Relying on empiricism fails- it’s impossible to be certain the future, we will never have all knowledge and taking action based on empiricism collapses civilization and generates prejudice

Paul Cleveland, professor of economics at Birmingham College, October 15th 2009; http://www.usatrustonline.com/ articles-videos/8-in-depth-articles/49-the-failure-of-empiricism, “The Failure of Empiricism”; [we don’t endorse the gendered language]; hhs-ab

Empiricism dominates the attention of most academics today. In fact some philosophers argue that the employment of the empirical method is the only one able to obtain any knowledge. As a result, the scientist more and more lives in a dark world of uncertainty. The more he relies on empiricism alone, the less he is able to arrive at any foundational principles. This arises because empiricism alone cannot provide a complete picture. The problem of relying on empirical analysis alone is that we do not have now, and never will have all information. Moreover, the information that has been collected may be inaccurate or organized in a poor fashion. Therefore, the empiricist learns to be forever skeptical. Nevertheless, the empiricist continues to rely upon the rules of logic. He must necessarily affirm the law of noncontradiction, the validity of cause and effect relationships, and, to some degree, the reliability of his senses. Without these he could not honestly continue his study of the cosmos. However, the empiricist derides certain deductive conclusions which arise from these accepted conditions of thought. Rather, he chooses to develop elaborate arguments to avoid these conclusions. This is more a matter of personal prejudice than of soundness of thought. Indeed, the philosopher who asserts that the empirical method is the only valid method of investigation is being illogical for his own assertion cannot be verified empirically. His assertion is a metaphysical statement. As arguments of empiricists have progressed, we have seen a downfall of knowledge and thought. This has been especially problematic in the study of economics since that area of inquiry necessarily begins with a deductive conclusion. That conclusion is that there is no such thing as a free lunch. This conclusion follows from the obvious observation that we are purposeful actors who live in a world marked by limited means to achieve our ends. This deductive conclusion needs no further verification. It remains a rock solid principle and no amount of empirical investigation can ever overthrow it. Nonetheless, it would appear that students are very perceptive. They reason in the following way. Since their teachers teach them that nothing can be known with certainty, then nothing can be known. Therefore, why do we bother attempting to discover something of reality, when in fact reality cannot be known? Within this framework of thinking, the student concludes that the educational process is merely a game we play. The winners of this game gain an advantage over their counterparts in society which allows them to acquire more material rewards. Moreover, even solid principles are questioned and often rejected as being nothing more than an opinion that they happen not to like. It should not surprise us, therefore, that moral principles are consistently rejected and that our civilization is crumbling around us. Students are merely acting out of what they have been taught is true. Specifically, they have bought into that totally illogical adage, "everything is relative." Thus, they are no longer interested in consistent, logical thought. As a result, the drift continues and society will slide further and further away from reality and from the truth of God.

3. Economic predictions fail

Menand 2005 (Louis ,phd Colombia and Robert M. and Anne T. Bass Professor of English and American Literature and Language

Tetlock is a psychologist—he teaches at Berkeley—and his conclusions are based on a long-term study that he began twenty years ago. He picked two hundred and eighty-four people who made their living “commenting or offering advice on political and economic trends,” and he started asking them to assess the probability that various things would or would not come to pass, both in the areas of the world in which they specialized and in areas about which they were not expert. Would there be a nonviolent end to apartheid in South Africa? Would Gorbachev be ousted in a coup? Would the United States go to war in the Persian Gulf? Would Canada disintegrate? (Many experts believed that it would, on the ground that Quebec would succeed in seceding.) And so on. By the end of the study, in 2003, the experts had made 82,361 forecasts. Tetlock also asked questions designed to determine how they reached their judgments, how they reacted when their predictions proved to be wrong, how they evaluated new information that did not support their views, and how they assessed the probability that rival theories and predictions were accurate.Tetlock got a statistical handle on his task by putting most of the forecasting questions into a “three possible futures” form. The respondents were asked to rate the probability of three alternative outcomes: the persistence of the status quo, more of something (political freedom, economic growth), or less of something (repression, recession). And he measured his experts on two dimensions: how good they were at guessing probabilities (did all the things they said had an x per cent chance of happening happen *x* per cent of the time?), and how accurate they were at predicting specific outcomes. The results were unimpressive. On the first scale, the experts performed worse than they would have if they had simply assigned an equal probability to all three outcomes—if they had given each possible future a thirty-three-per-cent chance of occurring. Human beings who spend their lives studying the state of the world, in other words, are poorer forecasters than dart-throwing monkeys, who would have distributed their picks evenly over the three choices. Tetlock also found that specialists are not significantly more reliable than non-specialists in guessing what is going to happen in the region they study. There are also many studies showing that expertise and experience do not make someone a better reader of the evidence. In one, data from a test used to diagnose brain damage were given to a group of clinical psychologists and their secretaries. The psychologists’ diagnoses were no better than the secretaries’. The expert-prediction game is not much different. When television pundits make predictions, the more ingenious their forecasts the greater their cachet. An arresting new prediction means that the expert has discovered a set of interlocking causes that no one else has spotted, and that could lead to an outcome that the conventional wisdom is ignoring. The expert also suffers from knowing too much: the more facts an expert has, the more information is available to be enlisted in support of his or her pet theories, and the more chains of causation he or she can find beguiling. This helps explain why specialists fail to outguess non-specialists. The odds tend to be with the obvious. Tetlock’s experts were also no different from the rest of us when it came to learning from their mistakes. Most people tend to dismiss new information that doesn’t fit with what they already believe. Tetlock found that his experts used a double standard: they were much tougher in assessing the validity of information that undercut their theory than they were in crediting information that supported it. If you look backward, the dots that lead up to Hitler or the fall of the Soviet Union or the attacks on September 11th all connect. If you look forward, it’s just a random scatter of dots, many potential chains of causation leading to many possible outcomes. We have no idea today how tomorrow’s invasion of a foreign land is going to go; after the invasion, we can actually persuade ourselves that we knew all along. The result seems inevitable, and therefore predictable. Tetlock found that, consistent with this asymmetry, experts routinely misremembered the degree of probability they had assigned to an event after it came to pass. They claimed to have predicted what happened with a higher degree of certainty than, according to the record, they really did. When this was pointed out to them, by Tetlock’s researchers, they sometimes became defensive. And, like most of us, experts violate a fundamental rule of probabilities by tending to find scenarios with more variables more likely. If a prediction needs two independent things to happen in order for it to be true, its probability is the product of the probability of each of the things it depends on. If there is a one-in-three chance of x and a one-in-four chance of y, the probability of both x and y occurring is one in twelve.

Economic security threats aren’t real and destroy epistemological questions

Tooze 5 (Roger, Visiting Professor of International Relations – City University, “The Missing Link: Security, Critical International Political Economy, and Community, Critical Security Studies and World Politics, Ed. Booth, p. 146-148) [Note – “IPE” = International Political Economy]

The Failure of Orthodox IPE One would hope that the disciplinary knowledge of IPE could provide the required analysis. My sense is that it cannot yet do this. The reason for this is the failure of critical thinking: mainstream IPE is still **locked into an ontology and epistemology** that reproduces a very specific and partial inter­pretation of international political economy, based around the state and the shared commitment to a method of positivism.49 Mainstream IPE grounds its analysis in a world in which the state is the fundamental unit and legiti­mate knowledge is gained through the objective testing of propositions against an external and knowable reality. My negative conclusion is all the more disappointing given that the origins of modern IR-based international political economy lie in the very dissatisfaction felt with the limitations of a traditional military security-focused study of international relations, cou­pled with the inability and unwillingness of economics and international economics to handle questions of power.50 IPE as a distinct field of knowledge has been an academic growth industry since the early 1970s, particularly in the United States. Its growth has reflected events in the world political economy and the perceived needs of policymakers (again mainly in the United States). It is now a substantial field of knowledge, with all of the professional structures necessary to that success.5 As it has been primarily located within the larger field of interna­tional studies, the core theoretical frameworks of a U.S.-dominated IR, with its particular philosophical and political values and assumptions, have been transposed into IPE itself. Moreover, under the hegemony of econom­ics in the social sciences in general, the exponents of IPE have increasingly also transposed the assumptions and methodologies of economics, includ­ing rational choice theory, and a fixation with formal, quantifiable, model­ing, and microsystems explanations. All these elements constitute a deep commitment to positivist epistemology. As defined above, positivist episte­mology entails a claim that the only legitimate knowledge of IPE is gained through the objective testing of propositions against an external and know­able reality. The influence of this double and mutually supportive hegemo­ny52 has produced a distinct form of IPE, in which a contest between the competing perspectives of liberalism, nationalism, realism, and Marxism has veiled a basic orthodoxy constructed around an epistemological com­mitment to positivism, a theoretical commitment to methodological indi­vidualism, an ontological commitment to the state, and a domination by the agenda and interests of the United States.53 The commitment to positivism is a **serious limitation** on the ability of orthodox IPE to construct a knowledge sufficient to suggest adequate understandings of security and community under today's conditions and therefore appropriate to the complex, multilayered world we live in (as exemplified by some of the problems we have already identified). By deny­ing the social construction and reproduction of reality (and the social repro­duction of itself), orthodox IPE cannot take into account the intersubjective basis and realities of power in the world political economy. Moreover, in the context of the argument here, it places a **fundamental epistemological barrier** to the integration of political economy and (critical approaches to) security. A detailed epistemological critique of orthodox IPE has been artic­ulated elsewhere54; the following analysis will focus on the principal onto­logical questions and the core problem of the theorization of politics and economics. In terms of the basic structure of assumed entities and their relation­ships, IPE was initially constructed as "the politics of international eco­nomic relations."55 In other words, the focus was to be the politics of inter­state economic relations, with the unit of analysis being the territorial economy of the state, the politics being intergovernmental, and the realm of economics being given the generative role in the construction of the issues and concerns of governments. In this ontology, IPE draws upon classical political realism for its statism and liberal economic theory for its under­standing of economics. And although it is an attempt to bridge the gap between international relations and international economics, it also shares with IR a marked tendency to equate politics (i.e., the realm of the state), with force and economics (linked to civil society), with rule by consent. In this equation the politics of interstate economic relations was already demonstrating the power of the yet-to-be-articulated neoliberal ide­ology and neorealist IR theory.56 Even after the politics of international economics became international political economy (around the same time that mainstream IR moved to embrace neorealism) the academic main­stream of IPE continued to conceive the state as the ontological core entity. Statism remains the core ontological commitment for orthodox IPE. At the same time, there is a willingness to recognize that other entities are possi­bly significant and other forms of politics may occur, but all are subservient to state structures, processes, and purposes. Within IPE statism is more than putting the state at the center of analysis (state-centrism), as it involves the commitment to the state as the only legitimate framework for political economy.57 With regard to the argument of this chapter, the nature and limi­tations of this statism are best understood in relation to the way in which the joining together of economics and IR in the concept and issue of eco­nomic security has been theorized by orthodox IPE. Economic Security The consideration of the economic in the theory and practice of security, and security in the theory and practice of political economy, has taken place on the basis of prevailing discourses in economics, political science, politi­cal economy, and international political economy. As we have seen, these discourses not only embody deep commitments to specific (orthodox) methodology, epistemology, and ontology; they also construct both eco­nomics and politics, and the relationship between them, in very particular ways. This seems to have led to the possibility of a twin track for investiga­tions into security by political economy and into economics by security. One track starts with politics (the traditional concerns of security) but with economic added on as a new domain of threat to states. The other track starts with a (repoliticized) economics, leading to a whole literature on eco­nomic security, vulnerability, and systemic risk (with particular reference to the global financial system). But the way that the economic is then related to the political (and vice versa) seems to depend upon prior ideological commitments as to the nature of the relationship between economics and politics, normally expressed in paradigmatic terms of perspectives or con­testing approaches. For instance, a liberal interpretation of economic secu­rity is conditioned by the prior assumption of the link between economic prosperity and war based on the assumed beneficial rationality of markets. In this sense, economic security as a concept and as an issue has been clearly constructed as an extension of statist, positivist IPE, which brings together the twin tracks by **grafting** the agenda of economics onto the clas­sic concerns of state security via neorealism. Of course, the tradition of mercantilist thinking, or economic nationalism, as Robert Gilpin prefers to describe it, clearly locks economic security into physical security—but on, and only on, a state basis. In this tradition, power and wealth, and hence national security, are inseparable and complementary, particularly in what are regarded as strategic industries, that is, those industries whose healthy development is considered necessary for the maintenance of national mili­tary-political security.58 Notwithstanding the mercantilist imperative for both states and theorists, the post-1945 international economic structure emerged as a U.S. hegemony that was articulated and developed on the public basis of a liberal trade and investment order with a constituting, rationalizing, and legitimating ideology of liberal political economy. Hence, for twenty years after IR and economics were theoretically linked in mainstream academic practice, it was only to the extent that a strong, broad-based modern economy was regarded as necessary to maintain secu­rity.

The **aff doesn’t have a coherent political strategy**

Schlag, professor of law@ univ. Colorado, 1990 (pierre, stanford law review, november, page lexis)

In fact, normative legal thought is so much in a hurry that it will tell you what to do even though there is not the slightest chance that you might actually be in a position to do it**.** For instance, when was the last time you were in a position to put the difference principle n31 into effect, or to restructure [\*179] the doctrinal corpus of the first amendment? "In the future, we should. . . ." When was the last time you were in a position to rule whether judges should become pragmatists, efficiency purveyors, civic republicans, or Hercules surrogates? Normative legal thought doesn't seem overly concerned with such worldly questions about the character and the effectiveness of its own discourse. It just goes along and proposes, recommends, prescribes, solves, and resolves. Yet despite its obvious desire to have worldly effects, worldly consequences, normative legal thought remains seemingly unconcerned that for all practical purposes, its only consumers are legal academics and perhaps a few law students -- persons who are virtually never in a position to put any of its wonderful normative advice into effect.

Turns all solvency

Delgado 1991 (richard, colorado law professor, 139 pa. L. Rev. 933, april)

But what is the cash value of all this priest-talk in the law reviews, in the classrooms of at least the "better" schools, and in the opinions of at least some judges? Are normativos better than other people? Are we better off for engaging in normative talk, either as speakers or listeners?PierreSchlag**,** for example, has described normativity as a zero -- as a vacuous, self-referential system of talk, all [\*954] form and no substance, meaning nothing, and about itself. n82 This description may be too generous. Normativity may be more than a harmless tic prevalent only in certain circles.1. Permission to Ignore Suffering The history of organized religion shows that intense immersion in at least certain types of normative system is no guarantee against cruelty, intolerance or superstition**.**  n83 In modern times, social scientists have tried to find a correlation between religious belief and altruistic behavior. In most studies, the correlation is nonexistent or negative. In one study, seminary students were observed as they walked past a well-dressed man lying moaning on the sidewalk. n84 Most ignored the man, even though they had just heard a sermon about the Good Samaritan. The proportion who stopped to offer aid was lower than that of passersby in general. The researchers, commenting on this and other studies of religion and helping behavior, hypothesized that religious people feel less need to act because of a sense that they are "chosen" people. n85 I believe this anesthetizing effect extends beyond religion. We confront a starving beggar and immediately translate the concrete duty we feel into a normative (i.e., abstract) question. And once we see the beggar's demand in general, systemic terms, it is easy for us to pass him by without rendering aid. n86 Someone else, perhaps society (with my tax dollars), will take care of that problem. Normativity thus enables us to ignore and smooth over the rough edges of our world, to tune out or redefine what would otherwise make a claim on us**.** In the legal system, the clearest [\*955] examples of this are found in cases where the Supreme Court has been faced with subsistence claims.

Bleiker, 2001 (Roland, Millennium: Journal of International Studies Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 509-533)

Nothing is harder than to notice the obvious that was not noticed before. The task of critically analysing world politics is to make fuller use of various faculties and to challenge the mimetic and exclusive conventions of Realist international politics, just as Magritte's painting of a pipe was aimed at undermining 'the mimetic conventions of realistic painting'. But few tasks are more daunting than that. We all have an intuitive longing for the hope that what we represent is what we see and think, and that what we see and think must really be real. The belief in resemblance and recognition is part of our desire to order the world. We know, of course, that Cold War spy films are not real, yet it is much more difficult to accept, for instance, that a scientific analysis of Cold War intelligence, based on quantitative archival research, can contain equally subjective representational dimensions. This is because we are wedded to conventions of language; conventions that tell us, to appropriate Michel Foucault's words, that the entire purpose of a scholarly analysis 'is to elicit recognition, to allow the object it represents to appear without hesitation and equivocation'.26 Representation is always an act of power. This power is at its peak if a form of representation is able to disguise its subjective origins and values. Realism has been unusually successful in this endeavour: it has turned one of many credible interpretations into a form of representation that is not only widely accepted as 'realistic'. but also appears and functions as essence. Realism has been able to take historically contingent and political motivated commentaries-say by E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau about how to deal with the spread of Nazi Germany, or by Kenneth Waltz about how to interpret the 'logic' of 'anarchy' during the Cold War-and then turn them into universal and a-historic explanations that allegedly capture the 'essence' of human nature and international politics.27 Expressed in other words, Realism has managed to suppress what Kant would have called the 'aesthetic Quality' of politics. that is, the elements which are 'purely subjective in the representation of an object, i.e., what constitutes its reference to the subject, not to the object' .

4.) Inevitability claims give moral license to violence resulting in extinction.

Campbell and Dillon ’93 David Campbell\Michael Dillon, “The end of philosophy and the end of international relations,” The Political Subject of Violence, 1993, pp. 17-18

To broach this task anew, however, we have briefly to re-visit again an aspect of the early formation of the terminus in which we are located. Should the old objection be advanced that a return to the ethical represents a retreat from the hard violent choices entailed in the political, the reply before we proceed should be brief and ‘hard-nosed’ enough to match any realist. Violence may be the ultima ratio of politics, but it has never been the only ratio; and in a life that now has to be lived with a proliferating array of devices capable of threatening lethal global consequences it simply cannot be allowed to enjoy the practical, intellectual and moral licence once extended to it in our political discourses. Neither is there anything in the history of the technology of political violence to warrant the claim that the political rationalisation of violence diminishes its sway. Monopolistic control and attempted rational deployment of the legitimate use of force by modern political authorities has helped bring human being to the threshold of prospect ultimately not only of genocidal but also of species extinction. Human perdurance cannot afford the cost of the politics of political and ethical forgetting charged by the technologising of the political as violence. Realist and neo-realist answers not only fail intellectually **—** in a way that would not matter very much if they did not so impoverish our political imagination **—** they fail most because they are not good enough practically to match our circumstances. It is not a matter of getting knowledge ‘to *represent* reality truly’ (we shall see later how modern reality has become a function of its technologies of representation), but of acquiring ‘habits of action for coping with reality’;25 a reality which always exceeds the realist representation of it, and whose unprecedented finitudes now define the horizon of life in novel ways.