist philosophical ontology. Jackson employs the disassociated stance of scholarship with which most of us are familiar, and the result is a lucid and intellectually honest book. But in being so dispassionate has Jackson perhaps done himself and the discipline a disservice? Consider his critiques of critical realism and neopositivism. Jackson makes a cogent case against critical realism's treatment of real-but-unobservables. Although he notes that these unobservables are often proclaimed to be provisional in their use, he follows the logic of such a position to its practical conclusion and argues that knowing the true nature of such entities is likely a fruitless endeavor. However, in discussing neopositivists' instrumental use of concepts he is less philosophically cutting.

From a reflexivist position this is troubling because one must ask: who is the audience Jackson is trying to reach? Although there is certainly an IR "cottage industry" in philosophy of science (Grynaviski, this symposium), it does not have many writers in the neopositivist camp. The rigorous philosophical unraveling that Jackson pursues against critical realism may have the effect of alienating the very group most likely, due to their own engagements in the philosophy of sci-

ence, to be interested in his book! This is a shame, as Jackson probably only seeks here to encourage critical realists to avoid the temptation of playing the science card themselves. Such a goal may have been better achieved by analyzing their position a bit more sympathetically while putting a little more edge into his account of neopositivism.

Conclusion

Jackson certainly shows that philosophy of science should be treated seriously, and this clarifying and inspiring book should be read by all students in the discipline. Yet it is not clear that it will be. As Jackson notes, there is an absence of sincere philosophy of science training in IR. Given the prominence of graduate students' concerns with making their work acceptable to key constituencies, Jackson displays a surprising reticence toward the practical feasibility of adopting his scheme for IR graduate students writing their dissertations. Success in a prospectus defense, conference presentation, or job talk relies upon the extent to which the audience will accept, or at least take seriously, the claims being made. It may, however, be quite difficult to stare down a dissertation committee or a job talk audience member and say, "Well, you are ignoring the philosophical-ontological contradictions implicit in your criticism."

Yet, unless held to such a standard—one, it should be noted, he does not set for himself—Jackson ultimately cannot be held responsible for how seriously the discipline will treat the very substantive issues this book raises. Although this book does not help us as graduate students to navigate the waters of the discipline *as a discipline* as much as we might hope, it has certainly helped us to steer our own thoughts more steadily. Being able to understand that many debates in IR already presuppose the same philosophical wager, and that others often mix and match from different underlying understandings of the hook-up between theory and the world, has helped us as scholars become more clear and confident about the standards which would establish if our own research counts as "science."

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Making Sense of the Study of International Relations: Seeking a Guide for the Perplexed

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Patrick Jackson's book on *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations* offers graduate students, younger scholars, and, indeed, many specialists a useful map for charting the often inhospitable terrain of scholarship in the field of International Relations (IR). This is particularly the case as far as illuminating the awakening to issues in the philosophy of science that has taken place in IR during the last two decades. Jackson presents a typology for sorting the debates about the nature and demands of scientific inquiry, which have often been conducted, either explicitly or implicitly, in terms of diverse and complicated philosophical arguments. As opposed to many previous analyses, which have tended to be couched in terms of dichotomies and biased toward a particular philosophical persuasion, Jackson's scheme is remarkably neutral, but, in some respects, maybe too neutral.

In exploring these matters, Jackson sometimes becomes entangled in the puzzles he seeks to resolve, such as the relationship between philosophy and social science, and, at certain points in his presentation, the historical context and genealogy of this relationship, as well as that between natural science and the philosophy of science, seems obscured.¹ My purpose is not to quarrel with his attempt to sort out what is going on in IR, but rather to add a little historical and critical gloss in the hope of joining in the kind of constructive contention that he so strongly advocates as essential to the conduct of inquiry.

Jackson's basic destination, after a long journey through a wide range of philosophers, reaching from Descartes to Roy Bhaskar, as well as a representative number of scholars in IR, is a condition of "healthy pluralism" in matters methodological. This general stance is certainly not novel. There is no doubt that pluralism has once again become the dominant ethic in political science, as well as democratic theory, and it now seems nearly as awkward to find fault with pluralism as it is to criticize the norm of eating a balanced meal. By securing objectivity while allowing variety, they seem both to solve the problem of relativism and to secure authority, but even some balanced meals are not easily digested.

The Genealogy of the "Science Card"

To put Jackson's work into perspective, it is helpful to consider briefly the intellectual genealogy from which his argument has emerged. Despite the fact that, from its earliest stages, and especially after the end of the nineteenth century,